

*Williams Lake to Host 40th Annual Elders Gathering*

Preparations are already underway for what organizers expect will be the largest gathering of First Nations Elders from across British Columbia. The Tl’etinqox (Anaham) Government is hosting the Elders Gathering under the theme *River Unity, River Spirit – “Keepers of the land and water”* at the Cariboo Memorial Recreation Centre and Thompson Rivers University from July 12 – 14.

This year’s event kicks off in true Cariboo style with the Wild Wild West Rodeo on July 11 at the Williams Lake Stampede Grounds where in 1970 the Tl’etinqox People put on a rodeo for then Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau. Plans are in the works to invite the current Prime Minister Trudeau to share in the fun and excitement.

Also new this year is the Cultural Tent City, which will showcase the culture of the Tsilhqot’in, Shuswap and Carrier Peoples of the Cariboo Chilcotin. People visiting the Tent City will be treated to exhibits and displays highlighting the language, culture and traditions of these local First Nations.

The Chair of this year’s Gathering Committee, Cecil Grinder, is excited about hosting the milestone event. “In the true spirit of our Peoples, First Nations from throughout the Cariboo region are joining together to host more than 3,000 Elders from across British Columbia. I also welcome the financial support of the federal and provincial governments and invite corporate sponsors to join us in this great opportunity to share the culture and traditions that have sustained our Peoples for thousands of years on these sacred lands.”

Over the past 40 years the Elders Gathering has become the premier event for celebrating and sharing the heritage of BC First Nations so registration fills up fast. To sign up or for information on this year’s entire event, including registration forms for the Arts and Craft exhibition, please visit [www.eldersgathering.ca](http://www.eldersgathering.ca).

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For more information contact:

Cecil Grinder, Chair 40th Elders Gathering Dianne Garner, Director Elders Society

(250) 394-4240 or [cgrinder@tletinqoxtin.ca](mailto:cgrinder@tletinqoxtin.ca) (604) 798-4519 or [40elders@telus.net](mailto:40elders@telus.net)