



BC ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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Prince George, BC V2K 5S3
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BCAFN SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY
March 7 & 8, 2024
Online via Zoom

Resolution 09/2024

SUBJECT: CALL TO EXTEND THE SAFE DRINKING WATER SETTLEMENT CLAIM DEADLINE

Moved by: CHIEF LYNDA PRICE, ULKATCHO FIRST NATION

SECONDED BY: CHIEF DAN MANUEL, UPPER NICOLA BAND

DECISION: CARRIED

WHEREAS:

- A. First Nations have historic and ongoing inequitable access to safe drinking water due to the Federal Government's failure to uphold its fiduciary responsibilities to provide First Nations with access to clean drinking water in Canada;
- B. First Nations citizens have the right to reliable and sufficient access to adequate, safe and clean drinking water;
- C. on December 22, 2021, the Federal Courts approved an \$8 billion settlement between Canada and impacted First Nations and their members who were subject to a drinking water advisory that lasted at least one year between November 20, 1995, and June 20, 2021;
- D. the settlement includes a \$1.8 billion compensation to impacted First Nations and an additional \$50 million for eligible First Nations who suffered Specified Injuries due to a drinking water advisory;

Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 8th day of March 2024

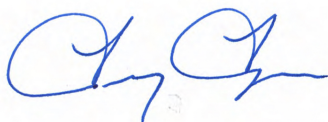
Terry Teegee, BC Regional Chief

- E. the Settlement Agreement stipulates that First Nations may not take legal action against the Federal Government for damages resulting in unsafe drinking water in First Nations communities before June 20, 2021.
- F. First Nations' eligibility to submit a claim requires substantive historical documentation and recordkeeping, creating barriers for some First Nations and their membership;
- G. First Nations in BC and across Canada have reported delays in proving eligibility, resulting in inequitable opportunities to submit a claim;
- H. a deadline of March 7, 2024, has been imposed on First Nations and individuals to submit a claim, which may lead to incomplete or unrealized claims, causing further harm to First Nations citizens;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly call on the federal and provincial government to acknowledge, affirm and uphold First Nations inherent rights, title, and sovereignty with respect to source water, drinking water, wastewater, and related infrastructure;
2. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly direct the Regional Chief to request a six-month extension for the Safe Drinking Water Settlement Claim Period to ensure First Nations in British Columbia have adequate time to complete the claims process, and;
3. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly call on the First Nations Drinking Water Settlement Class Counsel and First Nations Drinking Water Settlement Administrator to increase communication and outreach efforts with First Nations in BC over the six-month period to ensure all impacted First Nations are provided an opportunity to receive compensation.

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Terry Teegee, BC Regional Chief