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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy  
Lake Babine Nation

### **First-of-its-kind agreement signed between Lake Babine Nation, B.C.**

VICTORIA – Lake Babine Nation and the Province have signed a collaborative agreement to advance reconciliation, social and community well-being, and regional economic growth under environmental assessment legislation.

The agreement is an important step in shared decision-making between the Province and Lake Babine Nation.

The collaboration agreement describes how the Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) and Lake Babine Nation will work together on future environmental assessments for projects in the Nation’s territory. It highlights the Nation’s assessment criteria for proposed projects, including the Nation’s Sustainability Framework and Socio-Economic Impacts Framework, allowing proponents to understand what Lake Babine Nation expects of projects proposed for its territory.

The collaboration agreement is the first to be signed under Section 41 of the Environmental Assessment Act (2018) and establishes a key shared decision-making precedent for the Province. It is also an important step in advancing the EAO’s and Lake Babine Nation’s reconciliation journey.

The collaboration agreement marks the completion of a key step toward a consent agreement, which is one of the milestones in Lake Babine Nation Foundation Agreement reached between Lake Babine Nation, the Province and Canada in September 2020. A consent agreement will further strengthen the Nation’s role in decision-making on environmental assessments by requiring the Lake Babine Nation’s consent for certain projects to proceed.

The foundation agreement adopts an innovative, milestone-driven approach to reconciliation, designed to promote the collaborative implementation of Lake Babine Nation’s title and rights, strong partnership between the Nation and the Province on environmental stewardship, social and community well-being, and economic growth for both the Nation and the larger region. The collaboration agreement advances all these objectives.

#### **Quotes:**

##### **Chief Murphy Abraham, Lake Babine Nation –**

“This collaboration agreement is an important first step in restoring our Nation’s stewardship role for our yintah (our Territory and all the natural resources it sustains) in relation to major development projects. Lake Babine Nation looks forward to building a strong working relationship with the EAO in assessing projects and to helping ensure that new projects in our yintah will be sustainable, a responsibility that we inherited from our ancestors and that we

owe to all our future generations.”

**George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy –**

“This is an important and significant step on our reconciliation journey with the people of Lake Babine Nation. The first of its kind under this recent legislation, this agreement establishes a key shared decision-making precedent between the Province and Lake Babine Nation moving forward, and ensures that Indigenous knowledge and values will be applied in full collaboration with the Nation.”

**Quick Facts:**

- Section 41 of the Environmental Assessment Act enables the minister to enter into the collaboration agreement with Lake Babine Nation for environmental assessments in its territory and to vary the act to the extent necessary to accommodate agreement provisions.
- The agreement:
  - provides clear and united direction to proponents on how to work productively and respectfully with Lake Babine Nation.
  - identifies the Nation’s decision-making criteria for assessments and frameworks and helps ensure the application of those criteria throughout the environmental assessment process.
  - is an important step to support and demonstrate progress towards the foundation agreement milestone of an environmental assessment consent agreement.
  - identifies new information-sharing mechanisms so that Lake Babine Nation and B.C. can make informed decisions about proposed projects.

**Learn More:**

For more information on Lake Babine Nation, visit: <https://www.lakebabine.com/>

Factsheet on Lake Babine Nation Foundation Agreement:

<https://engage.gov.bc.ca/govtogetherbc/consultation/lake-babine-reconciliation/>

To see more on the Lake Babine Nation environmental assessment,

visit: <https://www.lakebabine.com/foundation/lands-and-resources/environmental-assessment/>

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