



# GIDIMT'EN CHECKPOINT

RESPECTING OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
SEPTEMBER 21, 2022**

It has been three months since we filed our lawsuit suing the RCMP and C-IRG, Minister of Justice for B.C., Coastal Gaslink Pipeline LTD., and private security contractor Forsythe for loss and damages.

**Over these three months, the RCMP have refused to respond to our lawsuit. So, our lawyers have provided legal notice that we intend to apply for a default decision against the RCMP.** Coastal GasLink and Forsythe have responded to our lawsuit, basically denying their violence and refusing to provide any justification for their constant surveillance and harassment on the Yintah.

In the colonial legal system, a lawsuit for loss or damages caused to another person or another person's property is known as a civil claim. In June 2022, Janet Williams and Lawrence Bazil on behalf of themselves, and Molly Wickham on behalf of herself as well as the Gidimt'en Clan of the Wet'suwet'en Nation filed a notice of claim in BC's Supreme Court to start the civil legal action. In this lawsuit, we are holding the RCMP and C-IRG, Minister of Justice for B.C., Coastal Gaslink, and Forsythe accountable for invading our privacy, intimidation, intentional infliction of mental distress, malicious and wilful misconduct, assault and battery, false arrest, trespass, violations of the Charter, and more.

We know that this legal system is not built for us. But because we are right and our ancestors are with us, we have won in their courts before. The authority of the Wet'suwet'en hereditary house and clan system was verified in the historic Delgamuukw and Red Top court decisions.

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Our Hereditary Chiefs have maintained their use and occupancy of their lands and hereditary governance system despite generations of colonial policies and big industries that aim to remove us from this land, assimilate our people, annihilate our culture, and ban our governing system.

We will not let the RCMP and C-IRG, B.C, Coastal GasLink, and Forsythe go unchallenged in their attempts to clear the lands for this pipeline project and their capitalist, colonial extraction. Every day, the government, industry, and police are invading our Yintah. Coastal GasLink's equipment is currently in a position to drill beneath the sacred headwaters of Wedzin Kwa.

It is the resistance of our people and our many allies that has delayed the pipeline construction for the past several years. Under 'Anuc niwh'it'en (Wet'suwet'en law) all Hereditary Chiefs of the five clans of the Wet'suwet'en have unanimously opposed all pipeline proposals and have not provided free, prior, and informed consent to Coastal Gaslink to drill on unceded and surrendered Wet'suwet'en lands. They are trying to drill under the Wedzin Kwa river, the sacred headwaters that feeds all of Wet'suwet'en territory and gives life to our nation. The pipeline, spanning 670 kilometers, will transport fracked gas to the proposed LNG Canada processing plant, which is the largest single private sector infrastructure project and one of the largest energy investments in Canadian history.

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When we rise up to defend the Yintah, we are criminalized. For many months and many years, we have face militarized raids of our village sites on the Yintah. In three large-scale police actions in January 2019, February 2020, and November 2021, a total of 74 people were arrested and detained, including legal observers and members of the media. Since February 2022, RCMP and C-IRG have entered our village sites and home sites multiples times a day - hundreds of times in total. RCMP and C-IRG have continuously harassed and intimidated our people and our guests and disrupted our cultural practices and ceremonies. This affects our rights to hunt, trap, fish, gather, and conduct ceremony on our Yintah. They have shone high beams and spotlights into our residential buildings and awakened sleeping residents. The RCMP and C-IRG have also demanded our identification and arrested us, including with the use of pepper spray. The RCMP and C-IRG have illegally seized and destroyed our Gidimt'en property. They have committed assault and battery, and prohibited and blocked our movement on our own lands.

This is a 24/7 campaign of surveillance and terror. The very creation and mandate of C-IRG in this province is to protect corporate resource and energy sectors by quashing and criminalizing Indigenous resistance. But we will never stop defending our Yintah. We live out our laws and cultural practices on our lands. Our medicines, our berries, our food, the animals, our water, our culture are all here since time immemorial. We will never allow our sovereignty to be violated.

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