

## **The Likhts'amisyu and Unist'ot'en Alliance - Pacific Trails Pipeline Attempts to Illegally Enter Talbits Kwa of the Unist'ot'en**

**November 8 – 10, 2011**

### **Monday, November 7, 2011**

After an exhausting week of dealing with the death of a friend and brother-in-law, I was finally home trying to relax and come to terms with losing a good friend on October 3, 2011, in Prince George BC. Hagwilakw (a Tsakiy Ze' of the Likhts'amisyu) phoned me at 9:30pm in the evening to tell me that she had reliable information from overhearing a phone call between her brother Kloum Khun (Dini Ze' of the Likhts'amisyu people) and someone from industry regarding the Pacific Trails Pipeline (PTP) company. Hagwilakw said that PTP was moving equipment into the area where the Unist'ot'en people and Likhts'amisyu people own traditional territories by the Gosnell River and Burnie/Clore Rivers. From what she gathered, she heard that PTP had drilling equipment at the 18km marker on the Shae Forest Service Road. She had heard that the PTP project manager had instructed the drillers that Aboriginal People do not have rights in the area. He had also instructed the workers that if they meet any resistance that they would have to cease their activities and follow the directions if they were told to leave. The information came by way of an unidentified whistle-blower phone call from a person working in the drilling industry. Hagwilakw said that if anyone can stop them it was going to be me and whoever I can get to go with me. I told her that I would get dressed and go and visit Kloum Khun at his place. Hagwilakw had said that she thinks he was still visiting Knebebeas at the wake for the late Unist'ot'en member Gordie Holland in the Moricetown Centennial Hall.

I went to the Centennial Hall and sat on the side of the hall to patiently wait for Kloum Khun and Knebebeas to finish visiting their friends and community members. At about 10:15pm Kloum Khun smiled and motioned me to come over to him. He proceeded to tell me about the phone call he had from an industry insider who refused to identify himself. Kloum Khun then began to state that he wished that the pipeline activities weren't happening during the time of the funeral because our people would otherwise have more resources to deal with them. After about a 10 second pause I asked Kloum Khun if he would support me leaving that evening to meet the PTP representatives and the drilling crew at the Morice River at the Unist'ot'en Camp. Kloum Khun then called Knebebeas over to discuss the idea with him. After about 10 minutes of discussion it was agreed with Kloum Khun and Knebebeas that they would support an action to stop PTP from coming into the area and threatening to proceed with their pipeline plans without consultation with the Likhts'amisyu and Unist'ot'en. I told them that I will be leaving about 12 midnight to ensure that I was at the Morice River early enough to meet the workers at the Morice River bridge.

I then left the Centennial Hall and began to visit different people's homes who I thought would be willing to join me in a last minute direct action to prevent other people from infringing on our inherent rights and title. By 11pm after I had made my way to a few homes in the community of Moricetown I

ended up knocking on the door of Doris and Henry Rosso. Doris' son Hank Michell answered the door. I spent about 5 minutes talking to Hank about my plans to leave that night and explained to him that I needed some help protecting the area by his family's camp. He then went to wake up his step father Henry and I explained the situation with Henry. Henry said he would need a small amount of time to think about the idea and that I could phone him in about ½ hour. I explained to Hank and Henry that I was prepared to leave alone that evening and to confront the drillers and PTP personnel on my own if I had to. I left his house and went home to pack my camping supplies and food. At 11:45pm I called Henry to ask if he was considering coming with me and he indicated that he and Hank were almost ready to go and would meet me at my place. At 11:55pm Henry and Hank came to my place to help me load some camping equipment. They left ahead of me at approximately 12 midnight and said that they would meet me in Smithers at the 7/11 gas station. My wife Freda Huson then arrived home after working on preparations for her brother's funeral at her sister's house. We said a quick good bye as I was packed and ready to meet Henry and Hank in Smithers.

### **Tuesday, November 8, 2011**

I met Henry and Hank in Smithers and we fuelled up his diesel 4x4 truck and my pickup. We also shopped for any last minute items that we might need for an indefinite amount of time we might be at the Morice crossing. By 1:15am we had fuelled up, shopped for supplies and had left Smithers.

We arrived at the Morice Camp about 3:30am. After unloading the trucks and getting a fire going in the cabin we began to settle in and plan out how we were going to deal with the plan of action. After witnessing many logging trucks and Heavy Equipment trucks passing the Morice Camp we decided that we would park our trucks alongside of the road by 5:30am. At 4:30am Henry decided that he needed to take a 1 hour nap before doing any direct action. I stayed awake and worked on painting a sign that was going to be placed on my pick-up alongside the road. The sign read "Road Closed 2 P.T.P. Drillers". At 5:30am we parked on the road and waited for the drillers and PTP personnel go attempt coming into the territory. At 6:30am the logging truck drivers began letting us know over the CB radio that the drillers were making their way up the Morice West FSR. By 7am we had encountered the two vehicles attempting to come into Unist'ot'en territory.



The PTP Geo in the White Jeep and the Drillers in the Blue GMC Crewcab.

I walked onto the road and was followed by Hank to meet them. I looked back and noticed that Henry drove his pick up across the road to block entry to the PTP staff and drilling crew.



Henry Rosso at the roadblock which prevented PTP and drillers from entering Unist'ot'en territory

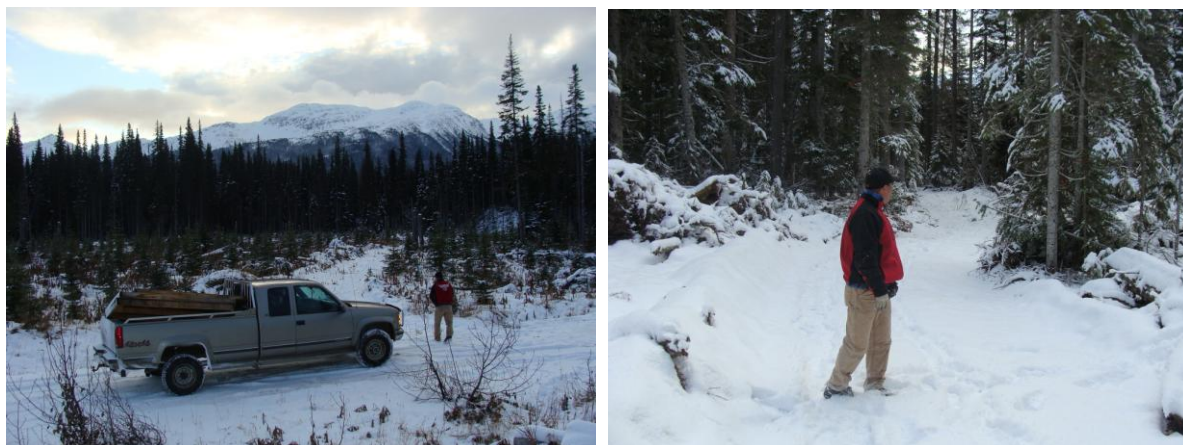
I approached the first vehicle which was a white Budget Rental jeep and asked the lone occupant if he was there for the Pacific Trails Pipeline company. He answered "yes" and I then sternly told him, "You realize that I can't let you through. You will have to turn around.". The individual then replied, "Understood, we will turn around and go.". I then asked him, "When do you guys plan on taking that stuff out of 18km on the Shae FSR?". He then replied, "That stuff was flown in and we can get it out right away too. I may have to come back tomorrow and pick it up. I will talk to my superiors.". He then began to turn his vehicle around and was followed by the blue GMC 2500 HD. The workers in the blue pick up cheered and gave us the thumbs up as they turned around. The logging truck driver who was waiting to cross the 66km Morice Bridge came across and opened his window and yelled, "Kick their ass!!! KICK THEIR ASS!!".

Later that morning after breakfast myself, Henry, and Hank went for a ride down to the area where equipment was left on Shae Road. As we reached 18km we encountered the drilling equipment and fuel that was left by PTP the day before.



Drilling Equipment and Fuel at 18 km on the Shae FSR

In the process of looking for a place to turn around down the road we encountered more vehicle tire tracks that went further down the road following Gosnell River. At the second bridge (about 2km down the road) we encountered a newer (approximately 500m) Right of Way that was pushed into to the shores of Gosnell Creek. Freda and I were at this same area 3 weeks prior on October 15, 2011, and had taken photos of coho salmon spawning in a small tributary.



The right of way from the second bridge. This ROW goes about 500m from the main road to Gosnell Creek.



Hank and Toghestiy at Gosnell Creek where PTP was proposing to do a directional drill crossing

Hank decided to stay back from our morning excursion and attempt to get some sleep. So that afternoon Henry and I went for a firewood run up the Silvertip Road at about 5km. While cutting firewood a Canfor employee named Kevin stopped and asked for clarification on the roadblock. He was curious to know if we were planning on stopping the logging traffic from going through. I asked him, "Do you know who logged out that area alongside the Gosnell Creek on Shae Road?". His reply was, "That was us – Canfor. It was from last summer.". I let him know that many of the Unist'ot'en Clan members were angry at how close they had logged alongside Gosnell Creek. I let him know that our people have depended on the salmon which spawn in that vital tributary for hundreds and thousands of years. I also told him that the damage that they inflicted on the spawning channel will likely result in silt build up in the spawning areas where salmon are born. I then proceeded to tell him that all industry personnel will have to take notice of the 1997 Delgamuukw Supreme Court of Canada Court Case and quit attempting to do business as usual. He acknowledged my concerns and then offered his support for us to stop all pipelines and said that it appears that the majority of people he has talked to do not want to see any pipelines coming through Northern BC.

After a very long day of little or no sleep we went to bed after supper at 7pm.

### **Wednesday, November 9, 2011**

After manning our checkpoint all morning and making 2 new signs, we decided to go and get a load of wood at about 10:30am. We were headed back up the Silvertip FSR to get more firewood for checkpoint on 66km when a logging truck driver told us on the CB radio that the drillers were back and were coming down the Morice West FSR with a low-bed transport truck. We turned our truck around and went back to the checkpoint site and waited. As we heard the caravan of PTP personnel vehicles getting closer we told them over the CB radio that they were not permitted to cross the Morice River Bridge. At 11am I walked across the bridge to confront a caravan of 3 vehicles. (1 red "Load Em Up Contracting Ltd" low-bed transport truck, the white PTP employee's jeep, and the blue GMC crew cab Driller's truck) The PTP guy got out of his jeep and walked up to me and asked if they could pass as they wanted to pick up their equipment and fuel at 18km on the Shae FSR. I told him that I will have to discuss this with the others at the road block and get back to him. I walked back over the bridge and discussed the situation with Hank

and Henry. We decided that since the low-bed was empty and there was a promise that they would attempt to remove all of the equipment and fuel on that day we would let them come through. I let the PTP geo know that we were expecting more people to show up later on that afternoon to ensure that they were taking their equipment and fuel out of the territory. The PTP employee came to our fire and re-iterated to us that he had full intention of removing all of the equipment and fuel that day and if it wasn't possible he may have to come back the next day. I told him, "You may have noticed because you are forced to use the same CB Radio channel as us that we have the full support of industry on this road. It appears that nobody wants to support any Pipelines in the North of BC." We assured him that we will be coming later on that afternoon to ensure that they were in fact loading up the low-bed and removing all of their equipment and fuel.



Red Low-bed and the PTP geologist employee

Subsequent to letting the PTP retrieval crew through our checkpoint we went back to making firewood on the Silvertip FSR before going up the Shae FSR. We ran into "Kevin" from Canfor and he was accompanied by a supervisor known to Henry as "Mr Mike". Mr Mike got out of his truck and talked to us about why he came out. He said that he was only interested in our safety and didn't want any trouble

from the PTP guy or drillers. We assured him that there was nothing to worry about and we had the PTP guys loading up their equipment and fuel to leave the territory. Mr Mike was surprised to learn that PTP had a low-bed on their road without an agreement in place. He said that he will have to talk to PTP about using the road for hauling heavy equipment without an agreement in place. I let "Mr. Mike" know that all industry personnel should be aware that Delgamuukw case is alive and not forgotten. There will be no pipelines on our territories.

On route approximately 15 km up the Shae FSR we encountered the white PTP rental jeep in the ditch. The weather and Road Conditions were horrible and we were not surprised to see someone in the ditch.



PTP Employee in the ditch at 15km

As we reached 18km on the Shae FSR we could clearly hear a helicopter in the dense snow fall. We parked our truck about 50 meters from the low-bed and observed them loading the trailer on the low-bed.



Vaguely visible you can see a helicopter loading the read low-bed at 18km

After attempting to turn around approximately 50 meters from the low-bed Henry accidentally slid his truck into the ditch. As we manoeuvred his loaded truck around in the ditch an employee of the drilling company came up to talk to us. He told us that PTP started calling them in the middle of the previous week frantically trying to get them to mobilize their equipment and crew to get set up at 18 km on the Shae FSR "As Soon As Humanly Possible". He said that he was disgusted to learn that the family was grieving the loss of a family member while PTP was attempting to recklessly "sneak-in" to the family's territory. We began to give him some advice as to how to get the white Jeep out of the ditch and the driller stopped us and said that he had "no intention of helping that *Asshole* and he is not catching a ride with us in our crew truck.". As the PTP employee approached, the driller told us that, "Nobody wants to see any pipelines in the North – especially one that operates as dirty as this one. Have a good day guys and good luck.". We then drove Henry's truck back and forth in the ditch again and the PTP employee asked if he could take a photo to show his superiors that the roads in fact were slippery causing his Jeep to go into the ditch. Shortly after he took his photo Henry managed to drive his truck out of the ditch with the cheers of the driller. I let the PTP employee know that we had a conversation with Canfor about 2 hours earlier. It seemed to really stress him out. He said to me, "I am not having a good day at all. The chopper is having trouble with the visibility issue, I have to remove all of the equipment from here, my truck is in the ditch and is probably a write-off, and now I am learning that Canfor is pissed at me."

At 16 km on the Shae Road on our drive back out we encountered Kloum Khun in his red Ford 4x4 truck. Kloum Khun asked us if we were sure that they were loading the low-bed. We assured us and we let him pass us and he followed us out.



Kloum Khun following us out of Shae FSR.

As we reached the checkpoint Knedebeas' son Justin Williams came from his logging block after piling brush and visited us at the check point. As we stood around the checkpoint fire we heard vehicles coming out of the territory. I ran back to my pickup and grabbed the camera in time to take some photos of 2 vehicles leaving the territory. As the vehicles approached we noticed that the red low-bed did not have many pieces of equipment loaded onto it for transport. The PTP employee got out of the transport truck and apologized for not having all of the equipment and fuel out of the bush. He said that

They will work hard at moving all of the equipment and fuel out on the following day. Kloum Khun quickly spoke up and told him, "Do you see that sign up there? It says, ***NO PIPELINES***. We want to just be sure that you guys are taking everything out of the territory because we do not want you guys here.". The PTP employee assured that they will be removing the equipment out on the next day or at the latest on Saturday. The PTP employee and the drilling crew then left and the visitors and roadblockers had a brief discussion over a couple of boxes of donuts brought in by Kloum Khun on the activities throughout the past few days and plans for the future.





Photos of the checkpoint at 66km on the Morice West FSR

### Thursday, November 10, 2011

After a heavy snowfall of about 2 ½ feet overnight we found that the logging trucks were not driving on the roads. The graders made it out to 66km about 1:00pm. By listening to the chatter on the CB Radio we learned that the grader operators were going to plough the Shae FSR to help PTP remove their drilling equipment. About 2pm we learned that the PTP and drillers were on their way back up on the Morice West FSR. At 2:30pm we stopped a white "Vihar Construction" low-bed, a white "Tyler's Towing" tow truck, and the blue GMC 2500 crew cab at the bridge. Again, the PTP employee assured us that they were removing the last of the equipment and fuel from the site. We let them through only after seeing that the low-bed was empty. Again we promised that we would follow the shortly to ensure that the low-bed was in fact being loaded with the equipment and fuel at 18km on the Shae FSR.

After talking to the grader operator we learned that there were no pull-outs along the Shae FSR. We ended up being held up at 11km on the Shae FSR as we waited for the grader operator to return from 18km. He told us that he needed to open a small spur road at 11km to help a logging contractor retrieve his backhoe that had a broken track. As we waited, another low-bed showed up at 11km to pick up the disabled back hoe. Henry got out and chatted with the low-bed driver. The low-bed driver told Henry that he too was against any pipelines coming through BC. He felt that the promises of jobs and prosperity were misleading and would only lead to rich multi-national companies and government revenue being misspent or only benefiting those in the lower mainland. He wished us luck in our fight to keep all pipelines out of the North. After the grader operator showed up and let us through we continued up the road and hoped that we wouldn't meet up with the tow truck because we knew he did not have a CB Radio. Unfortunately, we met him at about 12½ km where Henry attempted to back up on the slippery road and slowly backed into the ditch for the second time. Luckily for is there was a tow truck nearby. ☺



The final haul out of Talbits Kwa

After being pulled out of the ditch we proceeded up the road and found a vantage point to see that the helicopter was helping load the equipment and fuel onto the Vihar Construction low-bed. We decided to go back to camp and begin packing up our stuff to follow the grader out of the Morice West as a new winter storm was quickly moving in. This was dependant on whether or not the Vihar Construction low-bed had all of the remaining equipment and supplies. At about 4pm we were still loading up the last of our supplies and I heard airbrakes on the main road. I ran outside just in time to see the Vihar low-bed drive by with all of the equipment loaded onto it and the Jeep and GMC trailing behind. We completed packing our camp supplies and began our drive home after a long and intense few days. Thanks to all of those who supported and prayed for us. This is the beginning of a struggle that we will surely win.