



TŜILHQOT'IN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

253 – 4th Avenue North • Williams Lake, BC V2G 4T4 • Phone (250) 392-3918 • Fax (250) 398-5798

PRESS RELEASE

Tsilhqot'in Congratulate Councilor Marilyn Baptiste as recipient of Goldman Environmental Prize

Williams Lake, BC (April 20, 2015): The Tsilhqot'in National Government today congratulated one of its own, Xeni Gwet'in Councilor and former chief Marilyn Baptiste on being awarded the 2015 Goldman Environmental Prize – the world's largest international award for grassroots environmental activism.

Councilor Baptiste is one of six winners – one from each inhabited continent – who will formally receive the prize tonight in San Francisco, and was chosen for her work in leading her community in twice defeating a massive low-grade open-pit gold mine proposal by Taseko Mines Ltd. The project would have threatened Teztan Biny (Fish Lake) and Yanah Biny (Little Fish Lake)—a source of spiritual identity and livelihood for the Tsilhqot'in Nation, in the caretaker areas of Xeni Gwet'in and Yunesit'in.

“Marilyn worked tirelessly with community and other Tsilhqot'in Chiefs to protect Tsilhqot'in lands from the Prosperity/New Prosperity projects and this prestigious award is a great encouragement to all of us,” said Xeni Gwet'in Chief Roger William, who was the named plaintiff in the historic Supreme Court of Canada decision last summer on Aboriginal Title, declaring the right of the Tsilhqot'in to full ownership, benefit and control of our land, culture and way of life.

“This is a great honor to have one of our community members and leaders acknowledged for their work. We are proud of Marilyn and we celebrate with her success,” said Chief William.

Tsilhqot'in Tribal Chair Chief Joe Alphonse said: “This reminder is very timely and helpful as, despite twice defeating the proposed Prosperity mine and following that up with a Supreme Court Ruling that for the first time declared Aboriginal title, the mine company continues grabbing at straws to force their proposal through – demonstrating poor leadership and how not to work with First Nations. This is the first time that a member from our Nation has received an international award as prestigious as this - we welcome the positive attention it brings to our Nation's ongoing efforts to protect our sacred sites.”

“We congratulate Marilyn and thank the Goldman Environmental Foundation for choosing to highlight the Tsilhqot'in Nation's fight to protect our land, culture and traditions.”

Learn More:

- The awards, which take place in San Francisco at 5:30 PDT tonight, can be watched live at: www.goldmanprize.org/ceremony
- Photos, videos, news articles about Marilyn and the Prize: www.goldmanprize.org/Marilyn
- Details of the award and winners: <http://www.goldmanprize.org/pressroom/2015-press-resources/>

Media Contact:

Myanna Desaulniers
Communication Coordinator
Tsilhqot'in National Government
778-836-0122