



Media Backgrounder

In 2002-2003 the provincial government unilaterally make sweeping amendments to the *Forest Act* and the legal framework for forest practices, land use planning and land designations without meaningful consultation and accommodation of Aboriginal Peoples. These changes, which give resource companies greater rights over our territories, give rise to infringements of Aboriginal Title and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.

The “Title and Rights Alliance” is a collective initiative among treaty, non-treaty and non-aligned bands and Tribal Nations from across British Columbia to:

- Prevent infringements of Aboriginal Title and Rights, and Treaty rights, arising from recent forestry, range, and land use legislative amendments that were unilaterally developed by the Province without consultation or accommodation of BC First Nations
- Use all available means to create incentives for the provincial Crown and resource industries to recognize Aboriginal Title and Rights
- Stand unified in the face of threats by the provincial Crown and resource industries to our Aboriginal Title and Rights, and Treaty rights, resisting divide-and-conquer tactics
- Hold the federal Crown accountable regarding its fiduciary obligations to Aboriginal peoples

At a meeting hosted by the Okanagan Nation Alliance in September 2003, bands and Tribal Nations from around the province developed a “Joint Statement From Participating Nations.” In the Joint Statement participating representatives pledged to work to develop and implement a coordinated and integrated Action Plan that would combine legal, financial and political strategies to protect the integrity of the land and resources and advance Aboriginal Title and Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.

In October, at a follow-up meeting hosted by the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, the Joint Statement was ratified and a coordinated Action Plan was developed and affirmed unanimously by participating representatives. A four-person steering committee consisting of Guujaaw, Grand Chief Edward John, Justa Monk, and Chief Stewart Phillip was tasked with guiding the process.

On May 19-20, 2004, the Title and Rights Alliance Spring Caravan to Victoria: Moving Forward in Unity has brought together Aboriginal Peoples from every corner of the province. Hosted by the Songhees Nation, this caravan, conference and rally sends a strong message to the provincial and federal governments, and industry that they must stop their assault on the land and deal honourably and fairly with Aboriginal Peoples.

www.titleandrightsalliance.org