

## **Justice For Colten: Statement on Behalf of the Indigenous Environmental Justice Project**

Life is a gift of Creation. Our responsibility is to ensure that life continues. Justice, from an Indigenous perspective, is to do the Creator's work.

And yet, the loss of Indigenous life occurs at disproportionately high levels in Canada and across Turtle Island. The Indigenous Environmental Justice Project would like to acknowledge the profound loss of Colten Boushie. Our thoughts and prayers extend to his family, loved ones, and community. We also recognize the anger and sadness experienced by many Indigenous people in response to the not-guilty verdict in his shooting death. We denounce the colonial structure that perpetrates and then defends such violence. Injustice persists despite calls for reconciliation.

To the family, loved ones, and community that surround Colten, we also wish to say: you are not alone. Indigenous and non-Indigenous people are gathering together to celebrate the life of a young man. Gathered together, we bear witness to a racist society intent on the elimination of Indigenous life and we vow to see justice achieved. Indigenous peoples have justice traditions that are strong, resilient, and filled with vision, power, and love. Alive in our languages, lives, and lands, these traditions work powerfully for the maintenance of life – that of young men and women, and of the water, animals, plants, birds, and all the unseen beings. Gathered together, we are working to restore the authority of this law – the law of life that is a gift of Creation.

The Indigenous Environmental Justice Project denounces violence to the land and intimately connected violence to Indigenous peoples. Together with the many individuals and groups that are working for justice, we believe that #JusticeforColten will be achieved. The struggle continues, but with bravery, truth, wisdom, and love, we cannot be stopped.

*The Indigenous Environmental Justice (IEJ) Project is a research initiative based at York University. More information about the project, including key resources for community members, students, activists and scholars, can be found at the project website:*  
<http://iejproject.info.yorku.ca/>