



**Media Advisory, April 28, 2022**

## **Court Battle; First Nations vs the Trans Mountain Expansion Pipeline, Enters its 2nd Day**

**Secwepemc Hereditary Chief, 3 Matriarchs and Allies in Supreme Court today facing 30 days in jail demanding Secwepemc Law be respected on Secwepemc land**

Unceded Secwepemc Territory/KAMLOOPS - On Thursday at 10:00 AM PST, Eight Land Defenders are facing trial at the BC Supreme Court for having blocked work on the Trans Mountain Expansion Pipeline

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**WHAT:** Trial of Eight land defenders including Hereditary chief Sawses (Secwepemc) along with 3 matriarchs and 4 settler allies, Justice Shelley Fitzpatrick presiding enters it's second day. Today, the Crown Prosecutor will respond to the applications from the Trial of Eight. The Secwepemc Nation has made application that states, that this trial violates Secwepemc Law on Secwepemc Land. Also the application calls for a stay of all charges on the grounds that Judge Afleck in 2018 granted an injunction without the free and prior informed consent of all indigenous nations whose territory the proposed pipeline traverses, as per the Canadian Gov't obligation under UNDRIP and DRIPA. Further the application is made under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom.

**WHEN:** Wednesday April 27th 2022, 10:00AM

**WHERE:** Courthouse - 455 Columbia St. Kamloops, BC, V2C 6K4

**WHY:** In October 2020, the eight land defenders were arrested and charged for blocking work on traditional Secwepemc territory where an alleged construction site of Transmountain pipeline expansion corporation (TMX) was taking place, aiming to drill under the Thomson River. The current Transmountain pipeline has reported 81 spills in the last 60 years. Such a track record speaks to the high risk of spills with the upcoming proposed pipeline. Spills often reach hundreds of thousands liters in volume which would cause unimaginable damage to the Thompson River, which originally was the largest salmon bearing river in the world, before the current damages due to colonization, logging mismanagement and climate breakdown.

Salmon populations, keystone species which underpin the entire ecosystem here and downstream to the Salish Sea, are greatly vulnerable to such spills and are currently facing the prospect of extinction. As Secwepemc people and allies, they follow Rule of Law and stand up to protect the Sacred Life on Secwepemc Territory from annihilation by the Canadian resource extractivist regime, in a worsening federally declared climate and ecological emergency. The Secwepemc Eight were arrested upholding Secwepemc Traditional Law with its inherent responsibility to Duty of Care to protect the water, salmon and all Life. They will challenge the jurisdiction of the colonial justice system as a Sovereign Nation with Sovereign Law on their unceded, unsurrendered and unrelinquished land. Spokesperson for the group, April Thomas will be presenting their notice of application for a complete stay of charges.