



T̓SILHQOT̓IN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

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Media Release
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T̓silhqot̓in Nation Celebrate Grand Opening of its Solar Farm

Williams Lake, BC: The T̓silhqot̓in Nation celebrated the Grand Opening of its Solar Farm last Friday, October 18, 2019. The T̓silhqot̓in Solar Farm is located 80 km west of Williams Lake on what is known as the Riverwest Sawmill. The 1.25-MW solar farm is the largest of its kind in British Columbia and is a hundred percent developed, built, owned and operated by the T̓silhqot̓in Nation.

Five years ago, the opportunity to initiate the T̓silhqot̓in Solar Farm presented itself. There were many challenges along the T̓silhqot̓in Solar Farm project's lifecycle including financing, authorization, training and harsh weather conditions. However, despite all the challenges, the Nation has been dedicated to the project and the result is that this opportunity has now become a reality. The T̓silhqot̓in Solar Farm consists of 3,456 solar modules that will convert the sun's rays into electricity which will then be sent into the BC Hydro grid and generate economic profit for the Nation. The T̓silhqot̓in Solar Farm stands on 2 hectares of the Riverwest Sawmill brownfield awaiting the final connection to the power line that runs along Highway 20. Full operation will begin shortly with the solar farm generating about 1,500 megawatt hours of electricity per year during its 25-year expected lifetime.

Quotes:

Nits'ilʔin (Chief) Joe Alphonse, Tribal Chair, T̓silhqot̓in National Government:

"The T̓silhqot̓in Nation continues to break new ground with our Solar Farm, which is the largest in British Columbia. This is an important accomplishment for the Nation and I'm proud that our people have been involved in all aspects of the project from the planning and development to the, now operation of the Solar Farm. Energy and electricity has been lacking out in the territory for a long time, despite one of the longest stretches of hydro in Canada, so we welcome the opportunity for business and to improve the well-being of our people. The Solar Farm is a huge economic win for our Nation and I believe our Nation is continuing to lead the way for indigenous people throughout Canada and around the world. I especially thank Chief Russ for providing leadership on the project and his commitment to see it through."

Nits'ilʔin (Chief) Russell Myers Ross, Vice-Chair, T̓silhqot̓in National Government:

"It was a pleasure meeting Michel de Spot of EcoSmart 5 years ago to kick start the project by scoping out what the possibilities were in the T̓silhqot̓in. At the time, it seemed like an opportunity and I was happy to explore the potential of solar energy. There were challenging hurdles to get this project to the point of completion, but I am happy to see that the Solar Farm is ready to offer electricity to the region and provide revenue for the T̓silhqot̓in Nation. This project is significant for our Nation because it involved all six T̓silhqot̓in communities in some way and is the first project to generate our own source of revenue for our T̓silhqot̓in organization and the community,

which is significant for our overall goal of self-sufficiency. Lastly, we are honoured to be recognized by Clean Energy BC and to receive the Community of the Year Award. ”

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