STATEMENT TO MEMBERSHIP

We wish to issue the following message to members of Blueberry River First Nations as we know that you are hearing things and we want to set the record straight. We also wish to emphasize that we are issuing this message as a majority of Council. We, the majority, are united in a single aim: to ensure that our treaty rights are secure for generations to come. We are not willing to accept a sellout of our treaty rights to industry for short term gain.

**Our community is under threat at this time and we risk losing our hard fought treaty rights if we do not stand united and fight together for them.**

- As you know, BRFN has an agreement with Petronas.
- Petronas asked for an exemption regarding the disturbance cap and sought permits in an HV1 area, the Dancing Ground, which is a high value area and a no go zone for protection of treaty rights and the land.
- Only Band Council can grant an exemption to permit that development.
- However, the Implementation Agreement does not specify exactly how the exemption can be granted.
- To get clarity on how to grant exemptions, Council passed a BCR on June 9, 2023 which specified that an exemption could only be granted by a majority decision of Council.
- Chief and Council voted unanimously in favour of the June 9 BCR. It is important that you know that the Chief was in favour of this BCR and signed it. The BCR passed on June 9 requiring full Council approval was valid. It was passed at a duly convened Council meeting with quorum.
- Further, all present at the meeting, including the Chief, stressed the importance of protecting our treaty rights and land and all were in agreement that we were not willing to grant Petronas the exemption to develop on our high importance cultural areas.
- Between June 9 and June 16, the Chief met privately with Petronas.
- After this private meeting with Petronas, the Chief changed her mind about the BCR for reasons entirely unknown to the rest of Council.
- 2 -

- The Chief also acted contrary to the wishes of the majority of Council and gave Petronas the exemption they were seeking to allow them to break the Implementation Agreement without Council approval and develop in an HV1 (High Value) area (i.e., the Dancing Ground).

- Finally, the Chief also allowed the Province to approve the PRGT pipeline which will require 100's of new wells every year for the next 40 years. Council has continuously opposed this project since 2014, and without the Chief's inaction the Province would not have proceeded.

- Council had told the Chief not to approve these permits and the Chief had promised she wouldn't. What Petronas could have said or given her to change her mind is unknown. The Chief has mentioned $15 million in work for our contractors, however, it is not evident that our people have any of this work.

- Council has been unanimously in agreement that the court case and Implementation Agreement we have won are about protecting treaty rights for future generations.

- The Implementation Agreement is not about:
  - money;
  - enriching a few contractors or people for short term gain; and/or
  - personal enrichment or gain at the expense of the community or the land;

- The Chief's refusal to listen to Council has weakened our Implementation Agreement and treaty rights and goes against everything we have fought so hard for many years to secure.

- Ratcliff has been diligent in winning a major court victory and negotiating a tough agreement with the Province for us.

- The Chief wants to get rid of them because they listen to Council and prioritize treaty rights over procurement.

- Ratcliff would not cooperate with the Chief to allow her to violate the Implementation Agreement or sell out the community's treaty rights for her own private interests. The Chief does not like this.

- The Chief's lawyers (Thomas Arbogast and lately, Stephanie Axmann) who the Chief engaged without the consent of Council, will follow the Chief's directions willingly. They have no knowledge of the treaty rights, the court case or the Implementation Agreement, and will not stand up to the Province or to big business and developers. Notably, Thomas Arbogast is a criminal lawyer and Stephanie Axmann's background is working on behalf of the Province and industry.

- These lawyers are willing to work with the Chief to undermine our treaty rights and ignore the majority wishes of Council. Ratcliff is not and will work only under directions from a majority of Council and wishes to continue to fight to uphold the Implementation Agreement that they have worked hard to secure for this community.

- We are not at the finish line for this Implementation Agreement and it is imperative that we continue our vital work.
• We also wish to emphasize that Maegen Giltrow and Greg McDade KC fought the court case on our behalf and were not involved in the conflicts with the former Chief and Council. Other lawyers at Ratcliff were responsible for that.

• Maegen and Greg have always sought and obtained unanimous consent from Council and act only in accordance with direction issued by the majority of Council.

• It is our assessment that given their deep understanding of the Implementation Agreement, they are the best lawyers to continue to work on our behalf in connection with the Implementation Agreement.

• We also wish to make it clear that Ratcliff is not involved in governance or human resources matters. We have engaged separate legal counsel at a different firm to advise on governance and human resources issues.

• In closing, we need to stand up to the Province and Petronas. The Chief is willing to sell out our victory and four families out of five are standing firm and wish to protect our treaty and our land over short term business interests.

We expect that the Chief will be spreading misinformation over the coming weeks and we wish to counter that by sharing the facts with you openly and transparently. To that end, we are happy to answer any questions you may have.

Issued August 21, 2023

Councillor Shelley Gauthier

Councillor Sherry Dominic

Councillor Wayne Yahey

Councillor Troy Wolf