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Small businesses affected by ban on grizzly bear hunt announce Class Action against Province of B.C.

Vancouver, British Columbia (December 18, 2018) - Ron Fleming, owner of Love Bros & Lee, a 45-year guide outfitting company outside Smithers B.C., filed a class action suit in B.C. Supreme Court today, seeking compensation for all guide outfitting businesses following the government's December 2017 decision to ban grizzly bear hunting across the province.

The suit alleges the decision was taken for inappropriate reasons, without regard to proper wildlife management practices, and with the knowledge that the decision would cause harm to guide outfitters.

With 245 guide outfitter businesses, the B.C. industry is an important contributor to the local economy, jobs and quality of life in rural and remote areas. These businesses directly employ more than 2,000 people whose livelihoods are now at risk.

Prior to the ban, fewer than 2% of grizzly bears in B.C. were hunted each year and grizzly bear numbers have been increasing in B.C.

Quotes:

"The government has pulled the rug out from under guide outfitters -- without any consultation. To suggest we can just retrain to other businesses or move to the city is absurd and disrespectful of rural communities." **Ron Fleming, Owner Outfitter, Love Bros & Lee.**

"The Grizzly Bear hunting ban decision by the Province was made without consulting the Tahltan Nation and many other important stakeholders. It has hurt our people culturally, economically and put many of British Columbia's communities and dwindling ungulate and salmon populations at further risk. We support the efforts taken to hold the Province accountable for this very irresponsible, counter-productive and dangerous decision. Wildlife management decisions in British Columbia need to be based on science and best wildlife and conservation practices." **Chad Norman Day, President, Tahltan Central Government.**

"Guide outfitters have been hit very hard by this decision. I hear their frustration daily and understand the need for this lawsuit. If government is not prepared to fairly compensate these outfitters, they are left with little other choice." **Scott Ellis, Executive Director, Guide Outfitters Association of B.C.**

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