



NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release
May 22, 2025

Lilwat Nation

Lilwat Nation opposes Bill 14, the Renewable Energy Projects (Streamlined Permitting) Act and Bill 15, the Infrastructure Projects Act

Mount Currie, BC – Lilwat Nation's leadership passed a motion on May 20, 2025 to issue a letter to Premier David Eby officially registering their opposition to Bill 14, the Renewable Energy Projects (Streamlined Permitting) Act and Bill 15, the Infrastructure Projects Act.

Chiefs & Council strongly believe that these bills are detrimental to the direction the Nation is moving towards. Chief Kúkwpi7 Skalúlmecw Dean Nelson said "we strongly oppose Bills 14 and 15 as they contradict everything outlined through the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the province's commitment to reconciliation. First Nations need to be included in provincial decisions like this, as the impacts will exist far beyond the term of the current government and the threat of the USA's imposed tariffs".

The laws would allow development projects to be expedited and exempt from current permitting and legislation that protect First Nations and the environment from the impacts of development projects. Lilwat Nation has concerns about rushing into projects which have a lifetime and impact that often exceeds our own lifetime and leaves our children and future generations to deal with the consequences of these decisions, whether positive or negative.

The bills would also remove First Nations participation from key decision making around project development. As many First Nations work towards economic sovereignty, the potential of being removed from the decision making and project development processes could limit their ability to participate meaningfully in economic growth while also putting pressure to cut corners. This could lead to a diminishment of title and rights for the sake of economic prosperity of others, effectively causing a continuation of colonization rather than reconciliation.

These laws have been brought forward without any consultation with First Nations which contradicts UNDRIP and DRIPA which require such consultations in the development of new laws.

A copy of the letter to Premier Eby, as well as further information on Bill 14 and Bill 15 can be found below.

Skalúlmecw
Political Chief Dean Nelson



May 15, 2025

Premier David Eby

PO Box 9041 STN Prov. Govt.

Victoria BC V8W 9E1

Via Email Only: premier@gov.bc.ca

Dear Premier Eby:

Re: Opposition to Bill 14, the *Renewable Energy Projects (Streamlined Permitting) Act* and Bill 15, the *Infrastructure Projects Act*

We write to you to directly register our opposition to Bill 14, the *Renewable Energy Projects (Streamlined Permitting) Act* and Bill 15, the *Infrastructure Projects Act*, and to express our serious alarm and concerns regarding your government's backtracking on its reconciliation efforts, specifically its commitment to substantive implementation of the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (Declaration Act).

As drafted, Bills 14 and 15 are deeply flawed.

Bill 14 would see certain projects exempted from key provincial permitting and environmental oversight legislation and grant expanded and unilateral authority to the BC Energy Regulator to make complex decisions with minimal oversight. Despite this, Bill 14 contains no framework for First Nations decision making or participation in decision making and places no obligation on your government to obtain the free, prior, and informed consent of affected First Nations. There is no consistency with the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN Declaration).

Bill 15 goes well beyond expediting the approval and development of schools and hospitals. It is apparent that Bill 15 could be used to fast-track major extractive projects and has the potential to greatly impact our inherent and Aboriginal rights, title, and jurisdiction. We are not comforted by your government's commitment to consult First Nations on the development of related regulations after Bill 15 has already been unilaterally developed and passed. That is wholly inadequate and inconsistent with the Declaration Act.

You have to follow your own law. The Declaration Act is clear: your government must take all measures necessary to ensure the laws of British Columbia are consistent with the UN Declaration in consultation and cooperation with First Nations. By shirking your obligations under the Declaration Act, and circumventing related processes and guidance set out in your own Interim Approach on the Alignment of Laws (Interim Approach), your government has all but ensured that, if passed, Bills 14 and 15 will undermine our inherent and Aboriginal rights, title, and jurisdiction. Consequently, our confidence in your government's ability to deliver on its commitment to reconciliation is eroding.

Bills 14 and 15 must be pulled back and time must be given to implement the Interim Approach – that is, to take necessary measures of consultation and cooperation – to address the concerns of First Nations around the province.



While, conceptually, we support taking appropriate action to counter outside threats to our collective economic wellbeing, such efforts must be done in partnership, and not come at the expense of the basic human rights of First Nations or sidestep your related obligations to us.

We look forward to you and your government taking prompt and appropriate action.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dean Nelson".

Skalúlmecw

Political Chief Dean Nelson

cc: Hon. Bowinn Ma, Minister for Infrastructure <INF.Minister@gov.bc.ca>

Hon. Christine Boyle, Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation <IRR.Minister@gov.bc.ca>

Hon. Randene Neill, Minister for Water, Lands and Resource Stewardship <wlrs.minister@gov.bc.ca>

Union of BC Indian Chiefs

First Nations Summit

BC Assembly of First Nations



https://www.ubcic.bc.ca/kill_the_bill_14_and_bill_15



[Kill the Bill: First Nations Call on B.C. Government to Immediately Withdraw Bill 14 and Bill 15](https://www.ubcic.bc.ca/kill_the_bill_14_and_bill_15)

Working towards the recognition, implementation and exercise of our inherent Indigenous Title, Rights and Treaty Rights

www.ubcic.bc.ca

<https://thenarwhal.ca/bc-bill-15-controversy-explained/>



[B.C.'s controversial Bill 15, explained | The Narwhal](https://thenarwhal.ca/bc-bill-15-controversy-explained/)

Premier David Eby says Bill 15 will help B.C. become "the economic engine of the new Canada that we all know we need." Critics say the bill risks running roughshod over Indigenous Rights and environmental protections.

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