

## MEETING SUMMARY: SKEENA NATIONS FISH FORUM ON FEB 7, 2019

*“The Skeena holds us together – it flows through our veins. We owe it to the mighty Skeena river to fight together,” - February 7 meeting participant*

### OVERVIEW

Last Thursday, February 7, 2019, nearly 20 Gitxsan Simgiigyat, as representatives of the Gitxsan Huwilp Government, gathered in Terrace to attend the Skeena Nations Chiefs Leadership and Fish Forum Meeting hosted by Kitsumkalum First Nation.

The meeting brought together multiple Skeena Nations (Kitsumkalum, Kitselas and Gitxsan) to discuss recreational fishing closures for the 2019 season as a unified response to the salmon crisis.

Wii Eelaast (James Angus)  
Niikyap (Rena Benson)  
Niist/Baskyalaha (Bill Blackwater Sr.)  
Niisgimiinuu (Robert Campbell)  
Zoak (Frank Benson)  
Xgwoimtxw (Sadie Harris)  
Gasgabaxs (Lawrence Watson)  
Simadiiks (Calvin Hyzims)  
Niis Noolth (Ray Jones)  
Xsgogimlaxha (Vernon Milton)  
Sakumhigookxw (Vernon Smith)  
Wii Muugilsxw (Art Wilson)  
Tsaulst (Amanda Zettergreen)  
Ooy'e (Clifford Sampare)  
Moloxan (Norman Moore)  
Xsimwiitsiin (Lester Moore)  
Stuutxwnlaxha (George Sampare)  
Ladaax (Marjorie Quock)  
Gwisgyen (Robin Alexander)



*Gitxsan representatives at the February 7 meeting.*



*All participants signed the resolution to move forward.*

### GITXSAN ROLE IN THE MEETING

The Gitxsan Simgiigyat together invited participation from the other Nations on the Gitxsan Crisis Management Team, an advisory group of the Gitxsan Huwilp Government.

Quotes from the Simgiigyat:

*"We are seeking support from our neighbours in closing the river this summer,"  
Sakumhiigok (V. Smith)*

*"This is a good cause, so let us be of one mind. Let's work together," Ooy'e (C. Sampare)*

*"For years we have been taking fish out of the Skeena, for thousands of years. We knew our own lands, our own territories, our own rivers. We are the salmon people... We together as nations will address what is happening to our people,"  
Molaxan (N. Moore)*

*"We have so many common problems in trying to get the river healthy. If we put our heads together, then we can find the fixes," Wii Muugilsxw (A. Wilson)*

## **OUTCOME**

Together, the Skeena Nations, in a show of solidarity and strength, voted to continue to work together for the protection of the Skeena Salmon and the Skeena Watershed, through the structure of the Skeena Nations Fish Forum Protocol.

Representatives of the Skeena Nations Chiefs may send representatives to the Crisis Management Team meeting in Gitxsan Laxyip on February 21, 2019, at 9am.



*Meeting participants voted on the resolution.*

## **NEXT STEPS**

The Skeena Nations Leadership will continue to coordinate governance over the Skeena fishery. Its next steps will be to:

1. Bring the five motions from October 11, 2018, to the next meeting (date not set), for further discussion and implementation.
2. Reaffirm the details of the Secretariat including the Chair, Co-Chair, and consider starting an advisory committee.
3. Advise the Department of Fisheries and Oceans about to the vote of February 7.

4. Exercise protocols for enforcement and support each other going forward.

## GET INVOLVED

As we work together to address the salmon crisis, there are a number of ways for Gitxsan Simgiigyats and Wilps to get involved and stay up-to-date:

1. **Attend Giigeenix (Upriver) or Gyeets (Downriver) Simgiigyats meetings:**  
Email [executiveassistant@gitxsan.ca](mailto:executiveassistant@gitxsan.ca) for details about meetings.
2. **Attend Crisis Management Team meetings:**  
The Crisis Management Team meets monthly, with the next meeting to be held on February 21, 2019, at 9am in Hazelton.
3. **Get involved online:**
  - a. Register for newsletters: <http://bit.ly/gitxsansignup>
  - b. Follow [www.facebook.com/gitxsanhuwilpgov](http://www.facebook.com/gitxsanhuwilpgov)
  - c. Ask questions or send comments to [communications@gitxsan.ca](mailto:communications@gitxsan.ca)



*Simgiigyat sign the resolution.*

