

Treaty News

Federal Treaty Negotiation Office



*Providing general news and
Canada's views on BC treaty negotiations.*

December 1997

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We're going Global!



CANADA'S YEAR
OF ASIA PACIFIC
1997 L'ANNÉE
CANADIENNE DE
L'ASIE-PACIFIQUE

1997 has been Canada's year of Asia Pacific. Throughout the year, trade initiatives have focused on Canada's economic position in the Pacific Rim, but none quite so comprehensively as the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit held in Vancouver this past November.

The importance of the BC treaty process was not lost during the week of APEC meetings and parallel conferences. Rather, Canada's success in squarely approaching outstanding land claims was noted several times during the events, and proved to be a source of pride for Canadian delegates. More than ever, APEC drove home the point that developing a new, equitable arrangement between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples is fundamental to ensuring a rich and stable economy.

The positive impact of a new relationship was emphasized during the "Gala '97" dinner that brought together 900 business and political leaders. At the opening of the dinner, Nisga'a Tribal Council President Joseph Gosnell, speaking on behalf of Aboriginal people throughout BC,

reminded delegates that respect and cooperation between different peoples are fundamental to long term economic success.

At the NEXUS 97 Global Indigenous Business Conference at the Squamish Reserve, participants were told that Aboriginal people live not only on this continent, but in 70 countries around the globe, where they account for 300 million of the world's inhabitants. Canada is not alone among Pacific Rim nations in its goal to establish a new relationship between First Peoples and non-Aboriginals, but Canada, and the BC treaty process, are at the forefront of this change. On the international scene we are a success story.

This issue of *Treaty News* focuses on the relationship between treaty-making in BC and Canada's position in the world economy. The articles and regular features in this special extended issue explore the expanding importance of the treaty process, and the efforts that are being made to unite local and global concerns.

For example, our report on NEXUS 97 highlights some of the treaty-related items that appeared on the meeting's agenda, and brings new light to the links between Aboriginal business and treaty-making in both BC and New Zealand.

Focusing on the nuts and bolts of developing business opportunities, *Treaty News* also brings you into

the world of Aboriginal banking and reveals some of the success stories brought about by cooperation between financial institutions and First Nations.

In an article on the innovative Coyote Collective, you will find a profile of a small film production company that strives to bring the BC treaty process to the attention of television viewers in this province and beyond.

Not to forget the importance of public consultation in the treaty process, *Treaty News* also brings you information on "Open Space," a new way to conduct consultation, designed to ensure that you get to speak to all of the issues -- little and big -- that are important to you and your community.

Finally, be sure not to miss the feature on "Understanding the B.C. Treaty Process." This article on a compact, but extremely useful, *resource book* brings you details on how concerned organizations managed to get information on the BC treaty process into the hands of every public school teacher in BC.

As always, the Federal Treaty Negotiation Office looks forward to continuing success in the BC treaty process in 1998. The year ahead will undoubtedly bring new challenges, and opportunities to the making of modern treaties in BC.

[Pull-out: Nisga'a Tribal Council President Joseph Gosnell reminded delegates that respect and cooperation between different peoples are fundamental to economic success]

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In brief

- **New Minister's representative appointed to TNAC**

Minister Jane Stewart has appointed the Hon. Jack Austin to be her alternate representative to the Treaty Negotiation Advisory Committee (TNAC). In this capacity, Senator Austin will attend TNAC meetings when the Minister is unavailable, and communicate the Committee's advice to her. Senator Austin brings a wealth of political and business experience to his new position, including recent work on Canadian-Asian trade. Senator Austin was Principal Secretary to the Rt. Hon. Pierre Trudeau before being appointed to the Senate in 1975.



- **President of the Nisga'a Tribal Council receives Honourary Doctorate**

Chief Joe Gosnell was granted an honorary doctoral degree by Royal Roads University at the institution's first commencement exercises in October. The Honourary Doctor of Laws was bestowed upon Chief Gosnell in recognition of his role in negotiating the landmark Nisga'a agreement-in-principle.

- **New Zealand settles 149 year old land claim**

On Nov. 22, the New Zealand government and the Maori group Ngai Tahu settled what is considered to be the longest running land claim in the world. The claim, which was filed in 1848, concerned land on the country's South Island that was confiscated by the government in the first half of the 19th century. It was then sold to new settlers, despite being occupied by the Ngai Tahu.

As part of the settlement, the Ngai Tahu will receive \$152 million Cdn., a formal apology, the right to access traditional food resources, and exclusive use of some islands and freshwater fishing sites.

- **Vancouver Island Groups unite in negotiations**

The Gwa-Sala-Nakwaxda'wx, Kwakiutl, Namgis, Tanakteuk and Tlatlasikwala First Nations are negotiating together under the name Winalagalis. The scope of the shared negotiations will be defined as the groups progress through the treaty process.

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Global Indigenous Business at NEXUS 97

Indigenous representatives from around the world gathered in Vancouver in late November for the NEXUS 97 Global Indigenous Business Conference. The conference, for Aboriginal business people and their partners, was timed to coincide with APEC, and bring Aboriginal businesses to the attention of the Pacific Rim. Delegates came together to discuss ways to establish new opportunities, business networks, and joint ventures.

While sharing success stories and acknowledging the challenges ahead, delegates from Canada, the United States, New Zealand, Australia and the Philippines spent two days offering advice and encouragement on how to forge new business ties. Their work was built on recognition of the fact that economic development among Aboriginal groups is accelerating and that this same development is a tool to overcome the oppression and marginalization of the past century.



News from across the Pacific Rim

Maori delegates from New Zealand talked about the rapid expansion of Maori businesses into the country's fisheries and forestry sectors as a direct result of settlements under the Treaty of Waitangi.

In forestry, Maori enterprises are set to become one of the major forces in an industry that presently employs 30,000 people and produced \$2.5 billion in export products last year. The area of Maori traditional territory in forest production is estimated at 324,000 hectares. Fewer than 20,000 hectares of this are now under direct Maori ownership and management, but forestry has the potential to grow further: an additional 100,000 hectares of Maori land is considered suitable for production forestry.

Even with these good news stories in mind, delegates were reminded that New Zealand is a small country, whose successes represent only a portion of the economic opportunities available to First Nations in North America.

Opportunities for international cooperation

Strong business links are developing between Canadian First Nations and New Zealand's Maori groups. Several exploratory trade exchanges have already taken place, resulting in the development of a Trade Accord between the Native Investment and Trade Association (NITA) and the National Aboriginal Business Association of Canada on the one hand, and Te Aka Umanga (the National Maori Business

Network) on the other.

The Accord fosters exchanges in trade, business education and indigenous development strategies.

One exciting six-month exchange that grew from the Accord involved Nisga'a graduate student Cory Stephens, who went to work for the Maori Enterprise team of Trade New Zealand. In New Zealand, Stephens began work on a framework for inter-indigenous trade between Maori and other First Nations. He also helped to organize a visit by NITA. In total, his work in New Zealand resulted in a number of agreements for trade in apparel, meat, arts and crafts, and mining, to name a few.

Reports of this successful venture at NEXUS 97 prompted a Nuuchah-nulth delegation to consider a trip to New Zealand in Feb. 1998, to explore joint venture opportunities with Maori groups.

Also at NEXUS 97, delegates from the Philippines signed a Memorandum of Understanding with NITA to explore the possibility of creating a similar trade accord between the indigenous people of the Philippines and First Nations in Canada.

The realities of trade

Amid the good-news discussions on developing partnerships and expanding trade opportunities, a few notes of caution were sounded at NEXUS. Australian delegate Les Malezer noted that part of the challenge in Aboriginal economic development is to work out ways to ensure that activities are appropriate to the integrity of indigenous cultures.

"Aboriginal people want the opportunity to participate in the economic future of Australia," he said, "but as equals and in ways that are appropriate to the needs and dignity of their people."

In this regard, many international delegates appreciated the experience and expertise of First Nations in Canada and the United States who have successfully developed joint ventures and shared economic developments with non-Aboriginal companies.

First Nations delegates from BC equally appreciated hearing an address by Dame Georgina Kirby of New Zealand, who outlined the important development implications flowing from treaty settlements in her country in areas such as education, land utilization, economics, technology and health. These developments, she said, contribute to economic success as much as an entrepreneurial spirit; they are expected to stabilize the Maori economic position over the course of the next few years.

Those attending the conference agreed that although business and society have become more complex and competitive, Aboriginal people are facing the future with tremendous opportunities to take full advantage of the strong leadership, vision, purpose and goals they possess. The Vancouver conference has helped to build linkages to make global indigenous business achievable.



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Top Negotiator's News : Robin Dobson

People often ask what it's like to be a Chief Federal Negotiator in the treaty process. The best answer that I can give is that it is hard, but rewarding work.

For me one of the most satisfying experiences of the last three and a half years has been meeting citizens in communities all across southern B.C. and discussing treaty negotiations with them.

There is no doubt that there are wide ranging views and concerns on the impacts and outcomes of treaties in this province. At meetings in community halls, schools, libraries, and even in private homes, I have most often found a genuine interest in listening, understanding, and contributing to the identification of a lasting and fair solution to the issue of unresolved Aboriginal land claims. People seem genuinely to want to put this issue behind them and get on with the job of building their communities.



Robin Dodson

This is truly encouraging to negotiators like myself. Treaties will only work if they work for everyone. This is why we put so much effort into our third party advisory and public information processes.

This effort has paid dividends in places like the Sunshine Coast, where we are working closely with the Local Advisory Committee in our attempts to complete an agreement-in-principle with the Sechelt Indian Band.

For those who don't believe their opinion makes a difference, I suggest you get to know your local treaty negotiator and start to get involved.

Robin Dodson currently works on negotiations with First Nations in southwestern BC.

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Policy: public consultation



The federal government's obligation to consult third parties that may be affected by treaty settlements is integral to the BC treaty process.

Canada has several objectives in conducting consultations. Primarily, the government wants to ensure that the interests and expertise of local governments, major industries, business, labour, environmental and outdoor recreation groups are understood and represented in negotiations. Additionally, Canada's negotiators hope to gain technical advice on the feasibility of settlement proposals from those most likely to be affected by them.

Treaty-making is ultimately about creating a new relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, so consultation plays an important role in shaping settlements that are lasting and meaningful to all affected by them. It provides a forum for non-Aboriginal communities to understand the concerns and aspirations of their Aboriginal neighbours, and vice versa.

Consultations on treaty issues in BC are conducted through the Treaty Negotiation Advisory Committee (TNAC) and through 18 regional and local advisory Committees (RACs and LACs). TNAC was established to advise both the federal and provincial governments on broad, province-wide treaty issues, while RACS and LACs provide advice on issues that pertain to specific sets of negotiations.

In representing the interests of all Canadians in negotiations, Canada will ensure that existing rights and the public interest are respected and dealt with equitably. Negotiators are accountable for the advice they receive, and will provide ongoing feedback to advisory committees on how governments intend to use the advice they gather.

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Coyote Collective: illuminating the small screen with a unique point of view

They named their production company after the trickster Coyote, the creature in Okanagan spirituality responsible for the inexplicable mishaps of daily life: the picture that falls off the wall without warning, or the pen that seems to disappear into thin air. The work of film makers Richard Hersley and Renae Morriseau explains much more than the puzzling, however. In the form of the Coyote Collective, the two have tackled issues of profound importance to Aboriginal communities and to the relationship between First Nations and their non-Aboriginal neighbours.



Richard Hersley

Hersley and Morriseau met 10 years ago while working on a television project for a local station in Winnipeg. He was non-Aboriginal, with an interest in First Nations issues, and experience in TV production. She was Cree and Salteaux, relatively new to the world of broadcasting, but with a wealth of life and work experience in First Nations communities.

For their first project together, Hersley and Morriseau created segments for the television series *First Nations*. Only when they moved to B.C. in 1990 did they create the Coyote Collective, and begin to make a series of longer documentaries that have been broadcast throughout Western Canada.

says Morriseau.

"We formed the Collective as a vehicle for telling First Nations stories,"

"We wanted to ensure that the public has a clearer, fairer picture of what Native concerns are," continues Hersley. "The media are a very important part of how people form their views on issues, but First Nations really have an insufficient voice on TV. I'm interested in rectifying that, to equalize how media portray Aboriginal concerns -- to bring people together."

The most recent of the Coyote Collective's documentaries investigates B.C.'s turbulent history of land claims. "We wanted to clearly and accurately explore the situation in B.C. so that all people will understand what land claims are and why they exist," says Hersley.

The making of the film marked a departure for the team. "In the past, our programs have focused on issues of concern to Aboriginal communities, told from a First Nations perspective. *In Whose Land is This?* we changed that somewhat and took a more journalistic approach," remarks Morriseau, who wrote, researched and directed the show.

Although the program has met with success in broadcast, it was not without difficulties in the making. "We produced the program in conjunction with Global Television and the Dept. of Canadian Heritage, but we mostly used our own money," co-director and producer Hersley explains. "We tried the usual routes for funding but could not wait -- we knew *Whose Land is This?* was a film that needed to be done and reach the public now. So we just went ahead and created the program."

Changing their film-making point of view also posed some challenges for the Coyote Collective. With the new journalistic approach came the need to reconcile philosophical differences about how to tell the film's story. "But in the end, after much debate, we were able to agree and still keep an Aboriginal community perspective" says Morriseau.



Renea Morriseau

Now that *Whose Land is This?* has been released, what is on the horizon for Hersley and Morriseau? For Hersley, it is another TV program called *Making Treaties in B.C.*; while for Morriseau, it's time to tackle other challenges.



The Coyote Collective asks, Whose Land is This?

In 1885, a Nisga'a named Neis Puck challenged a Royal Commission of Inquiry to explain how Nisga'a lands had become the property of the Crown. He asked, "Who is the chief that gave this land to the Queen? Give us his name, we have never heard of him."

Puck posed his question 98 years after the first European arrived in Nisga'a territory. Now, 210 years after that first arrival, at a time when non-Aboriginals are about 95 per cent of our population, the question of who owns the land in B.C. persists.

The Coyote Collective's most recent production, *Whose Land is This?* examines B.C.'s land question in careful detail. The one hour television documentary chronicles the history of land administration in B.C., and discusses the political and social forces that have led to a resurgence of land claims in the late 20th century. Candid moments with the B.C. Treaty Commission, federal and provincial government representatives, the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs, and scholars illuminate the many facets of land claims.

"We just tried to tell the truth about the history of this province and let our audience make their own decisions about it," says the program's co-director Richard Hersley.

Whose Land Is This? aired on Global television on Sept. 6. A rebroadcast is planned for B.C., and the program will also be shown in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

The program is available to the public on VHS cassette by calling (604) 990-9337 or (604) 990-6773.

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Progress in Negotiations

The following provides an update on the status of BC treaty negotiations as of December 1997.

6 Stage Treaty Negotiation Process:

- Stage 1 - Statement of Intent
- Stage 2 - Preparation for Negotiations
- Stage 3 - Negotiation of a Framework Agreement
- Stage 4 - Negotiation of an Agreement-in-Principle
- Stage 5 - Negotiation to Finalize a Treaty
- Stage 6 - Treaty Implementation

North-East

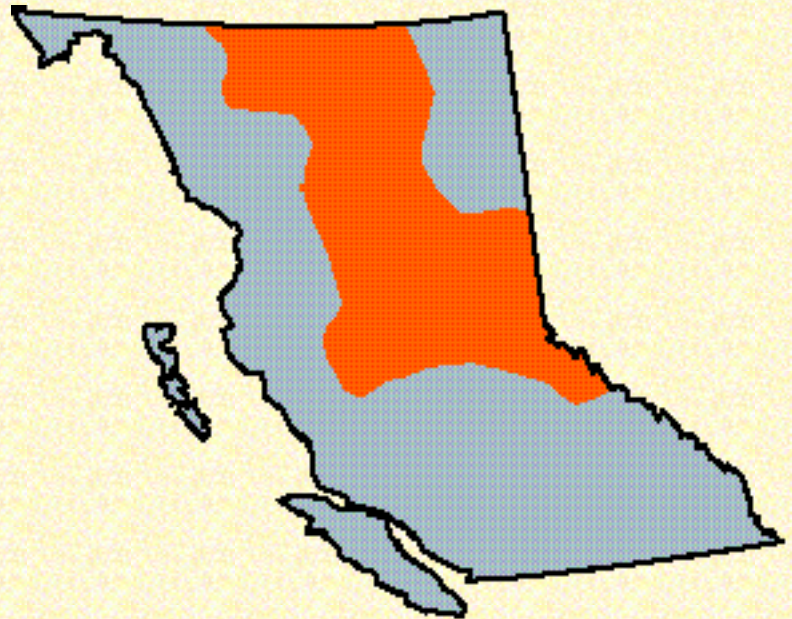
Chief Federal Negotiator:
Eric Denhoff

Senior Negotiator:
Bill Zaharoff

**Public Information and
Consultation Advisor:**
Mark Podlasly

Status report:
Stage 3: Cheslatta Carrier Nation

Stage 4: Carrier Sekani Tribal Council
Lheit-Lit'en Nation
Tsay Keh Dene Band
Yekooche First Nation



North-Coast

Chief Federal Negotiators:



Tim Koepke
Pauline LaMothe
Wendy Porteous
Vince Collins

Senior Negotiator:

Bill Megill

**Public Information and
Consultation Advisor:**

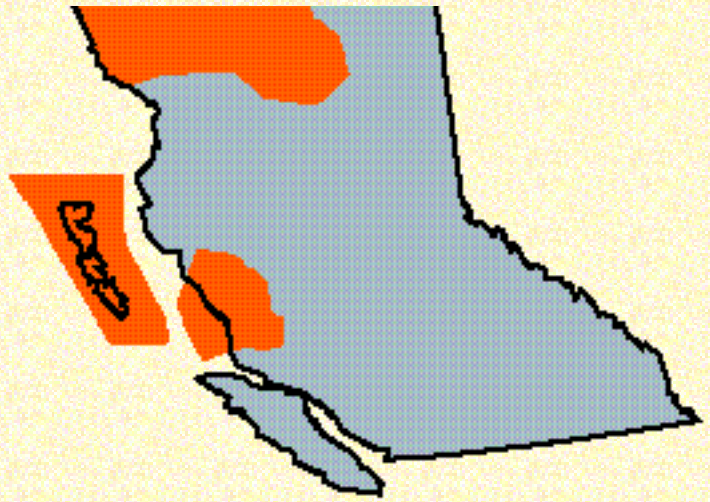
Mark Podlasly

Status report:

Stage 2: Carcross/Tagish First Nations
Haida Nation

Stage 3: Oweekeno Nation

Stage 4: Champagne and Aishihik First Nations
Heiltsuk Nation
Kaska Dena Council
Taku River Tlingit First Nation
Teslin Tlingit Council



North-Central

Chief Federal Negotiators:

Eric Denhoff
Wendy Porteous
Pauline LaMothe

Senior Negotiator:

Bill Zaharoff

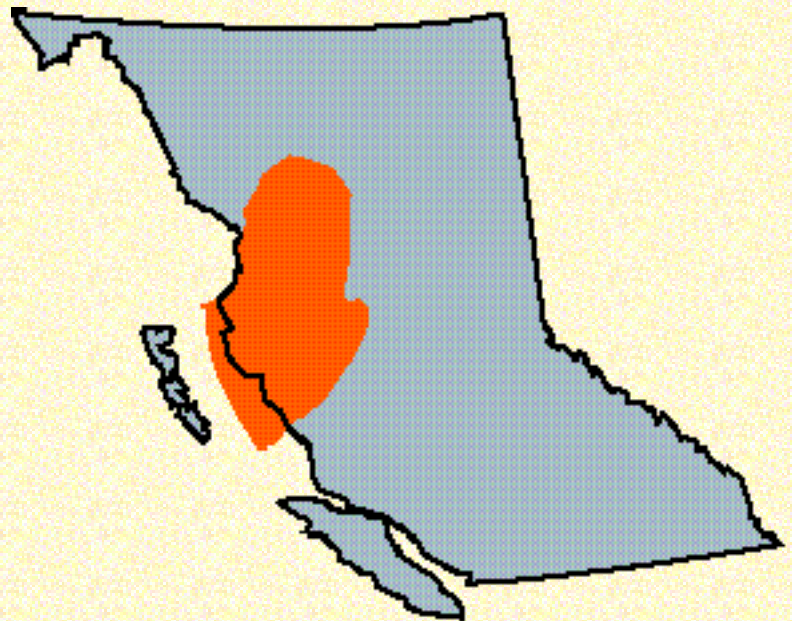
**Public Information and
Consultation Advisor:**

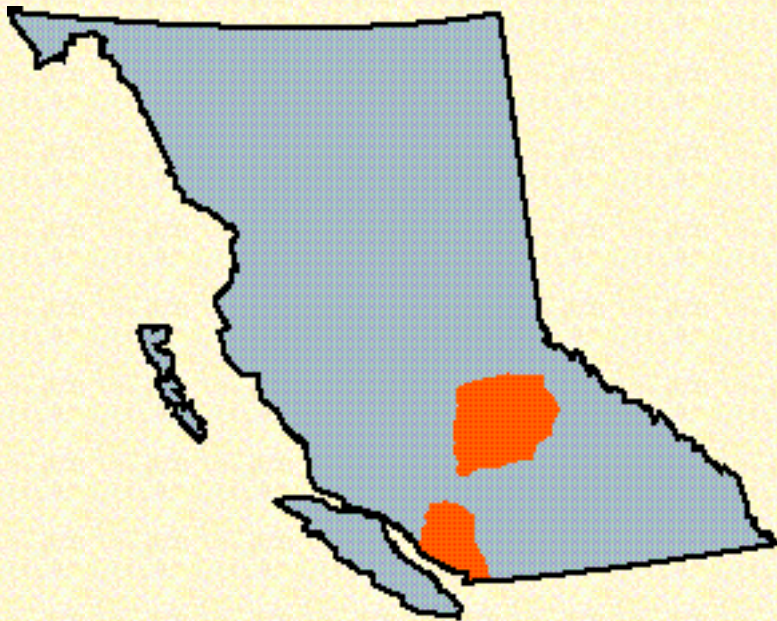
Chris Corrigan
Joseph Whiteside

Status report:

Stage 3: Lake Babine Nation

Stage 4: Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs
Gitksan First Nation
Haisla (Kitimaat) First Nation
Tsimshian First Nation
Wet'suwet'en First Nation





South #1

Chief Federal Negotiators:

Eric Denhoff
Robin Dodson
Vince Collins

Senior Negotiator:

Mike Sakamoto

Public Information and Consultation Advisors:

Diane Gielis
Chris Corrigan

Status report:

Stage2: Katzie First Nation

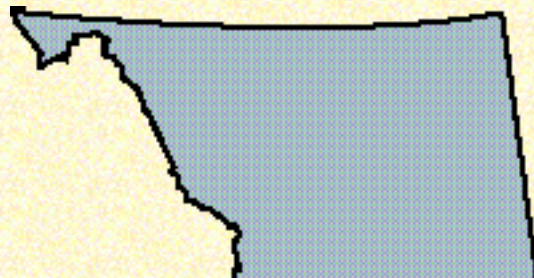
Stage 3: Cariboo Tribal Council
Nazko First Nation
Squamish First Nation

Stage 4: Esketemc (Alkali Lake) Nation
Sechelt Indian Band
Tsleil-Waututh (Burrard) First Nation

South #2

Chief Federal Negotiators:

Robin Dodson
Wendy Porteous
Vince Collins



Senior Negotiator:

Mike Sakamoto

**Public Information and
Consultation Advisor:**

Chris Corrigan

Diane Gielis



Status report:

Stage 3: Ktunaxa-Kinbasket First Nation

Musqueam First Nation

Sto:Lo First Nation

Xaxli'p First Nation (Fountain Band)

Stage 4: In-SHUCK-Ch/N'Quatqua

Tsawwassen First Nation

Ts'kw'aylaxw First Nation (Pavilion)

Westbank First Nation

Yale First Nation

Vancouver Island

Chief Federal Negotiators:

Ted Hughes

John Langford

Eric Denhoff

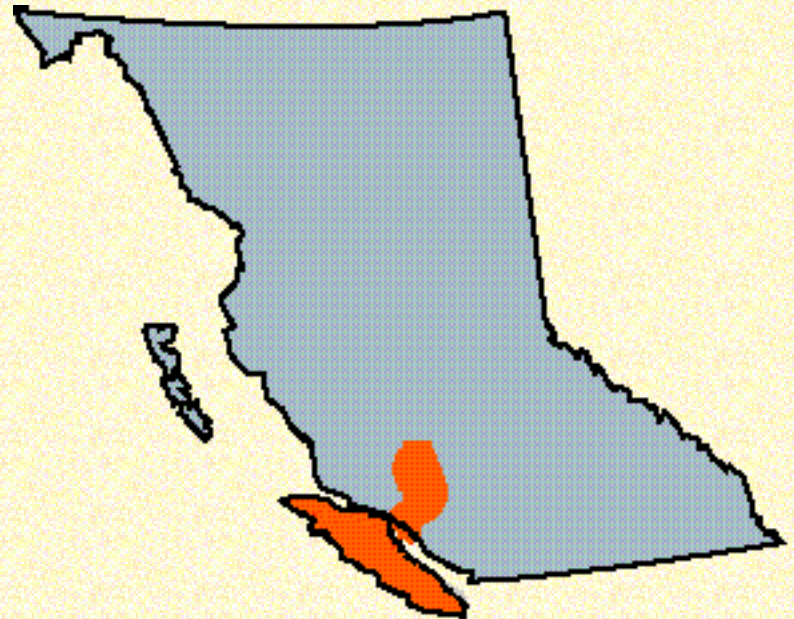
Senior Negotiator:

Ross McKinnon

Chris Lok

**Public Information and
Consultation Advisors:**

Jonathan Rayner



Status report:

Stage 2: Winalagalis

Kwakiutl Laich-Kwil Tach Council of Chiefs

Stage 3: Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group

Stage 4: Ditidaht and Pacheedaht First Nation

Homalco First Nation

Klahoose First Nation

Nanaimo First Nation

Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council
Sliammon First Nation
Te'mexw Treaty Association

Nisga'a

Chief Federal Negotiators:

Tom Molloy
Florence Roberge

Acting Senior Negotiator:

Jim Barkwell

Public Information and Consultation Advisor

Joseph Whiteside

Status report:

Agreement-in-principle concluded March 1996. Negotiations toward a final agreement now underway.

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Making space for all voices in public consultation

Federal and provincial consultation advisors tried a new method of community consultation in November, when they held two Open Space meetings in Pemberton and D'Arcy.



**Consultation at the Pemberton
Open Space meeting**

The Open Space approach to meetings was first used in 1984, after it was noticed that coffee breaks were often the most effective part of professional conferences. During these breaks, participants are free to discuss the topics *they* feel are most important -- issues that are often not on the official agenda.

Harrison Owen, the man credited with developing the approach, recognized the importance of keeping this "coffee break" style of discussion at the centre of Open Space meetings. To facilitate this, Open Space discussions are held in a circle formation, providing what Owen calls the "fundamental geometry of human communication." By sitting face to face, meeting participants, rather than the facilitator, have power over how the meeting progresses. They define the agenda by identifying the issues that

they feel are important and need to be discussed.

The way Open Space works can best be explained by its four principles: "whoever comes are the right people to have"; "whenever it starts is the right time"; "when it is over, it is over"; and, most important, "whatever happens is the only thing that could have happened". Open Space also works according to the "Law of Two Feet" which permits participants at an Open Space meeting to leave their group at any time, to move to another group, or to leave the meeting entirely.

The communities of Pemberton and D'Arcy were chosen to test this new approach to consultation because of their small size and because negotiations with the In-SHUCK-ch N'Quatqua First Nations are moving well through stage 4. Negotiators therefore decided that they wanted to gather detailed information and advice from residents in the communities in an innovative way.

The topic of the Open Space meeting, "What would the implementation of a treaty mean to you?" left the agenda wide open to accommodate any issues the participants wanted to bring up.

In Pemberton, where the first of the two Open Space meetings was held, more than 50 people turned out to attend. Everyone was given the opportunity to raise treaty negotiation topics for discussion, and the subjects that were generated formed the agenda for the meeting. When the group had identified its areas of interest, all the participants were asked to sign up under those topics closest to their hearts. This

process created the Open Space discussion groups, which were facilitated by the participants themselves.

So what did people in Pemberton talk about? Some important issues on the minds of participants were access to settlement lands, provision of services, equal rights, and environmental management.

As with many experiments, the first Open Space consultation meeting had a few glitches. However, organizers did their best to iron out these challenges for the next meeting in D'Arcy.

Bearing in mind the challenges of the Pemberton meeting -- especially the fact that community members wanted public information in addition to a chance to air their views -- organizers were better able to tailor the general Open Space approach to community needs in D'Arcy. The result: a very successful session that wedded the principles of Open Space to the more traditional question and answer format of regular community meetings.

Three dozen people attended the D'Arcy Open Space. Their reaction to the process was very positive, according to federal consultation advisor Chris Corrigan, and the input that discussion groups provided was useful.

A report on the two community consultation meetings is being compiled and will be sent to all who participated. This report will include information on how the governments have, or intend to, consider and act upon community members' suggestions.

With the positive results from the meetings in Pemberton and D'Arcy, it is likely that the Open Space approach will be used in other areas of the province. Watch for it where you live, and join your community in Open Space!

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You Say...



In this column, Eppa (Gerard Peters) reflects on his hopes for the treaty process, and the new relationship he hopes to see between the In-SHUCK-ch N'Quatqua and the rest of Canada.

We're not negotiating the sovereignty of the In-SHUCK-ch N'Quatqua people. I don't believe sovereignty is an issue. To seek sovereignty will have the effect of solidifying the status quo. Nothing will change. And it is change we want. We want to negotiate our way into Canada.

Eppa (Gerard Peters) We have to show that we can support ourselves. We need In-SHUCK-ch N'Quatqua people to be able to pay our own way, including our own government. We need to create wealth and we need to be able to tax it. You can't tax the poverty that now exists for many of us.

Of course, wealth can't come at any cost. We must be active partners in any business development.

I believe that we can accomplish these economic development goals because we have a good relationship with third parties. For example, every six months we meet with forest industry representatives and officials from the Ministry of Forests. We have a sound relationship, I believe, with many of the people who live in Pemberton.

The fact is that there's no responsible way to isolate yourself. We share the same economy, like it or not. The people I represent have come to believe that.

Eppa (Gerard Peters) is the chief negotiator for In-SHUCK-ch N'Quatqua, whose traditional territories lie to the north and southeast of Pemberton. He has served in various capacities with the Mount Currie and Samahquam bands, and has worked in government and the private sector. Mr. Peters was also a founding executive member of the Native Communications Society of BC.

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Banking on success: New cooperation between Aboriginal communities and financial institutions

In Canada, Aboriginal business is a growth industry. There are over 20,000 Aboriginal firms operating in every sector of the economy, including software development, resource industries, media services and other knowledge-based fields.

For many First Nations, creating these business opportunities on their traditional territory is an essential part of developing the self-sustaining communities that will make the implementation of treaties successful. Healthy businesses translate into an increased capacity to manage human and financial resources, which means leverage over the pace and nature of community economic development.

Financial institutions that provide Aboriginal banking services facilitate this community capacity-building. At the same time, they tap into a new client base -- one that represents four percent of the Canadian population. The potential for mutual benefit in Aboriginal banking arrangements is clear; the question is how to make the partnership work.

Naturally, the simplest way to build a partnership is to establish a lending relationship. Many companies set up by First Nations get their start with the assistance of banks and credit unions.

However, there is more to Aboriginal banking than simply making loans. Financial institutions with Aboriginal banking services also share knowledge and skills with First Nations entrepreneurs. Tailor-made training and development programs allow Aboriginal business people to benefit from bankers' expertise, and learn negotiation, management, leadership, and interpersonal skills in a business setting.

For example, when the Bank of Montreal formed a partnership with the Gitlakdamix Band of the Nisga'a Tribal Council, the Bank and the Band agreed to share more than costs and revenues. The Bank's branch in the Nass Valley created jobs for Band members, who acquire banking knowledge while at work. The presence of the Bank in the community also enables monies generated in the Nass Valley to stay in the local economy.

BC Regional Manager of Aboriginal Banking for the Bank of Montreal, Richard George, says, "We currently have three full-service on-reserve branches in BC, and we expect that several more will be established in the near future. "We are committed to providing service to First Nations because developing a better working relationship on a day-to-day basis is key to building long-term partnerships."

Of course, the road to partnership is not always obstacle-free. Sometimes, First Nations and financial

institutions need to reconcile their mutual expectations before a successful partnership emerges. The Bank of Montreal's Richard George continues, "First Nations can face challenges in getting capital from chartered banks if they don't clearly understand the services a chartered bank offers. So, the rapport First Nations have with their account managers at the local level is really important. A good relationship with the account manager will help ensure that First Nations feel comfortable in approaching the bank."

For its part, the financial institution can facilitate a partnership by developing a deep understanding of the community's specific economic development goals and choices. Do members of the First Nation engage in traditional economic activity? To what degree? Does the First Nation's workforce have any special characteristics? Is the community located near an economic hub? What values are important to the community?

Moreover, it is critical that banks and credit unions communicate openly about their practices. A clear statement of services, lending terms and explanation of what types of security a financial institution requires are information that is especially important to on-reserve borrowers who may have minimal experience dealing with financial institutions and little property to offer as collateral.

When these good partnership practices are followed, the results can be impressive for all involved.

Financial institutions have provided loans to thousands of Aboriginal businesses through direct application of their own funds and through partnerships with parallel lending institutions such as Canada's 33 Aboriginal Capital Corporations and the Business Development Bank of Canada. The advisory services they can provide to First Nations have also proven to be valuable. For example, a survey of status Indians by the First Nations Resource Council showed that 91 percent of respondents who had worked with an investment counselor found that the specialist's advice helped them.

Financial institutions that work with First Nations today -- whether by providing loans, advice or work experience -- also benefit in the form of a chance to help First Nations manage treaty settlements tomorrow. Institutions looking toward the future are helping First Nations to prepare for the management of funds from the cash components of treaties, and revenue generation from potential mineral rights, royalties, real property taxes and other taxation regimes.

"While First Nations communities are in dialogue with governments, they should have plans in place for the post-treaty period, such as financial and human resource strategies," Richard George says emphatically. "First Nations have to address the need to make sure they are ready for responsibilities in their own communities, and banks can help them accomplish this."

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Understanding the BC Treaty Process... The story behind a new resource for teachers and students

When the BC Teacher's Federation (BCTF) shared some of its lesson aids with the First Nations Education Steering Committee, the Committee found some gaps in the resources. Wanting to ensure that the gaps were filled, the Committee proposed to the BCTF that they work together on new material. The result: an information-packed resource called *Understanding the BC Treaty Process*.

Larry Kuehn, Director of Research and Technology at the BCTF says, "We recognized the absence of up-to-date material on First Nations issues in our Lesson Aids Service, and we wanted to correct that. We believe that it is very important for teachers to be well informed about the BC treaty process. When issues in society are contentious, they spill over into schools and can cause conflicts among students. Informed teachers can help diffuse these conflicts."

The First Nations Education Steering Committee and the BCTF joined with the Tripartite Public Education Committee on Treaties, and together with some funding from the BC Treaty Commission, they began to plan out the scope of their project. Writing on the project began in April, and by the second week of August, *Understanding the BC Treaty Process* was in print.



Christa Williams, BCTF President Kit Krieger, and Tripartite Public Education Committee member George Watts at the launch of *Understanding the BC Treaty Process*

Christa Williams, Director of the Steering Committee, says that the working group, "was fairly united in our intentions" while the project was underway. The only problematic area for the team was deciding whether -- or how -- to explain the various alternatives to the BC treaty process that non-participating First Nations may view as desirable.

"In the end, we decided simply to acknowledge that there are alternatives and leave it at that, in part for practical reasons," Williams continues.

To ensure that the resource would be relevant for its intended audience, the working group met with 25 teachers to find out what they wanted to see in the

text. Once the booklet was drafted, it was also sent for review by a joint committee that included teacher representatives.

The final product is impressive: a 36 page primer on the BC treaty process. The booklet addresses many questions, such as "What are treaties and why are they being negotiated?", "What is meant by certainty?", "What is self-government and how does it relate to treaties?", "How was the current treaty process initiated?" and "How are negotiations proceeding?". The booklet also includes discussion of the major issues in negotiation, the role of the BC Treaty Commission, and the context for treaty-making in BC.

To ensure that the resource was widely available to teachers from the beginning of the school year, the BCTF distributed copies to all of its members; in total 36,000 booklets were given out. The Teachers Federation also retained several thousand more copies in its Lesson Resources library, so that teachers would be able to obtain class sets for special projects.

It was not until October that the booklet received an official launch, however. When it was unveiled to the media, a whole new audience for the resource opened up. "I was receiving between three and four calls a day about it for two weeks after the launch. The response to this project from First Nations and the general public has been fabulous," says Colin Braker, Communications Manager at the First Nations Summit and the distributor of the booklet since October.

In fact, public response to the booklet has been so strong that a second printing is anticipated. "People generally view the booklet as an excellent overview of the treaty process," reports Braker.

"It is a very versatile product," continues Williams. "It's written so that it can appeal to a wide audience. We've even heard that communities around the province are using it for their public education and consultation efforts around the treaty process. Its usefulness has surpassed what we envisioned," she concludes.

Nonetheless, work to ensure that information on the treaty process is readily available to BC teachers is not over. For example, in the upcoming months, the First Nations Education Steering Committee and the BCTF plan to expand their resources for teachers by creating professional development modules and developing workshops where teachers can spend time examining the BC treaty process in more detail.

"Teachers are also telling us that they need materials for their elementary-level students, so we plan to do some work in that area, too," the BCTF's Kuehn concludes.

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Website Box

You can use the Internet to access several aboriginal business and economic development homepages across Canada. A few that you might want to check out:

Aboriginal Business Canada: <http://www.abc.gc.ca>

Canadian Aboriginal Cyber-Mall: <http://www.cacmall.com>

Profiles in Aboriginal Business Leadership: <http://www.abc.gc.ca/abenaki/abclst.htm>

Native Investment and Trade Association: <http://www.native-invest-trade.com/>

Nisga'a Home Page: <http://www.ntc.bc.ca/>

Many of these sites are accessible from the INAC homepage at <http://www.inac.gc.ca/sites/index.html>.

See what's new on the INAC Website: look for this box in Future Issues of Treaty News!

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Q&A: Who is Canada's newest Chief Federal Negotiator?

The Federal Treaty Negotiation Office is pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Vince Collins to the position of Chief Federal Negotiator.

In his new capacity, Mr. Collins is responsible for treaty negotiations with the Kaska Dena Council and the Squamish, Musqueam, and Sto:lo First Nations. It is also expected that he will assume responsibility for several other negotiations over the coming months.

Mr. Collins has been a senior public sector manager for over 25 years, the last 14 of which he has spent in executive positions with the Province of British Columbia.

Among his roles at the province of BC, Mr. Collins was Assistant Deputy Minister for Parks at the Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing from 1983 to 1987. More recently, he served as Deputy Minister for the Ministry of Transportation and Highways. In conjunction with this last position, he served as Chair of the Board for the BC Systems Corporation.

Just prior to coming to the Federal Treaty Negotiation Office, Mr. Collins was the part time Chair of the Board for the Workers Compensation Board of British Columbia. He has also undertaken a variety of consulting assignments in public sector management.

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Credits

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