

# Snuneymuxw First Nation



668 Centre Street  
Nanaimo, BC, V9R 4Z4

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

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Nanaimo, BC/Snuneymuxw Territory: Snuneymuxw Government Resolution on Nanaimo Harbour**

At a meeting of the Snuneymuxw Chief and Council on April 6, 2017, a resolution was unanimously passed to join efforts with the City of Nanaimo and the Nanaimo Marina Association to seek to craft a new approach to governance of the harbour and marine areas around Nanaimo.

In recent years, the Nanaimo Port Authority (NPA), and the Nanaimo Harbour Commission before them, purported to manage for the benefit of all the key waters and foreshore areas in Newcastle Channel, Nanaimo harbour, and across to the Duke Point Industrial Park. These are all areas of critical importance to Snuneymuxw as the location of treaty-protected village sites and fisheries, however, notwithstanding that legal reality, Snuneymuxw has been largely excluded from decision-making and benefits of the harbour. The NPA has shared with Snuneymuxw that they are constrained in their ability to recognize and implement our treaty and aboriginal rights – indeed, over the years, our experience has been that NPA’s plans and processes regarding the area has often not been consistent with, or fully considered, those rights.

“The waters of Nanaimo harbour are sacred to the Snuneymuxw First Nation and at the core of historic Snuneymuxw Fisheries that are protected by our Treaty of 1854 with the Crown that acknowledges our right to ‘carry on our fisheries as formerly.’ Since 1854, these waters and fisheries have been systematically displaced by settlers in ways that are inconsistent with our rights and that has not provided compensation for those losses. Snuneymuxw will join with the City of Nanaimo and the Nanaimo

Marina Association to build a new and more respectful approach to the governance of Nanaimo waters” said Chief John Wesley.

"The Nanaimo Marina Association is excited to be working with Snuneymuxw First Nation on developing a model of governing Nanaimo Harbour that benefits all user groups and citizens," said Odai Sirri, President of the Nanaimo Marina Association. As members of the marine industry, we are committed to working in partnership with SFN and the City of Nanaimo to ensure we have a sustainable, economically viable harbour that respects Douglas Treaty Rights and creates economic benefits for industry and the community-at-large," Sirri added.

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For further information contact:

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