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Tsilhqot'in decision won't change approach to First Nations: Taseko

By Tribune staff

The November 21 Xenigwet'in decision gives **Taseko** Mines some certainty, but it will not change the company's approach to or relationship with Chilcotin First Nations, Brian Battison says.

"We will continue to respect the Tsilhqot'in people, their culture, their history, and their relationship with the land," says Battison, vice-president of corporate affairs for **Taseko**.

The company wants to build the Prosperity copper and gold mine at Fish Lake, 125 kilometres southwest of Williams Lake.

According to Justice Vickers in the last week's landmark ruling, the proposed Prosperity site does not fall in the 2,000-hectare area where Justice Vickers found the Tsilhqot'in to have aboriginal title.

It is, however, within the area that Justice Vickers found the Tsilhqot'in have the right to hunt and trap birds and animals.

Taseko is preparing for a formal environmental assessment of the Prosperity Project.

"In terms of our approach, nothing will change," Battison says. "The Tsilhqot'in National Government has asked us to paint them a picture of what the project would look like, and we're working hard to respond. Our relationship with First Nations is very important."