



## T̓SILHQOT̓IN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

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Media Release  
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### **T̓silhqot̓in Nation Enacts Historic *Nulh Ghah Dechen Ts'edilhtan* (“Wildlife Law”) for Declared Aboriginal Title Lands**

**Williams Lake, BC:** The T̓silhqot̓in Nation has enacted the *Nulh Ghah Dechen Ts'edilhtan* (“Wildlife Law”) to better regulate hunting on its declared Aboriginal title lands, and help ensure wildlife populations on these lands are conserved and protected for this generation and generations to come.

On June 26, 2014, the Supreme Court of Canada declared Aboriginal title for the first time in Canadian history, in the homeland of the T̓silhqot̓in people, within the caretaker area of Xení Gwet̓in First Nations Government – one of six communities that comprise the T̓silhqot̓in Nation. In that same case, the courts also declared that the T̓silhqot̓in hold proven Aboriginal rights to hunt, trap, and trade throughout the claim area. The unanimous judgment from the Supreme Court of Canada was the culmination of 25 years of litigation by the T̓silhqot̓in people.

On August 23, 1989, Xení Gwet̓in First Nations Government enacted its first modern written law, the Nemiah Declaration, and the law was affirmed by Xení Gwet̓in and the T̓silhqot̓in Nation in 2015. The *Nulh Ghah Dechen Ts'edilhtan* law comes into force on August 23, 2019 – the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Nemiah Declaration. The law applies to hunting and other activities, except trapping, that may affect wildlife and habitat within the Nation’s declared Aboriginal title lands. In particular, the law regulates hunting by T̓silhqot̓in and non-T̓silhqot̓in persons. All persons are expected to familiarize themselves with the law, and ensure their compliance with the law while in the T̓silhqot̓in Nation’s declared Aboriginal title lands.

#### **Quotes:**

##### **Nits'il?in (Chief) Joe Alphonse, Tribal Chair, T̓silhqot̓in National Government:**

“The T̓silhqot̓in Nation continues to make history with this new law, which will apply within the Nation’s declared Aboriginal title lands. This is a ground-breaking accomplishment for the Nation as we work collectively to see our jurisdiction recognized throughout our territory. This law honours T̓silhqot̓in culture, and recognizes our inherent law - law that our people have known and lived by for centuries. This law has taken a lot of time and effort; our people have been involved and consulted with throughout its creation. We commend Xení for taking the lead on this issue, and we look forward to developing more laws that will help move our Nation forward.”

##### **Nits'il?in (Chief) Jimmy Lulua, Xení Gwet̓in First Nations Government:**

“The T̓silhqot̓in and Xení Gwet̓in have always lived by our *dechen ts'edilhtan* (“laws”) as taught to us by our ancestors. However, we are at a time in our history where it has become necessary to share our *dechen ts'edilhtan* on paper with each other as T̓silhqot̓in and with non-T̓silhqot̓in. We are continuing to stand up our T̓silhqot̓in laws on our declared Aboriginal title lands. This is only the start. We will continue to develop more laws and take the necessary steps to implement our

laws on our declared Aboriginal title lands, our proven Aboriginal rights lands, and throughout our community caretaker areas.”

**Resources:**

- T̓silhqot'in Nation *Nulh Ghah Dechen Ts'edilhtan* (“T̓silhqot'in Nation Wildlife Law”) - <https://bit.ly/2HB2cLd>
- T̓silhqot'in Nation Hunting Order - <https://bit.ly/30E5a9f>

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