



Treaty 6, 7 and 8 Elders Mission Statements

Introduction

The Chiefs Steering Committee on Technical Services have convened a series of working groups in support of the work to respond and prepare for the impacts of Bill C-61, an Act respecting water, source water, wastewater and related infrastructure in First Nations or the First Nations Clean Water Act which was introduced in Canada's House of Commons on December 11, 2023. The Elders Advisory Working Group provides guidance and support to the CSC on Technical Services. The CSC is also assessing the impact of the *ISC Act 2019* as part of its ongoing work.

In follow-up to the first meeting of the Treaty Bilateral Table on Water held on September 9, 2024, the Elders Advisory Working Group and Chiefs Steering Committee agreed that it was important to develop mission statements for the Chiefs in Treaty 6, 7 and 8 in their review and response to the CSC advocacy activities and Government of Canada objectives, on water and related issues impacting Treaty First Nations.

The following statements have been prepared by the Chiefs Steering Committee on Technical Services, Elders Advisory Working Group and other invited elders and knowledge keepers for the Chiefs in Treaty No. 6, No. 7 and No. 8. The intention is to respectfully guide their work on Treaty Protection at the Assembly of Treaty Chiefs in Treaty 6 territory at the Edmonton Doubletree Hotel.

Mission Statements

Treaty Protection

Treaty First Nations leaders must continue the important work of Treaty Protection, which is to take actions on matters that will affect the rights and responsibilities of Treaty First Nations peoples through any and all means available to them and must include ceremony and participating in the spiritual aspects of protecting our collective way of life.

Treaty Protection must be prioritized and re-affirmed by Treaty leaders by raising Treaty importance through establishing Treaties amongst those tribes that still want Treaty to be formally recognized and actively utilized for today and those generations of Treaty peoples yet to come.

Treaty First Nations leaders cannot and must not rely on outside entities such as the Assembly of First Nations to protect our Treaties because the AFN has become used by the Government of Canada to move the Federal objectives.

Treaty First Nations must focus on educating and transferring knowledge about Treaty rights and responsibilities to ensure there is ongoing understanding generation after generation.

Treaty First Nations leaders must ensure that laws and policies that align with our Treaty relationship with the Crown are part of the response to the Government of Canada actions.



Treaty Preservation

Treaty First Nations leaders have a sacred responsibility which flows from the Inherent right of self-determination as given to them by the Creator. Treaty First Nations leaders must recognize that no other government can give them an Inherent right.

Treaty First Nations leaders must preserve the rights and responsibilities of Cree, Dene, Blackfoot, Beaver, Saulteaux, Nakoda, Sioux and all tribal relations under Treaty, maintaining and sustaining those rights for the next generations of the First peoples.

Treaty First Nations leaders must communicate with their grassroots peoples, regardless of where they live about the impacts and issues that are affecting their rights so to ensure their free, prior and informed consent on matters that will affect their way of living as Cree, Dene, Blackfoot, Beaver, Saulteaux, Nakoda, Sioux and all tribal peoples.

Treaty First Nations leaders must ensure the lands and resources, including water, are preserved and protected as understood at the time of Treaty making. Water is not written in an express way in any numbered Treaty, therefore, remains in the domain of the Cree, Dene, Blackfoot, Beaver, Saulteaux, Nakoda, Sioux as kin (relations) and stewardship.

Lands, Water and Health/Wellbeing

Treaty First Nations leaders must find the means to raise the impacts on Treaty way of life that includes international mechanisms that will support the continuation and preservation of the sacred agreements made with the pipe at the time of Treaty making.

Treaty First Nations leaders must promote the understanding that our territories, is all of our territories and not just the use and benefit, reserved lands.

Treaty First Nations leaders must demonstrate they respect the role of women as life-givers and their support to leaders at the time of Treaty through ceremony and guidance. Treaty First Nations leaders must open the door for women to returning to their proper place at the governance table outside of the colonial view of governance processes.

Treaty First Nations leaders must use the sacred and natural laws to guide their decision-making in line with seasons and Cree, Dene, Blackfoot, Beaver, Saulteaux, Nakoda, Sioux worldview and sovereignty.

Treaty First Nations leaders must reclaim our Treaties true spirit and intent in their dealings with federal and provincial governments by speaking for the people in ways that supports their rights and meets the actual needs as agreed to under Treaty making.