



Recognizing and Reflecting on Canada's National Indigenous History

Each year, Canada observes Indigenous History month throughout June, with celebratory events across the country that culminate on June 21st on National Indigenous Peoples day. The history, languages and culture of the Indigenous people who have stewarded the land from sea to sea to sea are rich, diverse, and resilient. It is right for us all to celebrate them.

This year, Indigenous History Month falls at the midway point of what has already been an incredibly difficult year for Indigenous communities in Canada. Remote communities have particularly faced hardship in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, with lack of access to advanced healthcare facilities, pre-existing housing crises and boil water advisories. In May, the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc shared devastating news on the discovery of the remains of 215 children who never returned from the residential school in Kamloops, British Columbia. This was followed by Cowessess First Nation's announcement regarding 715 unmarked graves at the site of the former Marieval school. As communities across Canada conduct similar assessments at other former residential school sites, all who live and work in Canada are reminded that the nation's process of Truth and Reconciliation still very much requires our collective attention and action.

Yet across the country, First Nation, Inuit and Metis communities have responded in a way that has put the strength of their cultures and ceremonies on full display. Songs, prayers, sacred fires, spending time on the land, elders passing on their stories: these are the intangible expressions of Indigenous culture across Canada that offer a pathway to seek healing and renewal.

At Newmont, we support reconciliation between the industry and Indigenous communities. We acknowledge that over its long history, the mining industry could have done a better job at respecting and promoting Indigenous communities. We are taking concrete steps to demonstrate this commitment to reconciliation. Earlier this year, we launched the [Global Center for Indigenous Community Relations](#), which is a platform for Newmont to work toward strong relationships between indigenous communities and the mining industry.

One of the focus areas for the Center's work is Respect for Customs and Culture. Many of the activities in June highlight practical ways to demonstrate this respect. Earlier this month, employees at our Musselwhite Mine in Northern Ontario held an outdoor gathering to mourn the loss of the 215 children through a time of silence

and prayer and have shared orange ribbons and a banner to start a conversation across the site about the legacy of residential schools. Other sites in Canada celebrated their host communities in unique ways: Eleonore's catering contractor, Wolf Camp Corporation, an Indigenous business co-owned by Tawich Development Corporation prepared a special feast for site employees with elements of traditional Cree foods. At Porcupine, we worked with local leaders to create television and radio messages grieving the damaging legacy of residential schools and affirming our commitment to reconciliation work. The site also unveiled an orange truck painted in commemoration of the children who passed through residential schools.

Our support of reconciliation applies not only in Canada but at all our sites that operate in the traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples. Earlier in June, our Australian operations celebrated National Reconciliation Week and will celebrate NAIDOC week virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions from the 4-11th. We look forward to sharing stories and reflections from those events.

As an organization, we continue to reflect on the importance of learning about and working towards reconciliation year-round. We are particularly grateful to the communities where we work who have welcomed us to their traditional territories. We respect their traditional knowledge that helps inform our practices as we work on the land. We are proud that many community members have chosen to be a part of our workforce. And we join with them in celebrating the beauty and resilience of their communities and affirm our commitment to continuing with them in partnership.

Miigwech/Chiniiskumitinaow/Mahsi Cho/ Mēduh/Thank you/Merci