



## Joint Media Release

### **Yaqit ʔa·knuqʔiʔit (Tobacco Plains Indian Band) & Tobacco Plains Development Corporation**

[www.tobaccoplains.org](http://www.tobaccoplains.org)

For immediate release: February 11, 2022

(ʔakanuxuniʔ Territory, Grasmere, BC) – Yaqit ʔa·knuqʔiʔit (Tobacco Plains Indian Band) Chief and Council and the Tobacco Plains Development Corporation Board of Directors do not condone the actions, tactics or spread of misinformation regarding health mandates by the “Freedom Convoy” protesters. We specifically do not condone the misappropriation of First Nations culture and ceremony and the open acts of racism, both publicly or online, this convoy has exhibited in other First Nations’ traditional territories across this country.

Our First Nations people are already at a greater risk from COVID-19, and have been some of the hardest hit since the beginning of the pandemic. We work tirelessly to protect our community and ensure the safety of our most vulnerable. We believe that removing the mandates among the larger population will put our people at even greater risk and will increase the potential that our families will suffer from this deadly disease.

As political leaders, Yaqit ʔa·knuqʔiʔit Chief and Council feel this convoy has been an absolute insult to our Chiefs, Elders, Communities, families, healthcare workers and all those we lost in this pandemic. It is disheartening to see convoy protesters disgracing our ceremonies and traditions by using such sacred items as drums, pipes and medicines to demonstrate their own racism.

We support current public health measures. We do not support actions and behaviours that infringe upon the right of others as demonstrated by the “Freedom Fighters” who threaten our health, disrespect our culture and promote hate.

Roosville Border crossing sits on the unceded traditional territory of Yaqit ʔa·knuqʔiʔit and is surrounded by Yaqit ʔa·knuqʔiʔit Band Lands. Any protests that may occur at this border crossing are not sanctioned by Yaqit ʔa·knuqʔiʔit or the Tobacco Plains Development Corporation.

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*For more information or to coordinate interviews, please contact:*

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