



**KTUNAXA
NATION**

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Ktunaxa Nation Heads to Supreme Court of Canada

Cranbrook/?a·kiskaq#i?it – The Ktunaxa Nation is heading to the highest court in Canada in its ongoing efforts to reaffirm the right of Aboriginal Canadians to exercise spiritual practices that are dependent upon sacred sites.

On December 1, the Supreme Court of Canada will hear, ‘Ktunaxa Nation Council and Kathryn Teneese, on their own behalf and on behalf of all citizens of the Ktunaxa Nation v. Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, et al,’. The case stems from a large ski resort proposed to be built in an area known to the Ktunaxa Nation as Qat’muk. Qat’muk is of vital spiritual importance to Ktunaxa as it is the home of ‘grizzly bear spirit’ upon which so many key Ktunaxa spiritual beliefs and practices depend.

“Qat’muk has existed long before any ski resort proposal and long before Canada was a country,” said Kathryn Teneese, Ktunaxa Nation Council Chair. “As a Nation, we have spent too much money fighting in the court system to prove what we have always known. Qat’muk is vital to Ktunaxa as well as local wildlife populations and biodiversity and must be protected.”

“We believe that both the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Constitution Act provide us with the right to freely practice our traditions,” continued Teneese. “It is unfortunate that the Supreme Court of British Columbia and the British Columbia Court of Appeal failed to recognize this, but we are confident the Supreme Court of Canada will uphold the rights of all Canadians to practice their religions and traditions free from interference and the threat of destruction of sacred places.”

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