



Williams Lake
FIRST NATION

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

06/14/2023

WILLIAMS LAKE FIRST NATION TO DEVELOP PLAN FOR AREA WEST OF FRASER RIVER

Williams Lake First Nation (WLFN) Chief and Council today announced that preliminary work will begin on a focused land-use planning exercise in the area west of the Fraser River commonly known as “Farwell Canyon.” This planning exercise will be multi-dimensional and incorporate knowledge and data from a broad variety of sources, including archaeological research and surveys, environmental data, wildlife-related studies, and engagement with other First Nations, governments, and industry.

WLFN Chief, Willie Sellars:

I'm very excited to begin this exercise. The area known by the settler name of 'Farwell Canyon' is a critical part of Northern Secwépemc Territory. We have a rich and well-established historical connection to these lands, and our uses continue through to the present day. Unfortunately, there is not sufficient awareness of Secwépemc rights and values in the area of Farwell Canyon, and our management priorities have not always been recognized by government and industry. The Cariboo-Chilcotin Regional Land Use Plan was established in 1994 (well before many significant aboriginal title and rights developments), and by the province's own acknowledgment, the CCLUP is a very dated and insufficient planning tool. We feel there is a pressing need to fill some of the gaps in the current management tools, and to clearly assert ourselves as a critical decision maker with respect to the use and development of these Farwell Canyon lands.

In 2018, WLFN and three other Northern Secwépemc communities entered into a government-to-government agreement known as the *Yecweminul'ecw Land and Resource Use Agreement*, which acknowledges land and resource use in Northern Secwépemc traditional territory. The agreement was written to reflect the Province's pledge to true and lasting reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, and to serve as a means through which the Province could advance its commitment to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP).

“This Farwell Canyon Land Use Planning exercise is one very logical extension of our government-to-government agreement with the Province and we're excited about creating a product that will provide meaningful guidance to government, industry, and other land users,” adds Chief Sellars. “Being clear and transparent about priorities and values increases opportunities for collaboration and cooperation, minimizes the potential for conflict, and celebrates the history of Indigenous people in this region.”

Work on this WLFN Farwell Canyon planning exercise will commence in late June. Further information about community and industry engagement will be released in coming months.

MEDIA CONTACT

Whitney Spearing, Senior Manager, Title & Rights

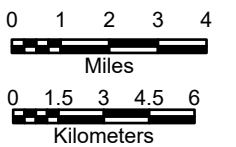
p. 778.417.0196 | e. Whitney.Spearing@wlfn.ca

TRADITIONAL TERRITORY & Locations of Interest

Legend

-  Cities
-  Locations of Interest
-  Stream/River
-  Highway
-  Railways
-  Lakes
-  WLFN Traditional Territory
-  Chilcotin Military Training Area
-  Reserve Boundary
-  NSTQ SOI

Scale: 1:250,000 (original size 11"x17")



Produced by : Williams Lake First Nation

Coordinate System : NAD 1983 UTM Zone 10

Date Exported: 2023-04-24

Disclaimer: Williams Lake First Nation assumes no responsibility for data supplied in electronic format. The recipient accepts full responsibility for verifying the accuracy and completeness of the data. The recipient releases Williams Lake First Nation, its officers, employees, consultants and agents from any and all claims arising in any way from the content or provision of data. The data and maps are owned by Williams Lake First Nation and may not be reproduced without prior permission.

