

# Snuneymuxw First Nation



668 Centre Street  
Nanaimo, BC, V9R 4Z4

Telephone: 250/740-2300  
Fax: 250/753-3492

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **13 July, 2017, Nanaimo, BC/Snuneymuxw Territory: Snuneymuxw Pursues Alternative to Nanaimo Port Authority**

Snuneymuxw First Nation has informed the federal government that it expects to have Nation-to-Nation discussions on the future of Nanaimo harbour in order to bring alternative harbour governance models forward to replace the Nanaimo Port Authority (NPA).

In a letter written to Ministers Marc Garneau (Transport Canada), Jody Wilson-Raybould (Department of Justice) and Carolyn Bennett (Department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs), Chief John Wesley of the Snuneymuxw First Nation said that Snuneymuxw and the surrounding community is united in its desire to work with the federal government on a new harbour governance model.

“Snuneymuxw made its position clear earlier this year to the Nanaimo Port Authority and to Transport Canada. The Port Authority model is fundamentally broken and unresponsive to the needs of our community. To be blunt, the legal structures upon which it is based come from another era – one that was not based on partnership, cooperation, and the recognition of our rights,” said Chief Wesley. “We were told that the federal government took our grievances with the NPA seriously and would engage with us to make the necessary changes to the NPA approach. That has yet to happen, and Snuneymuxw expects the federal government to diligently pursue fulfilment and implementation of its commitments enshrined in the Snuneymuxw Treaty of 1854.”

This past April, both Snuneymuxw First Nation and the City of Nanaimo resolved to work with the marine industry and undertake innovative work to explore and develop a new harbour governance model. That work continues, and forms the basis of the upcoming public dialogue *The Future of Nanaimo Harbour*, to be hosted in September. Snuneymuxw intends to achieve a new, responsive, and responsible governance model for Nanaimo Harbour in partnership with the City of Nanaimo, the marine industry and the community

at large that will promote economic investment and development that has been delayed in recent years because of uncertainty created by the port authority.

“This part of the Salish Sea is fundamental to the Snuneymuxw way of life, identity, and economy. Nanaimo Harbour and surrounding waters are the core of Snuneymuxw’s treaty-protected fisheries – a fact that must be acknowledged and respected,” added Chief Wesley. “We expect full partnership and cooperation from the federal government that reflects their commitment to implement the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and to review all existing federal law and policy, including the *Canada Marine Act*, to ensure it is compliant with our Treaty Rights and Aboriginal Title and Rights.”

For further information contact:

Douglas White III Kwulasultun  
Councillor and Chief Negotiator  
Snuneymuxw First Nation  
Mobile: 250-756-7563  
Email: [dwhite@snuneymuxw.ca](mailto:dwhite@snuneymuxw.ca)

Attachment: Snuneymuxw Letter to Federal Ministers dated July 5, 2017