



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 30, 2020

NEW BC ORDER BETTER ALIGNS WITH HAIDA LAW AND HAIDA GWAII'S COVID-19 RESPONSE

Background

Haida Gwaii has taken a unique approach to the COVID-19 response and recovery plan for our isolated Islands' communities. Today, the Haida Nation is pleased that BC has aligned with our efforts to protect Haida citizens and citizens of Haida Gwaii by issuing an order to restrict non-essential travel to the Islands. BC's order better supports Haida Gwaii's COVID-19 response.

The Council of the Haida Nation has taken a primary and preventative response to COVID-19 with measures above and beyond BC's Restart Plan. With limited health care resources, historical traumas and valued Elders, our communities deserve the best protections and safeguards. Restricting movement to Haida Gwaii has been a key precautionary measure to date and BC's travel restriction order is a necessary and welcomed measure to safeguard Island communities during the current outbreak of COVID-19.

Quotes

"This global health pandemic is a test of reconciliation with the province. It's critical that we come together at this time of crisis. BC's order is an important step towards a renewed partnership in emergency management. The province's work to enact an order that aligns with the Haida Nation's State of Emergency is a respectful act and recognition of Haida jurisdiction and our responsibility as governments to work together to protect all communities and residents of Haida Gwaii from the threat of COVID-19."

-- Gaagwiis *Jason Alsop*, President of the Haida Nation

"I'm grateful to BC for this provincial order, it will help our local efforts in controlling the outbreak of COVID-19. The order will be a reset button for our local governments on Haida Gwaii to commit to working together to free us all from this virus as soon as possible."

-- William "Billy" Yovanovich, Chief Councillor of the Skidegate Band Council

"Leaders of Haida Gwaii have done all that we can to keep COVID-19 from coming to our communities. Our EOC and health teams have been preparing for this day. I'm glad to hear BC has aligned with Haida Gwaii's measures and we are all working together on this pandemic response. Keeping our Elders and communities safe is our top priority during these difficult times.

-- Donald "Duffy" Edgars, Chief Councillor of the Old Massett Village Council

Resources and related documents

- [Haida Gwaii State of Emergency](#)
- [Constitution of the Haida Nation](#)

Quick facts

- A community outbreak was declared on Haida Gwaii on July 24, 2020
- As of July 29, 2020, there have been 20 confirmed COVID-19 cases on Haida Gwaii
- Under the authority of the Constitution of the Haida Nation, the Haida Nation declared a state of emergency on March 23, 2020
- Since March 23, Haida Gwaii SOE measures have prevented non-resident travel to the Islands, which applies to all non-essential work
- Haida Gwaii leadership have been coordinating the COVID-19 response and are committed to working together on an Islands-wide recovery plan
- The provincial order is in effect for the duration of the outbreak declared by the Medical Health Officer, Northern Health
- The community outbreak is not likely to be declared over by the Medical Health Officer until there have been no new COVID-19 positive cases confirmed for 28 consecutive days on Haida Gwaii
- The Haida Gwaii State of Emergency and measures are in effect until further notice

Media inquiries

Council of the Haida Nation

Valine Brown

valine.brown@haidanation.com

250.559.4468