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British Columbia Cattlemen's Association

NEWS RELEASE

BC Cattle Industry to Apply for Intervenor Status on DRIPA Legal Case

KAMLOOPS, BC – The BC Cattlemen's Association intends to apply to intervene in the Pender Harbour and Area Resident's Association (PHARA) court challenge of British Columbia's Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA). PHARA filed the case in the BC Supreme Court on February 9, 2026, seeking a constitutional challenge of DRIPA and for the court to declare the legislation of no force and effect.

The BC Cattlemen's Association intends to apply for intervenor status in the case to seek leave from the Court to speak to the ranching industry interests in the matter. PHARA is seeking declarations from the Court that DRIPA is unconstitutional because it is:

- **Inconsistent with section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982***, as it does not balance Indigenous and non-Indigenous interests, allow for justified infringements of Aboriginal rights by the Crown, or follow court-established processes for determining those rights;
- **Beyond provincial jurisdiction**, as it intrudes into matters under Canada's exclusive authority and creates the potential for Aboriginal rights to be recognized differently across the country; and
- Alternatively, **a violation of democratic rights protected by section 3 of the *Charter***, on the basis that DRIPA allows for agreements that transfer governance authority to bodies that are not accountable to the electorate.

DRIPA is concerning for ranchers in British Columbia because it could jeopardize security of private land and Crown tenures that support our ranch operations.

Yesterday, the province proclaimed BC Beef Day and hosted a delegation of ranching industry representatives from around the province. During a meeting with Premier Eby, the Association again urged the province to clarify its reconciliation plans and to ensure protections for landowners and tenure holders.

"These are the very tenures that allow us to produce food for the public and steward the resources under our care," explains Werner Stump, BCCA President. BCCA members are deeply concerned that co-governance between the provincial government and First Nations could impact vital water and land use tenures. Stump continues to say, "We are concerned that co-governance models erode the stability that tenures are meant to guarantee."

This application to intervene is not a challenge of Indigenous rights or reconciliation. Rather, it is about exploring whether the province has made a mistake in delegating decision-making responsibility not balancing non-Indigenous interests. BC Cattlemen's Association supports fair and transparent reconciliation processes that strengthen relationships over the long term.

About BC Cattlemen's Association

The BC Cattlemen's Association (BCCA) is the recognized voice of beef cattle ranchers throughout British Columbia. Established in 1929, the Association has long served as a grassroots advocate for ranchers. Our mission is to promote, support and protect a healthy cattle industry that provides quality beef products and is guided by strong membership, environmental stewardship, respect for stakeholders and excellent business practices.

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