



BRITISH COLUMBIA ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS
312-345 Chief Alex Thomas Way
Kamloops, BC V2H 1H1
Office: (250) 828 - 9757 Fax: (250) 828 - 9893
www.bcafn.ca

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

BCAFN REGIONAL CHIEF TERRY TEEGEE RESPONDS TO THE SUPREME COURT OF CANADA PEEL WATERSHED DECISION

(Secwepemc Territory/Kamloops, BC) – December 1st, 2017 Today, the Supreme Court of Canada sided with Yukon First Nations against the Yukon government, ending a five year legal battle that started in the territorial courts, and was appealed to Canada's highest court. The Yukon government's decision to dramatically weaken a treaty-established commission's plan to preserve a vast wilderness area in the Peel Watershed has effectively been reversed. The former Yukon government wanted to open 70 per cent of the watershed to development, which was fiercely opposed by First Nations in the region, as the Peel Watershed is one of the largest intact wilderness watersheds in North America.

Standing with Tr'ondek Hwech'in First Nation Chief Roberta Joseph, and all Yukon First Nations, BCAFN Regional Chief Terry Teegee stated, "Today is a critical day for not only First Nations in Yukon, but all First Nations in Canada. Territories governed by First Nations and the decision-making authority of First Nations must be fully acknowledged and respected. I am pleased to see that the Supreme Court has sided with First Nations in preserving the Peel watershed from development." Regional Chief Terry Teegee continued, "This is yet another example of the reality that governments must follow the procedures laid out under treaties. I am encouraged by this ruling, however, more must be done by the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to truly recognize and implement the principles articulated in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. This is the bedrock of how our relations must be conducted."

For further information contact:

BC Regional Chief Terry Teegee
250-299-2030