



GIDIMT'EN CHECKPOINT

RESPECTING OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
JANUARY 24TH, 2023**

TFollowing Devastation of Lho Kwa (Clare River) in Likhts'amisyu (Fireweed) Clan Territory

Unceded Wet'suwet'en Yintah (so-called Smithers, BC) - Within a week of trenching Lho Kwa which prompted an investigation by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) for their disruption to salmon habitat and sedimentation, Coastal GasLink is trenching through Tsel Kiy Kwa (Lamprey Creek) where sensitive Lamprey spawning is present. We demand that all work stops until at Tsel Kiy Kwa pending a review by DFO.

Reports and complaints were made in December 2021 to the Environmental Assessment Office about blasting happening on the shores of Lamprey Creek within 800 meters of Gidimt'en Checkpoint, with a neglectful response. Now there is complete trenching while Lamprey eel are wintering.

"Pacific lamprey eggs hatch within 2 to 3 weeks into ammocoetes (larvae) (Figure+2a), which then drift downstream to areas of slow velocity and fine substrates (BC CDC, 2014; Streif, 2008). The ammocoetes burrow in fine substrates (mud, silt, sand) in shallow backwater areas along the edges of streams." (Follet 2015)

The lack of consultation with the Wet'suwet'en people who have been managing these territories for thousands of years is destroying our biodiversity. Lamprey eels are believed to supplement predator diets and assist in salmon survival.

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Sleydo states: "In early 2021 we requested a mitigation plan for the lamprey eels from CGL and have never received any information. These fish were once a staple in the Wet'suwet'en diet and an important part of our culture and existence. The fact that CGL has been blasting beside the creek and has heavy machinery in lamprey eel spawning habitat is ludicrous and a gross violation of our indigenous rights to our culture, fish, and freshwater."

CGL violates Wet'suwet'en rights and title, and lacks consent of Wet'suwet'en Hereditary chiefs, who have been resisting the project for a decade. Despite letters from the United Nation and 50 warnings from the Environmental Assessment Office CGL continues to work unchecked.

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