

*Gitanyow Huwilp*  
*Consensus Decision Record -*

*Gitanyow Aks Ayookw*

Consensus Record No: 07042023

Date: July 4, 2023

Time: 12PM

No. Of Wilp Represented: 6

Location: Best Western Inn, Terrace, BC

*Whereas:*

1. The Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs, on behalf of the Gitanyow Huwilp entered into a water planning and policy development process in 2017 to build upon the water protection areas in the *Gitanyow Lax'yip Land Use Plan*;
2. The Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs have exclusive, unceded and defended rights and title to the water bodies within the Gitanyow Lax'yip including, rivers, creeks, lakes, wetlands, groundwater, glaciers and ice fields;
3. The *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* Articles 18, 24, 25, 26, 29, 32, affirm Gitanyow's rights to decision-making and free, prior and informed consent regarding matters related to waters contained within the territories of the 8 Gitanyow Wilp;
4. The Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs on behalf of the Gitanyow Huwilp signed the *Gitanyow Lax'yip Land Use Plan* in 2012, 2016 and 2021 with the provincial government represented by the appropriate and responsible Ministers;
5. The *Gitanyow Lax'yip Land Use Plan* is intended to be adaptive in nature and includes water protection zones called Water Management Units and Ecosystem Networks and Buffers and Management Direction for Equivalent Clearcut Area (ECA) Thresholds for Watersheds;
6. Climate change impacts are being experienced globally, and specifically in the Gitanyow Lax'yip including reduced snow pack in winter, drier and hotter summers resulting in intermittent drought conditions, and increased risk of wildfire;

7. Fresh water is a global resource that will be increasingly in demand due to climate change and has been commodified in other jurisdictions;
8. Some mining development upstream of Gitanyow Lax'yip in the Tahltan and other territories has the potential to cause downstream impacts in the Nass Watershed within the Gitanyow Lax'yip;
9. While forestry impacts to the Lax'yip are currently managed through the *Gitanyow Lax'yip Land Use Plan*, cumulative impacts from other activities may contribute to overall sediment and other erosional material in Gitanyow waters.

*Therefore, be it resolved that:*

1. The Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs endorse the *Gitanyow Aks Ayookxw (Water Policy)* for a term of no less than 12 months from the date below as a Pilot for review and initial implementation;
2. The Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs instruct their staff and contractors to distribute the *Aks Ayookw* for review and feedback to the following:
  - a. Gitanyow Huwilp members
  - b. Gitanyow partners, businesses, and those reliant on the Lax'yip for livelihood
  - c. Provincial, federal, and local governments
  - d. Neighboring First Nations, connected through the Nass and Skeena Watersheds
  - e. Proponents who may seek to operate in the Lax'yip;
3. Gitanyow staff and contractors will compile any feedback on the *Aks Ayookxw* and report back to the Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs between July and August 2024;
4. Gitanyow staff and contractors will conduct trial implementation throughout the 12 months of the Pilot and will compile relevant feedback on any implementation challenges or other learnings prior to final implementation;

Approved this 4th day of July 2023 by:

Chiefs in attendance:

Iwennu - *Shyllis Hayes*

Axwindesxw - *Tom*

Luu x How.

*Dr Russell Sr.*

RANDY WILLIAMS

*Andy Pini*

*Haijmsxw*

*Verna Howard*

*Ngilub*

*Wil Marsden*