



TSESHAHT FIRST NATION

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June 10, 2024

COMMUNITY NOTICE

RE: TSESHAHT STATEMENT ON UPCOMING 2024 FISHING SEASON

On behalf of Tseshaht First Nation ḥawiiḥ, Elected Council and Fisheries and Wildlife Committee

Honouring our past

As we approach our upcoming 2024 fisheries season, we would like to honour and recognize those who fought for our Aboriginal Right to fish and sell. Our rights are for salmon but extend to all species, with access for both economic opportunity (EO) and food, social and ceremonial (FSC) fisheries. For many of our new fishers, members and younger Tseshaht youth, you may not be aware that many Tseshaht literally risked their lives so that we could exercise our rights in our territories today. From confiscation, to being charged (although most were dropped) and even having guns drawn on our people; we have come so far in our fishery, none of which would be possible without those who laid the foundation for us all. λekoo, λekoo.

Our present reality

All Tseshaht fishers make a commitment to abide by the regulations and requirements within our Economic Opportunity (EO) Agreement which include enforcement, monitoring, safety, and more. Tseshaht has conducted active engagement with fishers and our community members over the last several years on rules, regulations, most recently hearing no objections to signing the EO Agreement while exploring a longer-term agreement and ensuring there are consequences for those who breach them. If we do not honour our sacred values, principles and responsibilities and manage; what will be left for our future generations?

We are also reminded that Tseshaht has one of the last strong, fresh wild sockeye, runs along the coast of British Columbia. And we acknowledge the importance of managing as we have in the past, practicing the principles of ḥiisaak (respect), ḥuuḥaaḥuk (taking care of) and ḥiḥukḥiḥ ḥawaak (everything is one), so this run will continue. We honour and are proud of those Tseshaht fishers who presently practice our long-standing traditions of sharing our first catch, ensuring we provide for our Elders and ensuring our food, social and ceremonial (FSC) needs are provided first and foremost.



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The future

Going forward into 2024 and beyond, we want to ensure our fishers maintain not only our values and principles listed above, but a standard that our community and children are proud of.

We are excited to have secured resources to purchase equipment for better monitoring on the water and future enforcement. Our top priority continues to be the safety and well-being of every single Tseshaht on the water, this includes everyone treating each other with respect.

Make no mistake, our future, including this season comes with huge obstacles and challenges that include climate change, warm waters, drought and at times even racism. We know that we must be ready and manage whatever comes accordingly. We are also aware of the increased cost of living and inflation, that impacts us all and how it can often feel out of our control. What we can do though is continue to look after Mother Nature as she continues to look after us.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish all fishers and community members a happy, healthy, safe and unified 2024 fishing season.

ʔuušʔakšileʔicuu