



Gitga'at First Nation

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MEDIA ADVISORY

ATTENTION ASSIGNMENT EDITORS

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For Immediate release.

B.C. POLITICIAN DEMANDS INQUIRY INTO QUEEN OF THE NORTH "GIVE GITGA'AT CLOSURE"

The Gitga'at of Hartley Bay, BC, in the heart of the Great Bear Rainforest, have a found a friend in Gary Coons. The MLA for the riding of North Coast has marked a tragic anniversary with a call for a full and thorough public inquiry into the sunken Queen of the North.

In a statement to the Legislature Coons said, "those in Hartley Bay are still dealing with the upwelling of diesel and the impacts on their harvesting grounds. Eight times in the final report of the Transportation Safety Board it said that B.C. Ferry Service's actions placed the vessel, its passengers and crew at risk".

The Gitga'at will be at risk as long as the wreck continues to deteriorate and release its dangerous remains. Hydrocarbons continue to foul the area. Asbestos, lead, mercury and other toxins lurk in one of largest remaining areas of unspoiled temperate rainforests in the world.

The Gitga'at have co-existed sustainably in the Great Bear Rainforest for centuries and they are bound by their laws and traditions to preserve their territory for future generations. They cannot execute their sacred duty while the Queen of the North remains in her current state.

British Columbia Ferry Service President David Hanh promised to restore Gitga'at territory to its pristine condition, but has failed to make good. The Ferry Service has settled many lawsuits related to the Queen of the North, but since they have done so out of court, details and testimony are secret.

The Gitga'at support the 'full and thorough' public inquiry demanded by MLA Coons and desperately hope for the "closure" Coons says they are due.

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For more information about the Gitga'at – www.gitgaat.net

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