

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statement from the CVRD Chair re: National Indigenous Peoples Day

DUNCAN, BC – “Today is the national 25th anniversary of celebrating the heritage, diverse cultures and resiliency of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples in the lands we now call Canada.

Today more than ever I am thankful for the leadership of First Nations here at home and across the country. Chiefs and Councils, Elders and community members continue to guide us toward a better future of stewardship for the environment and caring for all of our people.

The last year has brought into sharp focus the need for change; the great need for more urgent and focused action on our shared journey of reconciliation; the necessity of a more sustainable path forward for our people and our planet. I am honoured to be able to work with so many amazing people in First Nations communities and am so grateful for the caring hands that continue to guide us toward a better shared future.

Today, as we celebrate the great cultural and societal contributions of Indigenous People across Canada, I am so thankful for our close connections and strong bonds. These will be needed more than ever as we move forward toward a better future. Working together as one. Naut’sa mawt.

Setting aside a day for Indigenous Peoples is part of the broader recognition of Indigenous Peoples’ important place within the fabric of Canada and an opportunity to better understand our shared history.

This year has been like no other, and yet the compassion and resiliency within the First Nation communities has been unwavering and an inspiration to us all. Now is the time to be focusing on healing and moving forward with trauma-informed reconciliation efforts. I would like to remind everyone who may be struggling that there are resources available in our communities and to reach out to one of our many local organizations if you need support.

This day is important to for all of us to honour. However, some of us may be looking to do more. Here are a few ideas to consider and share with your friends and family:

- Learn about the origin story of the First Nations People where you live, work and recreate
- Educate yourself on the 94 Calls to Action outlined by the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#)
- Read the [Indian Act](#) and books like *21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act* by Bob Joseph, to better understand the colonial policies that have impacted and continue to impact First Nation communities
- Join other Canadians in the conversation on social media:
 - Twitter: [@GCIndigenous](#) and [@GovCanNorth](#); use the hashtag #NIHM2021
 - Facebook: [GCIndigenous](#), [GovCanNorth](#) and [@GCIndigenousHealth](#)
 - Instagram: [@gcindigenous](#); use the hashtag #NIHM2021
 - [YouTube](#)

Be sure to check out National Indigenous Peoples Day virtual activities happening in your region through [Celebrate Canada!](#) For more information on First Nations, Inuit and Métis-led virtual activities, please visit:

- [Assembly of First Nations](#)
- [Métis National Council](#)
- your local [Friendship Centre](#)

As we recognize National Indigenous Peoples Day, I would encourage everyone to reflect on the land in which you are standing and acknowledge the traditional keepers of this land. We must continue our effort of being agents of change, showing the respect and dignity that the Indigenous people of these lands deserve.”

In solidarity,

Aaron Stone
CVRD Chair
Town of Ladysmith Mayor