

January

Monthly Focus

Literacy Month: Hul'q'imi'num Language

Musqueam DECLARATION

We, the Musqueam people openly and publicly declare and affirm that we hold aboriginal title to our land and aboriginal rights to exercise use of our land, the sea and fresh waters, and all their resources within that territory occupied and used by our ancestors, namely:

The lands, lakes and streams defined and included by a line commencing at Harvey Creek in Howe Sound and proceeding Eastward to the height of land and continuing on the height of land around the entire watershed draining into English Bay, Bernard Inlet and Indian Arm; South along the height of land between Coquitlam River and Brannette River to the Fraser River, across to the South or left bank of the Fraser River and proceeding downstream taking on the left Bank of the main stream and the South Arm to the sea, including all those intervening lands, islands and waters both along the sea shore to Harvey Creek, AND the sea, its reefs, flats, tidal lands and islands adjacent to the above described land and out to the centre of George Strait. (These lands and waters are described on the map accompanying this declaration.)

We, the Musqueam people, are members of the Musqueam Indian Band and persons of one quarter Musqueam Indian Ancestry descended from those Musqueam/Seam/Spokane people who from time immemorial occupied, used and gained their livelihood from these lands, waters and seas as described above.

Our ancestors aboriginal right and our aboriginal right is to live upon and treat over our aboriginal lands, sea and waters without foreign control or restriction to utilize, trade and consume all the resources and products of those lands, waters and seas. It is our right to govern ourselves and our communities to uphold and determine our own customs, beliefs and laws.

Neither we nor our ancestors have ever given up, relinquished or diminished our aboriginal rights and title by treaty or agreement with any foreign government or power. We have never considered the bits of land called Indian Reserves as compensation for our lost rights and cannot consider them as adequate compensation.

We have never accepted or agreed to the right of governments of Canada or British Columbia, or their agents, to tell us how to run our own affairs or determine how we should live our lives.

We, the Musqueam people, hereby declare our intent to exercise our aboriginal rights, to return to our own and sufficient traditional resources to enable us and our descendants to live as distinct and independent people in our own land.

We announce our intent to obtain compensation for loss of resources and benefit of their seas, where these have been destroyed or exploited by others, or where they cannot be restored.

We announce our intent to establish control of our own communities and our own resources in order to control, determine and guarantee our future.

This is our aboriginal right and a basic, universal human right.

Musqueam Indian Band
Vancouver, British Columbia

Dated: Vancouver
June 21st 1975

Chief Albert Smith

Paul Brannette

John D. Smith

John D. Smith

John D. Smith

John D. Smith

Image Credit: <http://www2.moa.ubc.ca/musqueamteachingkit/history.php>

Whiteside's Truth and Reconciliation newsletter

This month's newsletter features two videos and a website. The videos will give you some examples of Hul'q'imi'num language and an example of a language revitalization project in the city of Duncan. The website is from the local Musqueam First Nation. We hope that these resources will inspire you to learn more about the languages and peoples of this place.

Bonus resource from the Museum of Anthropology:

<http://www2.moa.ubc.ca/musqueamteachingkit/>

Resource #1

Basic Hul'q'imi'num Greetings

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8M71tBLB8TU>

Jared Qwustenuxun Williams demonstrates the pronunciation of several basic greetings in Hul'q'imi'num (3m).

Resource #2

Hul'q'imi'num Signage Project

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oCPy0p5d3S0>

Members of the community of Duncan discuss the language revitalization project as well as reconciliation. There is also a part 2 for this video. (10m30s).

Resource #3

Musqueam: Our Story

<https://www.musqueam.bc.ca/our-story/>

This website gives an overview of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam) people. It includes Hul'q'imi'num vocabulary and links to other resources on their website.