

NOTE

Lax Kw'alaams Hereditary Chief Yahaan (Donnie Wesley) says that this document defames him. Discourse Media has no wish to cause any further injury to Wesley, although we believe the document adds context to the subject of our story. In light of that, Wesley agreed with our decision to link to the document here.

Nine Tribes of Lax Kw'alaams set the record straight on Lelu Island Occupation

For further information call:

Michael McCarthy

(778) 554-0557

newscribe@shaw.ca

May 9, 2016, Lax Kxeen (known in English as Prince Rupert) – We the undersigned represent the Ts'msyen Chiefs, matrons, elders and hereditary leaders of the Nine Tribes of Lax Kw'alaams. Since time immemorial we have been stewards of the environment in our traditional territories. It has been with increasing alarm that we have witnessed the occupation of Lelu Island by a small radical handful of our community members –particularly when they continue to misrepresent our Tribes, falsely suggest they represent our community, and who continually mislead the public as to their powers and support.

We would like to set the record straight. **Mr. Donald Wesley is not a hereditary chief and he should cease representing himself as one.** We are mystified as to how he came to hold the hereditary title of *Yahaan* that he pretends to carry. **He does not have authority to represent our Tribes and should immediately cease and desist doing so publicly.** To our knowledge, neither he nor any other person quoted in numerous media articles relating to Lelu Island is a rightful hereditary leader who has taken their title according to our feasting protocols.

Mr. Wesley took it upon himself to occupy Lelu Island solely on his own accord and it appears without collecting all the facts. He was asked to follow our traditional protocols and involve the real hereditary leadership but has refused to do so.

However, we do understand Mr. Wesley's frustrations. Especially since the previous Mayor, Garry Reece, had carried on past secret, and extensive negotiations in relation to the project without providing hereditary leaders and community members with any information until the day before a community meeting was scheduled (members found out about the deal only after it was leaked to the press by the Band's previous legal counsel). As a result of the complete lack of openness and transparency and not duly informing the community about the project, there was great suspicion and massive opposition to it. It was subsequently surprising to many to then see the former Mayor flip flop on his support for the project (after he and his advisers initially promoted it) and pretend to community members that he was always against it.

To be clear, we do not support the action by Mr. Wesley and his small faction. Furthermore, we can and have looked after the environment in our territories for over 10,000 years. We do not appreciate Mr. Wesley inviting environmental militants and outsiders into our territory without the respect and manners dictated the protocols of our *ayaawx* (laws). We are worried about safety of everyone concerned and **respectfully request that all parties on Lelu Island leave our traditional territory immediately.**

Respectfully,

The Hereditary Leaders of the Nine Allied Tribes

Chief Nislaganoos

Randy Wudoward

Clyde Dudoward - Nisweekx

 Hymass

Sawoygit Gitxoon

Alex Campbell

Bernie Brooks A.B. JR

Jack White

Gitwilgoots - Gispaxloats
Sm'oo'ghet - Ligiut-gwa'alk

Donald Alexcee

Ronald Mather SR

Don Nis Pa Alaas

Russell Mather

Gitwilgoots New But

Nesawalp Gispaxloats Laxgigik - Russell H-Mather
Kshum-lax-axsh, Gitnadoiks Laxgibu - Doreen Mather.

List of Signatories:

Sm'oo'gyit [Chief] Ligiut-gwa'alk - Donald Alexcee—**Gitwilgyoots**

G'uin bax me dik—George Bryant - Tribal member

Sm'oo'gyit Nislaganoos— Randy Dudoward—**Gitlan**

Sm'oo'gyit Nis Weekx - Clyde Dudoward-- **Ginadoiks**

-Sigidimna'ax Kshum lax axsh - Doreen Mather

Sm'oo'gyit Nisyuganat (also Hymass)— Clifford Musgrave—**Gits'iis**

Sm'oo'gyit Nis Gitxoon— Alex Campbell—**Gispaxloats**

-Sub-Chief Nis Pa Alaas - Ronald Mather

-Sub-Chief Nis Awalp -Russell Mather Sr.

Sm'oo'gyit Nis Hut - Arnold Brooks— **Gitaxlaal**

Elder and spokesperson Ski-las -Jack White—**Gitando**