

MEDIA ADVISORY

SECWPEMC TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT THEIR ANCIENT BURIAL & VILLAGE SITES

CP Rail and Trans Canada Highway expansion desecrates our Secwepemc burial sites

- When: Wednesday, April 1, 2009 10:30 am
- What: Secwepemc Peoples and their allies will be conducting a roadblock to demand the halt of the Trans Canada Highway and Canadian Pacific Railway expansion.
- Where: unceded Secwepemc Territory, in between Kamloops and Chase, BC, near Pritchard, BC (about 3 km from Pritchard) Look for cars, signs and tent. Coming from Kamloops will be in the right hand side before Pritchard and coming from Chase is on the left after Pritchard, BC.
- Demands: To halt the expansion of the Trans Canada Highway and CP Railway along this highway corridor bordering the South Thompson River and Shuswap Lake because this is the home to thousands of ancient burial and village sites that must be protected.
- Background: Secwepemc ancestral remains of a Secwepemc woman (dated back 7,500 years) were found by a team of archaeologist at a site that is being threatened by CP Rail and Trans Canada Highway expansion.

On Wednesday, March 25, 2009 a meeting was held at Neskonlith Hall. On Sunday March 29, 2009 it was determined the remains were going to be placed back where they were found. A ceremony at the site was done and the Sacred fire has been lit and the protection of the site is under vigilance.

This is one of thousands of remains and artefacts that have been found by settlers and archeologists along this highway and railway corridor and valley, where Secwepemc Peoples have never given authority or permission to the Canadian and BC government to build the highway or railway, both in the past and present. The desecration must stop. Protection of the sacred burial sites is the priority here.

This site lies within unceded, unsurrendered Secwepemc Territory, where the Secwepemc Peoples of the Shuswap Lakes refuse to enter into the current BC Treaty Process for a land settlement because of the fraudulent extinguishment of Secwepemc lands and title. Instead Secwepemc Peoples choose to assert Secwepemc title and rights to the land and challenge the governments' authority over the land and resources while working on many international levels to bring attention to this.

“We will never go dig up the cemeteries in the village of Chase or Kamloops, it would be considered a hate crime against humanity. We expect the same respect.”

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