



## Press Release:

### Council to Council Reinvigorates Important Conversations; Commitment for Collaboration.



Photo: Mayor (Barriere) Ward Stamer, Chief (Simpcw First Nation) George Lampreau, Mayor (Valemount) Owen Torgerson, Chair (Regional District Fraser Fort George) Lara Beckett, Mayor (Clearwater) Merlin Blackwell, Acting Mayor (McBride) Pietro Caputo view the Cranberry marsh during last week's Council-to-Council meetings in Valemount.

29 May 2023 - Valemount – Leaders from across the Robson Valley and neighboring regions visited Valemount last week for a round of high-level conversations centered on Old Growth Management, Transportation Corridors, Energy / Electrification and the legacy of the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion.

*"Valemount hosted the most important C2C I think I've ever attended. . . I'm super excited about moving forward on so many critical issues with all the North Thompson and Robson Valley governments in partnership with Kúkpi7 George Lampreau and Simpcw Council. We have so many mutual concerns that*

*it makes absolute sense that we work hand in hand on things like Highway Safety, electrical grid and internet improvements, and a future economic vision for all of us who live on Simpcw territory" – Mayor (Clearwater) Merlin Blackwell.*

Many of the conversations held will continue to be developed over the coming weeks, but it is already clear that the group aims to take a more collaborative approach in advocating for the region. Some venues for this collaboration include the 2023 Union of British Columbia Municipalities Annual Meeting in September, with provincial and federal government, and during future major projects.

*The "Village of Valemount was pleased to host this year's valley-wide Council to Council. We really appreciated all of the robust discussion that formed around mutual issues and opportunities! Valemount, as host, approached this gathering with a desire to have the room filled with the ideas of others, and to try to focus those ideas into initiatives the group could champion together – I think that goal has been met" - Mayor (Valemount) Owen Torgerson*



*Mayor (Valemount) Owen Torgerson, left, chairs the Council-to-Council meeting with 25 leaders from across the region present.*

A host of joint meetings, and action items, have been proposed to further discussions on:

- Memorandums of Understanding between the municipalities and Simpcw First Nation.
- Joint letters on highway safety in the region following significant loss of life along the corridors.
- Several meeting requests at, or separate from, UBCM to discuss major project impacts and the unique needs of the valley.
- Expectations around the close out of the Trans Mountain Expansion projects work in the area.

Reflecting on the day's work representatives added their comments:

*"Today was exactly what I wanted. I will be smiling all the way home"*  
*- Chief (Simpcw First Nation) George Lampreau.*

*“It is inspiring to see Simpcw First Nation and settler local governments collaborating to improve the lives and environment for of all those who live in the north Thompson and Robson Valleys. This is an example of leadership for all of BC” - Chair (Regional District Fraser Fort George) Lara Beckett.*

*“I really enjoyed the opportunity to meet with other community representatives and local Indigenous leaders. In particular, I thought we had a productive discussion regarding new electricity, our climate action commitments, and highway transportation safety. Coming out of this meeting, I would like to see a coordinated effort toward advancing additional electricity supply so that we can have more development” - Acting Mayor (McBride) Pietro Caputo.*

Clearwater is set to host the groups next formal Council-to-Council session in 2024 with several issue specific sessions targeted between now and the next full meeting.

For further information please contact:

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