



? ESDILAGH FIRST NATION

#4-423 Elliot Street, Quesnel B.C V2J 1Y6
Phone: (250) 991-6000 Fax: (250)747-3920
Email: reception@esdilagh.ca

PRESS RELEASE

?Esdilagh Declare Ban on Moose Harvest in Traditional Territory

Tsilhqot'in community forced to act to address gaps in the Province's weak response to unprecedented wildfire impacts.

?Esdilagh Territory, BC (October 13, 2017): The community of ?Esdilagh, one of six of the Tsilhqot'in Nation communities, declares a ban on moose harvest within their traditional territory after an informative community meeting held October 5, 2017.

The community discussed this seasons' wildfire, the effects it has had so far within their traditional territory and the devastating impact it will have on moose. Moose populations in ?Esdilagh's territory are already at an unprecedented low level, and as a result of the 2017 firefighting, there are many new roads and access to sensitive moose habitat. On October 6, 2017 the Ministry of Forests closed Zones A and C of Management Unit (MU) 5-13. Zone B of MU 5-13 and MU 5-14 were also heavily impacted by the wildfires yet the Province has left these area open to Limited Entry Hunts for moose.

"As a community who relies on moose as a main staple for sustenance this inaction by the Province is very alarming to us. Allowing a moose hunt after the wildfires could decimate the entire moose population in our territory," stated Chief Roy Stump - ?Esdilagh First Nation, "we cannot afford to lose anything else and we are alarmed that the Province of BC has failed to take action."

"I am particularly proud of my community members for making a decision that exercises our jurisdiction and for demonstrating how we take responsibility to preserve and protect our wildlife for future generations. We are willing to forego our Aboriginal rights to hunt moose and we expect the Province to rescind the remaining 2017 Limited Entry Hunt authorizations for conservation purposes. We also expect BC to commit substantial resources to work with us to protect and conserve the moose population."

?Esdilagh will commence discussions with Conservation Officers to develop a collaborative approach to help ensure the public respects ?Esdilagh's decision.

Facts:

- Moose population estimates completed in January 2017 show moose continue to decline by approximately 30% in our region, translating to a staggering low moose density of 0.17 moose per km².
- In Management Units 5-13 and 5-14, the fire perimeter accounts for about 31% of the entire MU's.
- There remain many scientific unknowns about the holding capacity of habitat after a fire, and the scale of the 2017 fires is unprecedented with respect to moose impacts.
- The Province of BC has no immediate plans for a population survey to determine how many moose are left in ?Esdilagh Territory, which means that any LEH hunt is occurring in a vacuum of solid scientific data.

Media Contact:

Chad Stump
Band Manager
?Esdilagh First Nation
250-991-6000


Nitsil'in Roy Stump
?Esdilagh First Nation