DRAFT — DO NOT PUBLISH YET

Tahltan’s 11% B.C. claim: what is territory, what is transfer, and who is getting paid?

NewsForBC Draft 2 for approval — prepared Aug. 11, 2026; updated with subagent findings on official vote materials and agreement timeline

Working deck: A social graphic says the Tahltan Central Government “claims 11% of British Columbia.” The number is real, but the wording needs precision: 95,933 km² is the publicly stated size of Tahltan Territory, not a completed transfer of 11% of the province. The harder accountability questions are about the agreements B.C. has already signed, the phrase “agreed-to lands,” revenue sharing, mine consent power, and the $10,000-per-eligible-member Eskay Creek vote controversy.

Status: draft only. Do not publish until approved. Draft 2 corrects the payment timing: the $10,000 Eskay Creek payment was announced/promised before the vote but official materials place payment in 2026 after/if the IBA was ratified and implemented; this draft does not state that members were actually paid before voting.

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1. The short answer

The viral graphic is partly right and partly sloppy.

The **11% figure is real**. Tahltan Central Government’s own “Our Territory” page says:

> “Tahltan Territory is 95,933 km² or the equivalent of 11% of British Columbia.”

B.C. government releases repeat the same figure and say Tahltan Territory includes about 70% of B.C.’s Golden Triangle.

But the graphic’s implied leap — that B.C. is simply transferring 11% of the province — is **not proven by the records reviewed**.

The real document trail says something more specific and still politically significant: B.C. and Tahltan have signed agreements outside the treaty process that include shared/consent-based decision-making, a co-designed land-use plan, fiscal/revenue-sharing language, and future “identification and negotiation of the transfer of agreed-to lands to Tahltan” with processes to add agreed-to lands to reserve.

That is not nothing. It is a major restructuring of land and resource governance in one of B.C.’s richest mining regions. But “traditional territory / asserted title area” is not the same legal category as “reserve land,” “fee-simple land,” “Crown land transferred,” or “11% of B.C. handed over.”

NewsForBC’s bottom line:

> The public deserves a plain ledger: what lands are being discussed, how many hectares, what legal category, what fiscal effect, what revenue-sharing formula, what voting safeguards, and which public officials signed off.

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2. Population: how many people are we talking about?

There are two different population numbers in the source trail.

First, the **federal Indian Act band profiles**:

Group	Federal band number	Total registered	On own reserve	On other reserves	Off reserve
Tahltan Band	682	2,273	297	41	1,935
Iskut Band	683	825	339	45	441
Combined	—	**3,098**	**636**	**86**	**2,376**

Second, the **Tahltan Central Government** says it represents approximately **5,000 Tahltan members** living on and off reserve. That is a broader Nation/governance number and should not be confused with the two-band federal registered-population total.

Using B.C. Stats' latest annual B.C. population estimate located in this check — **5,698,430 as of July 1, 2025** — the ratios are:

Count	People	Share of B.C. population
Combined federal registered Tahltan + Iskut	3,098	0.0544%
TCG "about 5,000" member figure	5,000	0.0877%
Combined registered on own reserve	636	0.0112%
Combined registered on any reserve	722	0.0127%

By area, Tahltan Territory is much larger:

Area comparison	Result
Tahltan Territory	95,933 km²
As share of B.C. total area using 944,735 km²	10.15%
As share of StatCan B.C. land area using 920,686.55 km²	10.42%
Public rounded figure used by Tahltan/B.C.	11%

The accountability question is obvious: a group that represents roughly **0.05% to 0.09% of B.C.'s population**, and roughly **0.011% of B.C.'s population living on its own reserves**, is at the centre of consent, revenue, land-use and future land-transfer negotiations across a territory publicly described as **11% of B.C.**

That ratio does not decide rights or title. It does demand transparency.

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3. Who is in charge?

The structure is layered.

The **Tahltan Central Government (TCG)** describes itself as the central administrative governing body of the Tahltan Nation. The **Iskut Band** and **Tahltan Band** continue to govern Indian Act matters, but they have endorsed TCG as representative government for inherent Aboriginal title and rights.

TCG's public materials and recent public/social excerpts identify a **Tahltan Leadership Council** including:

- **Kerry Carlick** — President, Tahltan Central Government.
- **Kimberley S. Marion / Kim Marion** — Vice President.
- **Carol Danielson** — Secretary-Treasurer.
- **Marie Quock** — Chief, Iskut Band.
- **Feddie Louie** — Deputy Chief / Iskut leadership figure in current public context; listed as councillor in Iskut 2024–25 remuneration schedule for two months.
- **Rocky Jackson** — identified in TCG public update as Chief.

Historic/financial-period leadership differs because schedules cover fiscal years. Tahltan Band's 2024–25 remuneration schedule lists **Carmen McPhee** as Chief for nine months and **Richard Jackson** as Chief for three months.

The board structure described by TCG: one representative from each of ten Tahltan families, plus an executive elected for two-year terms at the annual general assembly.

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4. What do leaders get paid?

The TCG financial statements page appears to be members-only/confidential. NewsForBC should not claim a TCG executive salary number unless a public statement is found.

But the two Indian Act bands have public remuneration schedules.

Tahltan Band — year ended March 31, 2025

Name	Position	Months	Remuneration	Expenses
Carmen McPhee	Chief	9	$125,285	$7,246
Richard Jackson	Chief	3	$24,792	$3,538
Brian Quock Jr.	Councillor	12	$49,049	$13,356
Lorraine Callbreath	Councillor	12	$23,400	$2,279
Shannon Frank	Councillor	12	$16,500	$4,117
Dennis Quock	Councillor	12	$38,137	$12,756
Scott Hawkins	Councillor	12	$17,500	$12,969
Margaret Frank	Councillor	3	$22,899	$3,496

Source: Tahltan Band Consolidated Schedule of Remuneration and Expenses, year ended March 31, 2025, prepared under the First Nations Financial Transparency Act.

Iskut Band — year ended March 31, 2025

Name	Position	Months	Salary	Honoraria	Expenses
Marie Quock	Chief	12	$108,400	—	$25,960
John P. Nole	Councillor	12	—	$19,050	$20,099
Quentin Nole	Councillor	12	—	$14,000	$20,345
Feddie Louie	Councillor	2	—	$2,450	$5,635
Richard Louie	Councillor	8	—	$3,850	$4,929
Clayton Burger	Councillor	12	—	$10,800	$28,908
Andrea Louie	Councillor	12	—	$18,550	$17,654

The Iskut note says councillors are not paid a salary for their council positions except the Chief; honoraria are for council roles, while salaries earned by councillors are tied to employment positions within Iskut Band Council.

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5. The agreements: what B.C. has already signed

The B.C. government's Tahltan page, last updated Feb. 5, 2026, says provincial negotiators are talking with TCG **outside the treaty process**. It lists completed agreements including:

- 2011 Government-to-Government and Northwest Transmission Line Negotiation Framework Agreement.
- 2013 Tahltan Central Government Shared Decision-making Agreement.
- 2014 clean-energy revenue sharing agreements: Forrest Kerr, McLymont Creek and Volcano Creek.
- 2017 Government-to-Government Red Chris Mine Management Agreement.
- 2018 Brucejack Gold Mine Revenue Sharing Agreement.
- 2019 Klappan Plan and related management board terms.
- 2020 Tahltan Nation Consolidated Shared Prosperity Agreement, amended July 28, 2021.
- 2022 Tahltan Central Government Wildlife Accord.
- 2022 Declaration Act Consent Decision-Making Agreement for Eskay Creek.
- 2023 Declaration Act Consent Decision-Making Agreement for Red Chris.
- 2026 Tahltan Central Government Mineral Tax Revenue Sharing Agreement.

That list alone justifies an accountability story. These are not rumours. They are B.C. government-listed agreements that reshape how resources are managed in Tahltan Territory.

The subagent agreement review also found the legal mechanism for the Eskay/Red Chris consent process: **Declaration Act section 7** combined with **Environmental Assessment Act section 7(b)** for consent-based decision-making on specific projects/consent areas. That mechanism is project-specific. It is not, by itself, a transfer of the entire 95,933 km² traditional territory.

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6. The phrase "transfer of agreed-to lands"

The key phrase in the social graphic appears to come from the **Consolidated Shared Prosperity Agreement**, not the Eskay Creek or Red Chris consent agreements.

That matters. The consent agreements give Tahltan a consent role for specific project decisions inside defined project/consent areas. The Shared Prosperity Agreement is the broader document that talks about future Foundation Agreement negotiations, land-use planning, fiscal relationships, and possible land transfers.

The agreement says future Foundation Agreement work may include:

> "identification and negotiation of lands in the Dease Lake, Iskut and Telegraph Creek areas for transfer to Tahltan"

and also:

> "identification and negotiation of the transfer of agreed-to lands to Tahltan and the establishment of conditions and processes with Canada to add agreed-to lands to reserve lands."

That wording is serious. It is also narrower than "11% of B.C. is being transferred." It points to future negotiated lands in/near the three communities and to processes that may involve Canada if lands are to be added to reserve.

The same section also refers to:

- recognition of TCG as governing body;
- support for a Tahltan constitution and governing bodies;
- recognition of Tahltan title and rights;
- an improved fiscal relationship, including sharing of revenue streams;
- socio-cultural priorities, infrastructure, health, education, employment and training;
- shared and consent-based decision-making;
- increasing regulatory efficiency, especially in mining;
- issuance of agreed-to natural resource and other tenures.

That is where the story should focus. B.C. should publish a plain-language public ledger answering:

1. What specific Dease Lake, Iskut and Telegraph Creek lands are being discussed?
2. How many hectares?
3. Are they Crown lands, fee-simple lands, reserve additions, conservation lands, tenures, or something else?
4. What has already transferred, if anything?
5. What compensation/fiscal settlement is contemplated?
6. What public revenue streams are shared, and under what formula?
7. What rights do ordinary British Columbians retain for access, roads, hunting, fishing, claims, tenures and public review?
8. How does the public tell the difference between territory, title claim, land-use plan, tenures, reserve additions and actual ownership transfers?

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7. The NDP / B.C. government players

This file spans several NDP governments and ministers.

John Horgan era

- **John Horgan**, Premier: quoted in 2021 and 2022 releases supporting Tahltan/B.C. agreements and reconciliation.
- **Murray Rankin**, Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation: led/announced Declaration Act and consent-based decision-making work.
- **George Heyman**, Environment Minister: supported the consent agreement/environmental assessment process.
- **Josie Osborne**, Minister of Land, Water and Resource Stewardship: described the agreement as a new milestone for collective stewardship and resource-management change.
- **Bruce Ralston**, Mines/Energy Minister: framed shared decision-making as creating land-use certainty and shared prosperity.
- **Nathan Cullen**, MLA for Stikine and Minister of State for Lands and Natural Resource Operations: supported SPA as key for land-use predictability and regional economic future.
- **Katrine Conroy**, then Forests/Lands/Natural Resource Operations minister: supported the government-to-government land/resource relationship.

David Eby era

The file continues under Premier **David Eby**. BIV/Canadian Press reported in February 2025 that Eby's government released an initial list of 18 mining and energy projects worth roughly **$20 billion** to accelerate in response to U.S. tariff threats. The list included **Eskay Creek** and **Red Chris expansion**, both in Tahltan territory.

This creates a tension: the same government is trying to accelerate critical minerals while also placing key projects inside consent-based decision-making and revenue/land-use frameworks with TCG.

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8. Public money located so far

This draft does not yet claim a complete taxpayer total. It identifies a minimum public-money trail from official sources:

Item	Amount	Source / note
Shared Prosperity Agreement provincial funding	$20,000,000	$16M economic self-determination + $4M implementation capacity
Dease Lake Airport StrongerBC funding	$9,000,000	Airport upgrades for health/emergency/mining access
Dease Lake Airport 2024 BCAAP funding	$918,652	perimeter fencing / pathway project
Future/revenue-sharing streams	not totalled here	B.C. page lists clean energy revenue sharing, Brucejack, mineral tax revenue sharing, Red Chris, etc.; formulas/amounts require separate extraction

The public-interest point is not that every dollar is improper. Airports, medevac, and northern infrastructure serve real people and industry. The issue is that the full ledger of government payments, resource revenue sharing, land transfers, tax effects, private IBA payments and public-service commitments is scattered across releases, PDFs and agreement pages — not presented as one plain public account.

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9. The $10,000 Eskay Creek vote controversy

This is the strongest “dirty” part of the story, but it must be worded carefully.

Business in Vancouver reported Nov. 27, 2025, that questions were being raised inside the Tahltan Nation after **$10,000 was offered to each member ahead of a critical vote** on the Eskay Creek mine’s Impact Benefit Agreement.

The subagent review found official Tahltan vote materials that sharpen the timeline:

- The project was **Eskay Creek Revitalization Project / Eskay Creek Gold-Silver Project**, operated by Skeena Resources / Skeena Gold + Silver through Eskay Creek Mining Ltd.
- The key vote was the **Dec. 13–14, 2025 Tahltan Nation referendum** on the Eskay Creek Impact Benefit Agreement.
- TCG’s November 2025 member letter said the IBA included a **$40,000,000 upfront payment** intended for one-time direct payments to individual Tahltans, anticipated at **approximately $10,000 per eligible individual**, to be paid in the **2026 calendar year**.
- The official referendum question asked whether members supported TCG, Iskut Band and Tahltan Band entering into the proposed IBA with Eskay Creek Mining Ltd.
- Eligible adult members could vote by in-person, remote electronic or telephone methods through Intelivote.
- Full IBA review was restricted: members could review hard copies at designated offices, with confidentiality procedures and limits on phones/recording devices.
- A later June 2026 distribution policy said the $40M received from the IBA would fund **$10,000** payments to each eligible person, with target payment dates in 2026.

The key facts from BIV / Times Colonist / Skeena / CJNY / official TCG materials:

- Project: **Eskay Creek Revitalization Project**, Skeena Resources / Eskay Creek Mining Ltd.
- Agreement: Impact Benefit Agreement / IBA.
- Claimed long-term benefit package: **$1.2B in cash + $570M in contracts/wages**, commonly described as **$1.7B**.
- Upfront payment: **$40M** negotiated; intended to fund **$10,000 payments to eligible individuals**.
- Payment timing: **announced/promised before the vote; official materials place actual payment in 2026 after/if the IBA was ratified and implemented**.
- Critics: some Tahltan members described timing as an inducement or “hush money.”
- TCG response: said it negotiated the $10,000 payments in response to direct feedback from members and said it had provided documents/meetings.
- Company response: Skeena said distribution of benefits was up to TCG.
- Vote: Dec. 13–14, 2025.
- Result: **77.4% yes** among participating voters.
- Ballots cast: **1,753**.
- Yes: **1,357**.
- No: **388**.
- Spoiled/rejected/cancelled: **8**.
- Turnout: Times Colonist reported **53.3%** of eligible voters.

Publishable conclusion:

> The vote passed. The payment was not hidden. But the timing created a serious governance and legitimacy problem: a $10,000 payment promise tied to a $1.7B benefit package was put in front of eligible members before a vote on the mine agreement. Some members saw that as overdue sharing of benefits; others saw it as a pressure tactic. Either way, the public and Tahltan members deserve stronger disclosure rules when consent votes are tied to large resource projects.

Do **not** say a court has found the vote rigged. No such court finding was located in this check. Also do **not** say members were actually paid before voting; the stronger source trail says the payment was promised/announced before the vote and paid/payable in 2026 after ratification/implementation.

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10. Conflicts and private benefit questions

BIV also reported member concerns about whether some TCG-connected business interests benefit from mine-related contracts.

The most specific example in the checked source trail:

- BIV reported that at least four firms — including **Sal’s Ironworks**, **Kica Contracting Ltd.**, and two other Kica-affiliated companies — were founded by TCG vice-president **Kimberley Marion** and her husband **Calvin Marion**.
- BIV reported a 2025 Business Elite Canada brochure said Kica serves four mine sites including Skeena Resources at Eskay Creek.
- Marion reportedly deferred conflict questions to TCG.
- TCG reportedly said any director in a conflict is required to declare it and recuse, and that those requirements were followed.

Publishable wording:

> This is not proof of misconduct. It is a disclosure problem. When a Nation government has consent power over a mine, when leaders or family-linked companies may hold mine-related contracts, and when members are voting on a $1.7B benefit package, the public record should make recusals, affidavits, business interests and procurement rules easy to inspect.

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11. Environmental and cross-border risks

BIV's source trail adds that the Eskay Creek project is expected to require storage of **160 million tonnes** of potentially acid-generating waste rock in a tailings pond. It also reported concerns about long-term water treatment and transboundary watershed impacts, including Unuk River concerns and Alaskan tribal litigation.

TCG told BIV its technical team applied the Tahltan 1987 natural-resource policy through a rigorous review and that the conditions exceed comparable provincial or federal standards.

NewsForBC should treat this as a verified dispute, not as one settled fact:

- mine benefits: very large;
- environmental concerns: documented in assessment/comment processes;
- TCG position: strong conditions and oversight;
- critics' position: not enough objective analysis and long-term water-risk concerns.

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12. What the story should demand

This investigation should not be framed as "Tahltan bad." It should be framed as **B.C. government transparency failure plus consent-vote governance risk**.

The hard questions:

1. How many hectares of "agreed-to lands" are being negotiated?
2. Are any lands already identified? Where are the maps?
3. What legal category will those lands have?
4. What lands could be added to reserve?
5. What public access remains?
6. What revenue streams are already being shared?
7. How much has B.C. paid under the SPA, Dease Lake Airport, conservation, clean energy, Brucejack, mineral-tax and other agreements?
8. What is the total public/private benefits ledger for TCG, Tahltan Band, Iskut Band, TNDC and affiliated companies?
9. What conflict-of-interest disclosures apply to TCG directors whose companies do work connected to mines being consented to?
10. What vote rules apply when members are offered direct payments before resource-consent votes?
11. Why are these agreements outside the treaty process not presented in one public dashboard?

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13. Draft headline options

1. **Tahltan’s 11% B.C. claim: territory, consent power and the missing public ledger**
2. **A Nation of 3,098 registered members, a territory the size of 11% of B.C., and the deals the public barely sees**
3. **The $10,000 vote and the 11% map: inside B.C.’s Tahltan land-and-mining deal trail**
4. **Before B.C. transfers “agreed-to lands,” taxpayers deserve a Tahltan ledger**

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14. Evidence label table

Claim	Label	Note
Tahltan Territory is 95,933 km^2 / 11% of B.C.	Confirmed as official public claim	TCG and B.C. use this wording
B.C. has transferred 11% of the province	Not established	The record shows territory/title claim language and future “agreed-to lands” negotiation, not completed 11% transfer
TCG represents about 5,000 members	Supported by TCG	Broader than federal two-band registered total
Tahltan + Iskut registered population is 3,098	Confirmed by ISC profiles	July 2026 pages, bands 682 and 683
Only 636 registered people live on own reserve	Confirmed by ISC profiles	Narrow federal category; not a rights/title test
B.C. gave $20M under SPA	Confirmed by B.C. release	$16M economic self-determination + $4M capacity
B.C. gave $9M for Dease Lake airport upgrades	Confirmed by B.C. release	Infrastructure also supports health/emergency/mining access
$10,000 payments were announced/offered before Eskay vote	Official TCG materials + BIV/Times Colonist/CBC; payable in 2026 after/if ratified	Timing raised member concern; no court finding of rigging located; do not claim pre-vote payment was actually made
Eskay IBA vote passed 77.4% yes	Confirmed by CJNY/Skeena/results reporting	1,357 yes, 388 no, 1,753 ballots, 8 spoiled/rejected/cancelled
Leaders or related companies improperly profited	Not proven	BIV reported conflict concerns; TCG said policies/recusals followed

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15. Draft conclusion

The social graphic is blunt, but it points at a real democratic problem.

British Columbians should not have to stitch together a 95,933 km^2 territorial claim, a 2020/2021 prosperity agreement, Declaration Act consent agreements, mineral tax revenue sharing, mine-management agreements, airport infrastructure grants, private Impact Benefit Agreements and member-payment controversies from scattered PDFs and news releases.

The honest version is not “Tahltan now owns 11% of B.C.”

The honest version is more complicated and more important:

> B.C. has built a layered land, resource, revenue and consent framework with the Tahltan Central Government across a territory publicly described as 11% of the province. The two Indian Act bands have 3,098 registered members; 636 live on their own reserves. The Tahltan Central Government says it represents about 5,000 Tahltan members. The agreements include future land-transfer negotiation language, revenue-sharing language, and consent power over major mines. One Eskay Creek benefits vote passed after a $10,000-per-eligible-member payment-promise controversy. That combination demands a public ledger, not press-release fragments.

That is the story.