



The Sn̓ʔayckstx (Sinixt)
Confederacy

P.O. Box 150, Nespelem, WA 99155

The Confederated Tribes of
the Colville Reservation

February 8, 2024

Minister George Heyman
Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
PO Box 9047 Stn Prov Gov
Victoria BC V8W 9E2
Email: ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Minister Lana Popham
Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport
PO Box 9082 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9E2
Email: TACS.minister@gov.bc.ca

Dear Ministers Heyman and Popham:

Re: Support for an Environmental Impact Assessment of the Proposed Zincton All-Season Resort

I am the Chairman of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (CTCR) and the Sinixt Confederacy. I write with regards to the proposed Zincton all-season resort planned within Sinixt traditional territory in southeastern British Columbia.

By way of background, on April 23, 2021, the Supreme Court of Canada handed down its decision in *R. v. Desautel*, recognizing the Sn̓ʔayckstx (Sinixt/Arrow Lakes) as an Aboriginal Peoples of Canada with a constitutionally protected right to hunt in their traditional territory in British Columbia, and to be engaged and consulted on anything that could impact those rights. As the Supreme Court specifically confirmed, that territory “ran as far south as an island just above Kettle Falls, in what is now Washington State, and as far north as the Big Bend of the Columbia River, north of Revelstoke in what is now British Columbia” (for visual depictions of Sinixt territory, see the attached place names map and a map prepared by provincial experts in 1956 depicting Indigenous territories in 1850). The Court also recognized the Arrow Lakes tribe, one of the twelve constituent tribes of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (CTCR) with approximately 3,500 members, as a successor group to the Sinixt.

CTCR has formed the Sinixt (Arrow Lakes) Confederacy, formerly known as the Arrow Lakes Aboriginal Society, to represent Sinixt people on both sides of the international border, regardless of tribal or band affiliation, in a manner consistent with Indigenous law and traditions. As you will see from the enclosed maps, one of which was prepared by provincial experts in 1956, the

Zinton project falls squarely within Sinixt traditional territory as described above and in the enclosed maps. Accordingly, full engagement with the Sinixt will be required moving forward.

Our preliminary internal review of the project has raised several concerns:

- The Environmental Overview Report (EOR) focuses only on the potential impacts of the project in terms of the Controlled Recreation Area (CRA) and does not include a discussion or review of potential impacts associated with the development on private property that will occur if the project moves forward. All impacts associated with the project must be considered to have a properly informed review and decision-making process.
- We also note that the project will potentially have impacts, or limit recovery, on five main wildlife species (mountain goat, wolverine, grizzly bear, southern mountain caribou, and western toad). These impacts would be year-round as the project will be an all-season resort.
- Although a proposed Commercial Summer Closure Area (CSCA) has been suggested as a mitigation option (primarily for grizzly bear) within a known wildlife corridor, it is unclear how the establishment of a CSCA will be of benefit to wildlife. In light of the fact that this is a proposed all-season resort, we have concerns that there will still be a significant increase in the human traffic in the CRA year round, even with the implementation of a CSCA.

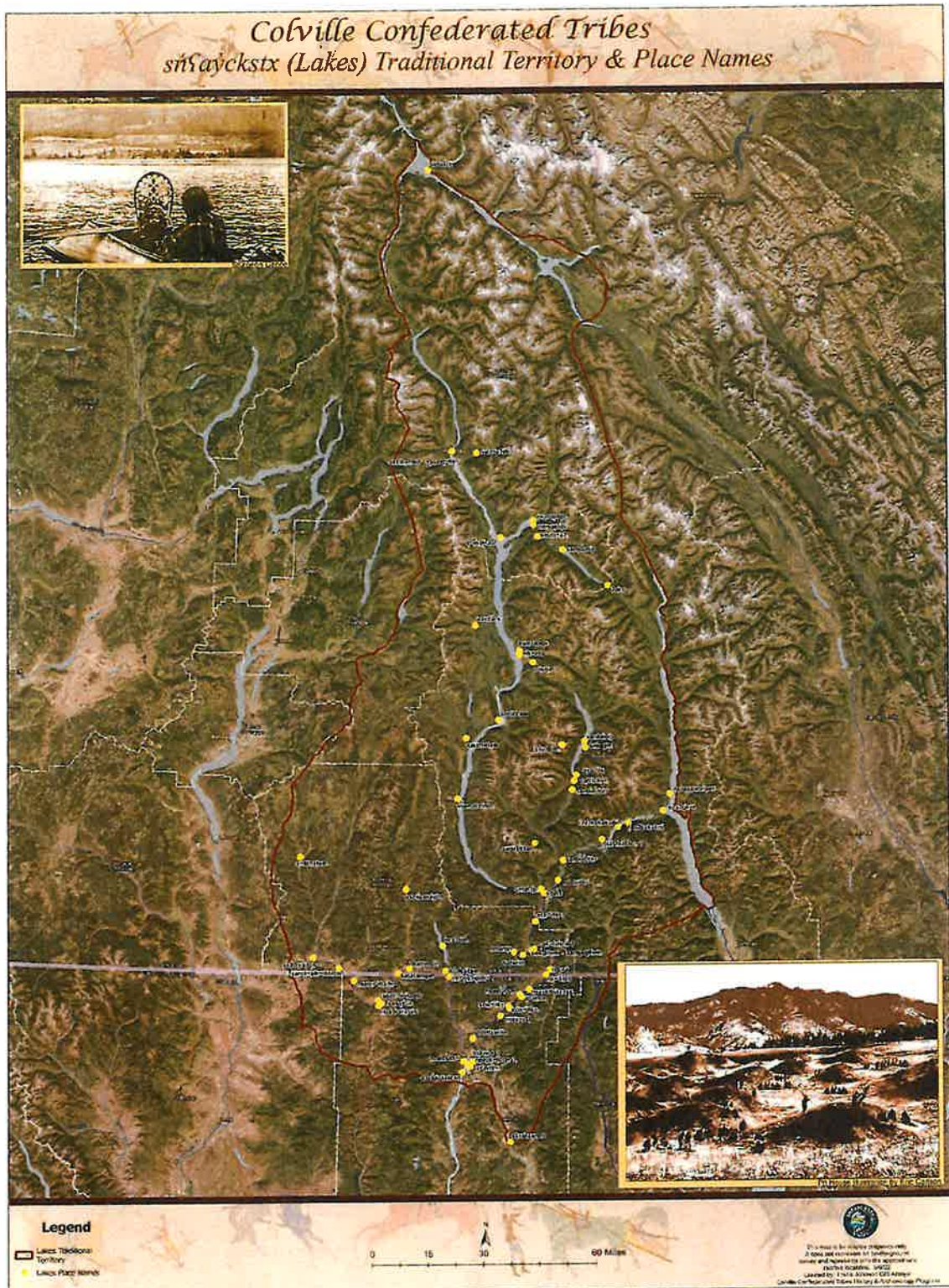
In summary, the full impacts of this project have not yet been fully developed and considered. We accordingly call on the provincial government, as other concerned citizens and groups in our traditional territory already have, to undertake a detailed Environmental Impact Assessment of this project, a process in which the Sinixt must be fully involved.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss this matter further, we would be pleased to meet with you at a mutually convenient time.

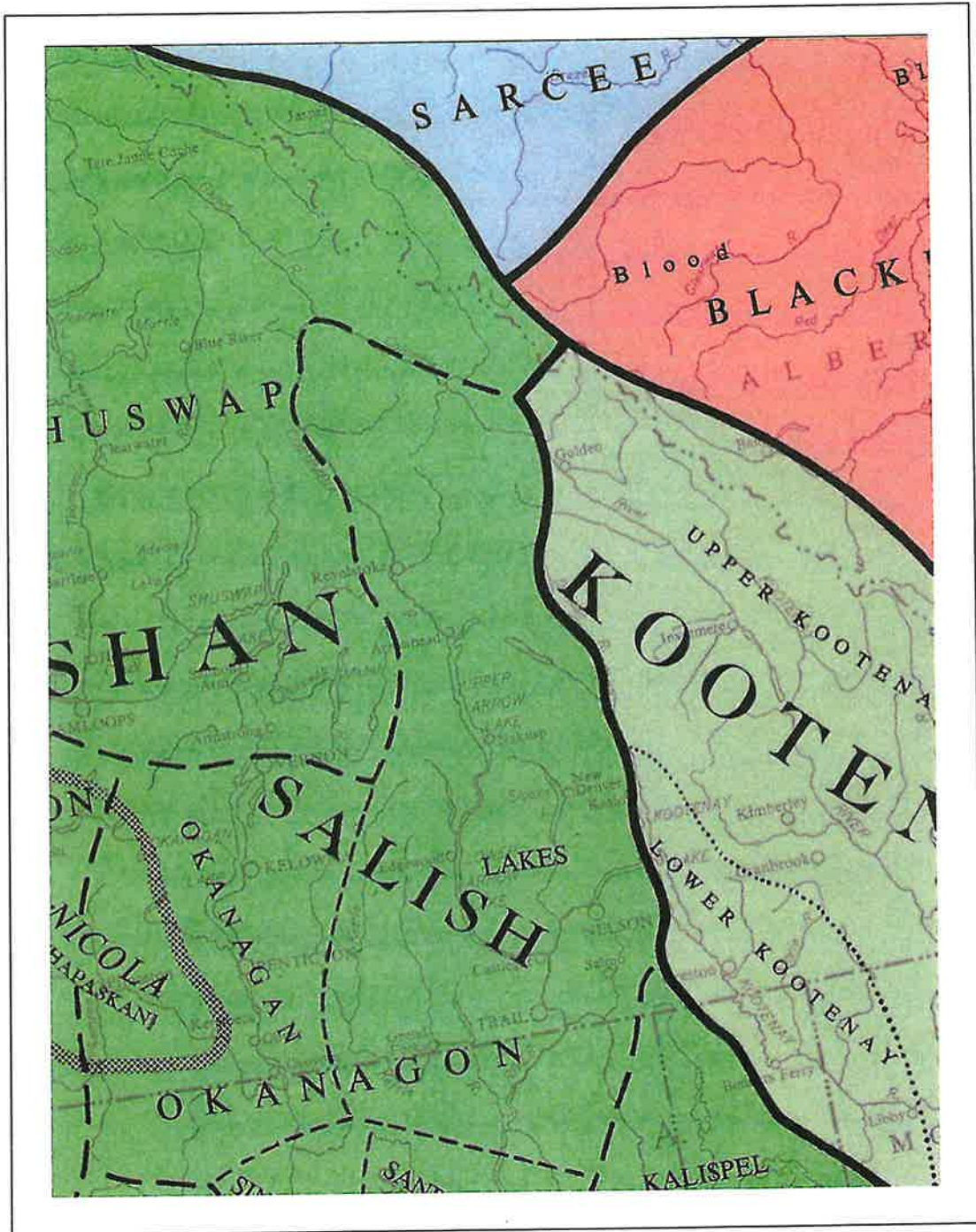
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jarred-Michael Erickson for".

Jarred-Michael Erickson
Chairman
Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation



S̓h̓ay̓ckstx (Sinixt/Lakes) traditional territory map and place names.



Sinixt (Lakes) as shown in Map 12 on pages 25-26 of the 1956 atlas created by the British Columbia Natural Resources Conference. The caption notes the territory of the Lakes (Sinixt) is mapped as it existed in 1850.