
News Release Communiqué

CHIEF JIM BOSS COMMEMORATED AS A PERSON OF NATIONAL HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

Lake Laberge, August 23, 2008 - On behalf of the Honourable John Baird, Canada's Environment Minister, Parks Canada along with Chief Ruth Massie, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, today unveiled a Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada plaque to commemorate the national historical significance of hereditary Chief Jim Boss of the Ta'an Kwäch'än. The ceremony took place at Helen's fish camp, to honour Chief Jim Boss as part of the historic fabric of the Canadian North.

"Our government is proud to honour a man who worked tirelessly to improve the lives of his people and preserve First Nation land and culture through changing times" said Minister Baird. "With today's commemoration, we take another step in bringing the historic significance of Chief Jim Boss to all Canadians."

Hereditary Chief Jim Boss, of the Ta'an Kwäch'än First Nation, was one of the first Yukon Aboriginal leaders to recognize the importance of preserving the land and its resources for his people. He is remembered for having initiated the first Yukon land claim in the year 1902. His leadership allowed the First Nations, from the southern region of the Yukon, to make the transition from a traditional way of life to a Euro-Canadian economy. Throughout his lifetime, Chief Jim Boss was an influential and outspoken leader whose insight helped guide the Yukon First Nations.

"It has always been important to our people that Chief Jim Boss be recognized and commemorated for his foresight to look after his people in our homelands forever. Chief Jim Boss was a visionary leader", said Chief Ruth Massie of the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council.

Created in 1919, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada advises the Minister of the Environment about the national historic significance of places, persons and events that have marked Canada's history. The placement of a commemorative plaque represents an official recognition of their historic value. It is one means of educating the public about the richness of our cultural heritage, which must be preserved for present and future generations.

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