



**Forest Stewardship Within Pacheedaht Territory
Pacheedaht Chief & Council, Port Renfrew, BC
April 12th, 2021**

Pacheedaht First Nation holds unceded Aboriginal title and rights in our Territory, which is located on the southwest coast of Vancouver Island. We have a spiritual connection with our Territory, and our culture is based on our relationship with our lands and resources. We have inherent governance rights and sacred responsibilities to manage the human use of resources in our Territory.

Pacheedaht is concerned about the increasing polarization over forestry activities in our Territory. Decisions about the use of our forestry resources in our Territory need to be made by Pacheedaht. Pacheedaht has always harvested and managed our forestry resources, including old-growth cedar, for cultural, ceremonial, domestic and economic purposes. Our constitutional right to make decisions about forestry resources in our Territory, as a governing authority in our Territory, must be respected.

We are in the process of undertaking an Integrated Resource Stewardship Plan that will be developed by our community, for our community and will be led by our hereditary and elected leaders. Our Stewardship Plan will include the identification of special sites, traditional use areas and places where conservation measures will be in place. Given our governance rights, this Stewardship Plan must guide forestry activities in our Territory. To provide our community with the time necessary to develop our Stewardship Plan, we have secured commitments from tenure holders and the government of British Columbia to suspend and defer third-party forestry activities within specific areas identified by Pacheedaht. This will result in the implementation of an immediate interim conservation measure. We are also engaged in treaty and other government-to-government negotiations with British Columbia and Canada to recognize our Aboriginal rights, including governance rights.

Our rightful ownership and management of forest resources within our Territory need to be acknowledged. All parties need to respect that it is up to Pacheedaht people to determine how our forestry resources will be used. We do not welcome or support unsolicited involvement or interference by others in our Territory, including third-party activism. Pacheedaht needs to be left in peace to engage in our community-led stewardship planning process so that we can determine our own way forward as a strong and independent Nation.

Klecko, Klecko!

Pacheedaht Hereditary Chief

Frank Queesto Jones

Pacheedaht Chief Councillor

Jeff Jones