

# Treaty News

Federal Treaty Negotiation Office



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

---

**October 1999**

## In this issue:

[Nisga'a legislation introduced in the House of Commons](#)

[In brief](#)

[More developments in the treaty process since \*Delgamuukw\*](#)

[Treaty talks forge links with City of Prince George](#)

[Negotiator's news: John Bell](#)

[Policy: The inherent right to self-government](#)

[Progress in negotiations](#)

[New tools approved for use](#)

[Ditidaht - Ladysmith initiative a model of regional cooperation](#)

[First Nations receive funds to improve land and resources capacity](#)

[Question & Answer](#)

[Credits](#)



[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)



## Nisga'a legislation introduced in the House of Commons



**Prime Minister Jean Chrétien addresses attendees at a community event in New Aiyansh.**

The Honourable **Robert Nault**, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, tabled *The Nisga'a Final Agreement Act* in Parliament on October 21, 1999.

"The Nisga'a Treaty signifies our willingness as a society to reconcile major historical and cultural differences through negotiation and compromise while respecting the rights of all Canadians," said Minister Nault. "Addressing historical issues through partnership allows us to move forward together to create a brighter future for all Canadians."

Introduction of the legislation in the House of Commons follows on the heels of a visit in late August by the Right Honourable **Jean Chrétien** to the Nass Valley. He was accompanied by the Honourable **Robert Nault** and the Honourable **David Anderson**, Minister of the Environment.

The visit was the Prime Minister's second trip to Nisga'a traditional territory; the first trip took place in 1969, when the Prime Minister held the Indian Affairs portfolio.

During this trip, the Prime Minister met with Nisga'a Tribal Council President **Joseph Gosnell**, Sr. and other Nisga'a officials, as well as other Nisga'a at a community event in New Aiyansh.

President Gosnell welcomed the Prime Minister and other guests: "To the Nisga'a people, your last visit, Prime Minister, made history. It signalled the start of a process that I believe continues today."

"Prime Minister, it took all those intervening years since you were last here with us to negotiate the Nisga'a Treaty. Twenty-five years of struggle. Twenty-five years of hard fought compromise. We believe, as you do, that in order to achieve something, we must work hard at it, recognizing that we as Aboriginal people today are not the only people in this great land of ours.

The Nisga'a Treaty is a triumph, I believe, for Aboriginal people across this country... I also believe that together we are sending an important message in an often fractious world, that negotiations, not confrontations, not violence, are the only way to resolve our differences."

Mr. Gosnell went on to say, "We are confident that as more Members of Parliament and all Canadians learn about the Nisga'a Treaty, they will recognize it for what it is -- a fair, honourable and thoughtful document that in our view will stand the test of time."

The Prime Minister echoed Mr. Gosnell's sentiments on the meaning of the Treaty, saying that "the Nisga'a Treaty is a fair and affordable settlement that reconciles the needs and interests of all of the parties."

The Prime Minister added, "I want to tell each and everyone that the commitment of our government to the Final Agreement is unwavering."

In response to questions from the media after his speech, the Prime Minister restated the government's commitment to present the settlement legislation to Parliament. "The wish of the Parliament has to be heard and voted upon," he said.

Historically, treaties in Canada became effective upon approval by the Crown without the need for any federal legislation. The modern practice for land claims agreements is to require passage of federal settlement legislation to give legal effect to a treaty. For the Nisga'a Treaty, this is the process which began on October 21, 1999.

The Bill to pass the Nisga'a Final Agreement is similar in structure to other Acts giving effect to land claim settlements in Canada. Should the bill complete all three readings in the House of Commons, it will proceed to Senate for its consideration. The Nisga'a Treaty will come into force upon the enactment of the federal *Nisga'a Final Agreement Act*.

Anyone interested in following the debate on the Nisga'a settlement legislation in the House of Commons can do so by watching the CPAC television channel, or by viewing transcripts on the Parliamentary Internet site at [www.parl.gc.ca/](http://www.parl.gc.ca/).

## [Table of Contents](#)



[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)



## In Brief

### Meet the Minister



The Honourable **Robert Nault** was appointed Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development in August, 1999.

Mr. Nault has been the Member of Parliament for Kenora-Rainy River, a Northern Ontario riding which includes 51 First Nations communities, since 1988.

Prior to entering the House of Commons, Mr. Nault studied at the University of Alberta and the University of Winnipeg, specializing in recreational administration and political science. He went to work for Canadian Pacific Rail in 1980 as a trainman. In 1986 he was elected Chairman of Local 431 of the United Transportation Union, and he also served as the Union's Vice General Chairman of Canadian Pacific Lines West.

Mr. Nault has held numerous portfolios since his election to the House of Commons. While in Opposition, he served as Chairman of the Northern Ontario Liberal Caucus, Opposition Critic for Labour, Associate Critic for Aboriginal Affairs, and Associate Critic for Energy, Mines and Resources.



[Table of Contents](#)



[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)



## More developments in the treaty process since *Delgamuukw*

December 1997 marked an important moment for Aboriginal groups in British Columbia. The Supreme Court of Canada, in its decision in *Delgamuukw*, for the first time commented on the nature and scope, and set out a test for Aboriginal title.

All parties in the treaty process knew that the principles articulated in *Delgamuukw* would have an impact on the negotiation of treaties. Therefore, the federal and provincial governments and the First Nations Summit moved quickly to explore, in partnership, the implications of the decision. The three parties initiated a tripartite review of the British Columbia Treaty Commission (BCTC) process in April 1998.

The key outcome of the ongoing dialogue has been unanimous agreement on the importance of the Chief Justice's superficially simple, but profound, comment in the majority judgment in *Delgamuukw*. "Let us face it," Chief Justice **Lamer** said. "We are all here to stay."

From the federal government's perspective, negotiations lead to the best solutions that meet the interests of everyone involved in treaty-making.

Fifty-one First Nation groups are now involved in treaty negotiations, and 37 of these are at the agreement-in-principle stage. The Sechelt negotiations are in the final agreement stage and governments expect to table a number of offers with First Nations in the coming months.

The tripartite review of the treaty process has revealed that some First Nations in the BCTC process are frustrated with the slow pace of negotiations. This is understandable: treaty negotiations are complex and require a great deal of consultation and policy work on all sides.

Accordingly, the Government of Canada has been working with the B.C. government, the First Nations Summit and the BCTC to find ways to accelerate the negotiation process. Their ultimate goal is to speed up negotiations so that First Nations and other citizens can access the benefits of treaties as soon as possible.

Progress has already been achieved in many areas. For example, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development approved \$15 million in funding over three years to assist First Nations with unresolved land claims in B.C. to improve their capacity to enter into complex land and resource negotiations and consultations. (See [First Nations receive funds to improve land and resources capacity](#) for more information.)

To demonstrate their commitment to the treaty process, the Governments of Canada and B.C. publicly endorsed a Statement on Aboriginal and Crown Title in the context of the B.C. treaty process.

Most significant, however, are the new tools recently designed by the federal and provincial governments for strategic use by their negotiators. These tools, commonly referred to as "treaty-related measures," will assist the partners at tables where agreements could be concluded if certain obstacles were removed. (See [New tools approved for use](#) for more information).

The goal is to conclude treaties in B.C. The sooner this goal can be achieved, the sooner all British Columbians will be able to benefit from the increased potential for economic development that certainty will bring.

## [Table of Contents](#)

---



[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)



## Treaty talks forge links with City of Prince George



Guest and participants launch *Treaty Awareness Month* in Prince George

Situated on the traditional territory claimed by the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation, the City of Prince George is home to several First Nations organizations including the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council.

Also known as B.C.'s Northern Capital, Prince George regularly plays host to treaty negotiation main tables, workshops and working groups.

Raising public awareness on the different subjects being negotiated remains an ongoing challenge. The city of Prince George has embraced that challenge by hosting *Treaty Awareness Month*.

Coordinated in partnership with local First Nations, the B.C. Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, the Federal Treaty Negotiation Office and the city of Prince George, the event has generated strong public attention and positive feedback.

Inaugurated in 1998, events held this year built upon last year's success.

*Treaty Awareness Month* is kicked off by a civic declaration signed by the Mayor. "The brief signing ceremony brings all the players together for a few minutes so the public can better understand who is involved," said **Eric Denhoff**, Chief Federal Negotiator.

"*Treaty Awareness Month* coordinates and unifies our activities into a central, easy to understand theme," Denhoff said. "It sheds the complexity of these negotiations and gives the public a door through which they can watch at their leisure."

Events scheduled throughout the month are designed to spotlight the city's growing role as a centre for treaty negotiations as well as its ongoing role as a centre for Aboriginal business and commerce. It also offers a unifying theme to the varied treaty-related activities in the city.

Supported by groups like the Prince George Treaty Advisory Committee and by members of the Northern Interior Regional Advisory Committee, *Treaty Awareness Month* has become a great way for everyone to learn more about treaty making.

In June, members of the Lheidli T'enneh treaty talks took advantage of *Treaty Awareness Month* to

raise some public awareness of their own. Well advanced in Stage 4 of the B.C. treaty process, the parties wanted to update the region on the advanced state of their treaty talks.

With seven chapters of the Agreement-in-Principle available for public review, the Chief Negotiators presented copies of their work to local libraries. The ceremony took place at the Fraser-Fort George Regional Museum and was attended by Commissioner **Wilf Adam** of the Treaty Commission and *Iona Campagnola* of the Fraser Basin Council.

Librarians from the University of Northern B.C., the College of New Caledonia and the Prince George Public Library accepted binders containing the public chapters.

The event helped raise the profile of local talks, raised awareness of the progress of negotiations, and provided everyone with a way to get involved in the treaty process.

[Table of Contents](#)

---



[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)





## Negotiator's news: John Bell

I worked for over 35 years in Canada's Foreign Service. During this time, I was struck by a number of parallels between the issues of poverty and development in countries where I served, such as Brazil, Cote d'Ivoire, and Malaysia, and our own challenges at home working with First Nations in achieving their aspirations.

So, when I returned to Vancouver from my last assignment abroad, I was delighted at the opportunity to become deeply involved in the treaty process as a Chief Federal Negotiator. To my mind, the treaty process is one of the most important challenges facing British Columbia: it involves nothing less than forging a new partnership between First Nations and government, underpinned by broad public support.



**John Bell is Chief Federal Negotiator for the Musqueam and Sto:lo negotiations.**

The policy issues involved are more complex than I would have imagined when I started a few months ago. Even with the best will on all sides, it is clear that it will take considerable effort to negotiate treaties that ensure certainty, provide adequate land, include money for development, opportunities for resource sharing and a framework for self-government.

From my vantage point, it seems essential to accelerate the process, through a variety of creative measures, while working diligently to "get it right" in comprehensive treaties.

I presently negotiate at the Musqueam and Sto:lo tables. Both negotiations will lead to urban treaties. Each has its own unique aspects and special challenges. I look forward to working closely with the other parties at the tables to arrive at agreements that will be practical and satisfying for all of us.

[Table of Contents](#)



[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)



---

## Policy: The inherent right to self-government

The Government of Canada announced its Inherent Right Policy in 1995. In this policy, the Government recognizes self-government as an existing Aboriginal right under section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

Among other things, the policy states key principles for self-government negotiations. Foremost, it provides that Aboriginal governments and institutions must function within the framework of the *Canadian Constitution* and the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The policy also clarifies the subject matters which Canada is prepared to negotiate with First Nations governments.

The inherent right to self-government does not include a right of sovereignty, as it is understood in international law. All First Nations exercising self-government will remain part of Canada, contributing to the Canadian federation and strengthening relationships with neighbouring communities. The spirit of the Inherent Right Policy means that it is appropriate that First Nations exercise self-government over matters that are essential to their community and integral to their culture.

In B.C., the federal government – with the participation of the province – is negotiating self-government agreements as part of the British Columbia Treaty Commission process. These agreements will result in practical arrangements which will meet the interests of all parties at the negotiating table.

The self-government provisions contained in the Nisga'a Treaty are one example of such self-government arrangements negotiated in B.C. Other treaties including self-government agreements will have provisions specific to the First Nations they involve.

Canada is mindful of the need to negotiate agreements which allow First Nations to govern themselves in a manner reflective of their unique identities, while ensuring that First Nation governments are firmly within the Canadian legal and constitutional fabric.

This view is shared by the Nisga'a people. In the words of Chief **Joseph Gosnell**, President of the Nisga'a Tribal Council, "We are negotiating our way into Canada, not out of it."

[Table of Contents](#)

---



[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)

# Treaty News

Federal Treaty Negotiation Office



## Progress in Negotiations

### North

**Chief Federal Negotiators:**

Vince Collins

Eric Denhoff

Tim Koepke

Pauline Tassone

Wendy Porteous

**Public Information and Consultation Advisor:**

Marc Sanderson

**Status report:**

Stage 2: Häida Nation

Stage 3: Cheslatta-Carrier Nation

Stage 4: Carrier Sekani Tribal Council

Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs

Gitxsan

Haisla Nation (Kitimaat)

Heiltsuk Nation

Kaska Dena Council

Lake Babine Nation

Lheidli T'enneh Nation

Northern Regional Negotiations Table

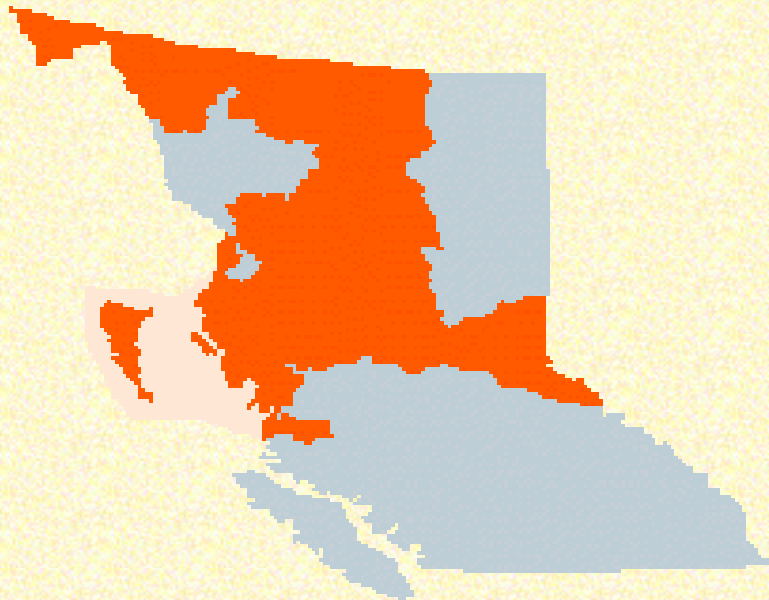
Oweekeno Nation

Tsay-Keh Dene Band

Tsimshian Nation

Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs

Yekooche Nation



### South

**Chief Federal Negotiators:**

John Bell



Vince Collins  
Robin Dodson  
Pauline Tassone  
Tom Molloy  
Wendy Porteous

**Public Information and Consultation Advisors:**

Helen Davies  
Diane Gielis

**Status Report:**

Stage 3 : Katzie Indian Band  
Musqueam Nation  
Squamish Nation

Stage 4 : Cariboo Tribal Council  
Esketemc First Nation (Alkali Lake)  
In-SHUCK-ch N'Quat'qua  
Ktunaxa-Kinbasket Nation  
Nazko Indian Band  
Sto:lo Nation  
Tsawwassen First Nation  
Ts'kw'aylaxw First Nation (Pavilion)  
Tseil Waututh Nation (Burrard)  
Westbank  
Xaxli'p (Fountain Band)  
Yale First Nation

Stage 5 : Sechelt Indian Band

## Vancouver Island

**Chief Federal Negotiators:**

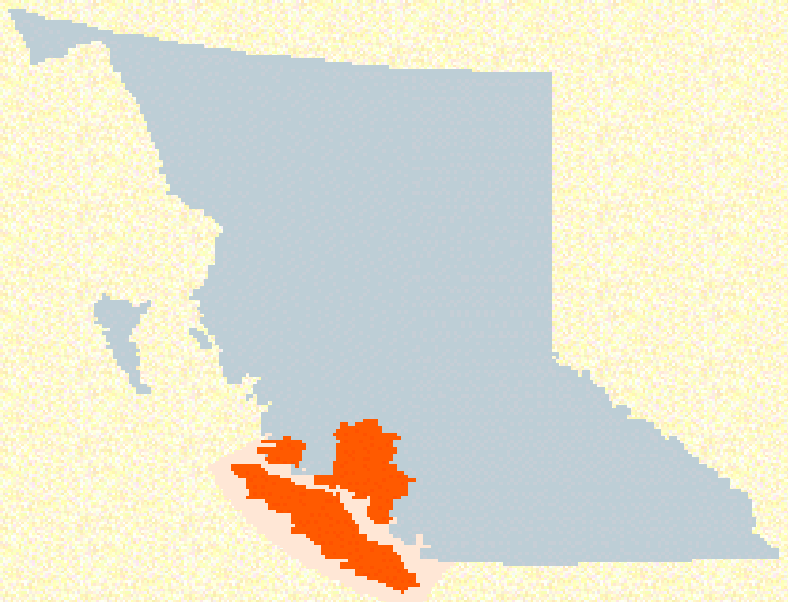
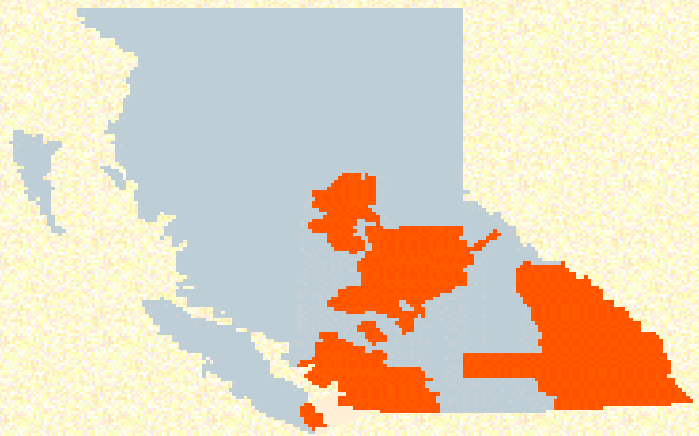
Vince Collins  
Eric Denhoff  
John Langford

**Public Information and Consultation Advisor:**

Jonathan Rayner

**Status Report:**

Stage 3 : Gwa-Sala-Nakwaxda'xw  
Kwakiutl First Nation  
Namgis First Nation  
Quatsino First Nations  
Tanakteuk First Nation  
Tlatlasikwala First Nation



Stage 4 : Ditidaht First Nation  
Kwakiutl Laich-Kwil-Tach Council of  
Chiefs  
Homalco First Nation  
Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group  
Klahoose First Nation  
Snuneymuxw (Nanaimo) First Nation  
Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council  
Pacheedaht First Nation  
Sliammon First Nation  
Te-mexw Treaty Association

## Progress in Negotiations

The governments of Canada and B.C. are expected to table three or four land-and-cash offers with First Nations this fall. In fact, offers were tabled just recently with the Ditidaht and Pacheedaht on Vancouver Island and with the In-SHUCK-ch N'Quat'qua in the Pemberton area. In addition, governments responded to an initial proposal by the Tsawassen First Nation on October 20, 1999.

## The six stages of the B.C. treaty process:

1. Submitting a statement of intent
2. Preparing for negotiations
3. Negotiating a framework agreement
4. Negotiating an agreement-in-principle
5. Negotiating a final agreement
6. Implementing the treaty

[Table of Contents](#)

---



[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)



---

## New tools approved for use

In recognition of the need to breathe new life into the treaty process, Canada and B.C., in consultation with First Nations partners, have designed a set of tools called "treaty-related measures." Canada has now approved their strategic use by federal negotiators based on the unique circumstances arising at individual negotiating tables, where they might lead to agreements more expeditiously.

For example, First Nations have expressed concern that lands they have earmarked for selection in treaty negotiations will be fully exploited by the time their treaties come into effect. In critical circumstances, negotiators will now be in a position to protect lands which all parties have agreed will be selected for a treaty.

Treaty-related measures would also enable Canada or B.C. to acquire land of particular significance to a First Nation, when it becomes available, for the purposes of including it in a treaty settlement. For example, a parcel of land holding cultural or economic importance to a First Nation could be purchased on behalf of that First Nation in advance of a Final Agreement, for eventual inclusion in a treaty settlement.

Additionally, where a role in the management of land and resources is envisioned for First Nations at negotiating tables, treaty-related measures could enable First Nations to begin exercising their new responsibilities, on a temporary, pilot basis, before the treaty comes into effect.

[Table of Contents](#)

---



[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)





## Ditidaht - Ladysmith initiative a model of regional cooperation

Ditidaht, a Vancouver Island First Nation, and its neighbour, the Town of Ladysmith, have big plans for regional cooperation. The two small communities have joined forces in an innovative project to develop a structured and accountable system of Aboriginal self-government, with qualified people to lead it.

The Ditidaht are currently in agreement-in-principle negotiations towards a treaty. To prepare for the transition from Indian Band administration under the *Indian Act* to self-government under the treaty, Ditidaht members are lined up to train with Ladysmith town staff in a number of areas key to operating and implementing Ditidaht self-government.

The First Nation's goal is to manage its own government affairs and provide essential services to over 550 Band members. Ladysmith, on the other hand, is looking to benefit from Ditidaht's experience in forestry and fisheries management, and from increased cultural and information sharing with the First Nation.

### Creating a partnership

*"We share the same values and each ask ourselves the same question: What can we do for our respective communities that works well and adds value to our communities? This is a unique partnership that makes sense."*

In spring 1998, Ditidaht advertised for the services of an experienced local government administrator to help the Band develop a system of government for the post-treaty environment and the capacity of Ditidaht people to administer their own government.

Ladysmith Town Administrator **Gord Horth** answered the ad after conferring with colleagues at City Hall. "I talked to some of our managers and suggested that collectively we have a lot of skills to offer," he said.

"Post-treaty, many First Nations will take on local government status," Horth continued. "Through the treaty process, First Nations are becoming more established, and there's a need for co-operative relationships between First Nations and municipalities all across the province."

The initiative between Ditidaht and Ladysmith is built on an organizational structure and a regionally-based outlook that emphasizes interests shared by the partners.

"Ladysmith and Ditidaht share the same regional district," says Horth. "We share the same values and each ask ourselves the same question: What can we do for our respective communities that works well and adds value to our communities? This is a unique partnership that makes sense."

Ditidaht Band Manager **Brian Cofsky** agrees. "This partnership is an understanding between us that this is Ditidaht's goal, this is Ladysmith's goal, and this is how we are going to help each other," said Cofsky.

## Taking action

Brian Cofsky is clear that the partnership with Ladysmith is about preparing for life after a treaty is signed. "We have to make sure that when the final treaty settlement is agreed to, there's an infrastructure in place to take on the responsibilities transferred over to the Band," he said.

However, preparing for the future also means coming to terms with change.

"A lot of our people are scared of change," said Ditidaht Chief **Jack Thompson**, "so we wanted a solid structure of governmental systems to allay those fears. We need to have systems of self-government that are well-structured, policies in place that make us more accountable to the Band membership. Our people see this initiative as a change, and they want to be part of the change."

Ditidaht's partnership with Ladysmith will help smooth the transition to self-government for Band members by providing access to on-the-job training at Ladysmith Town offices and in the community of Nitinat Lake, where the First Nation is based.

"We are offering our skills and expertise on an as-needed or as-requested basis," says Horth. "Band members will see how Ladysmith does things and decide whether it makes sense to apply those practices to the Ditidaht Band."

*Organizers foresee training opportunities for Ditidaht Band members in government administration, finance, public works, community and social services, and land use planning.*

In particular, the project's organizers foresee training opportunities for Ditidaht Band members in government administration, finance, public works, community and social services, and land use planning. Training will be provided in the form of supervised practical experience in addition to university or college courses.

The benefit for Ladysmith, says Horth, will be to learn from Ditidaht's expertise in resource management issues.

"Both communities are surrounded by forest land, but Ditidaht has been taking a much more hands-on approach to forests as a resource for its people," says Horth. "In fisheries management, Ladysmith needs to be involved in issues like stream stewardship and enhancement. If we don't do our job and protect the resource, we are denying our fishermen and future generations an economic opportunity. So we can benefit from Ditidaht's experience on those issues alone."



Ditidaht Councillor **Joe Thorne** sums up the partnership this way: "This is the perfect scenario," says Thorne. "You look at what Ladysmith has to offer to Ditidaht and what Ditidaht can offer Ladysmith. When you find a way to combine these two, you are going to come with a win-win situation."



[Table of Contents](#)



[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)



## **First Nations receive funds to improve land and resources capacity**

In Spring 1999, the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development announced an investment of up to \$15 million, over three years, to fund initiatives aimed at enhancing First Nations' capacity to participate in land and resource management negotiations and consultations.

First Nations with an unresolved land claim in B.C., whether it is being addressed through the British Columbia Treaty Commission (BCTC) process or through other processes, are eligible to apply for funding in any of the three phases of the initiative.

In July, members of the Capacity Initiative Council reviewed 167 applications for funding in the first year of the initiative. The Council, which includes representatives from B.C. First Nations, industry and labour organizations, is responsible for assessing proposals and making recommendations to departmental officials.

From the 167 proposals received, 74 were approved for funding in various amounts up to \$75,000 during the 1999 – 2000 fiscal year, resulting in a total commitment of \$5 million. The successful proposals are also eligible for funding at the same levels over the 2000 – 2001 fiscal year.

A large number of projects approved for funding are in the area of land and resource management. For example, funding was approved for the development of a multi-community lands and resources database to research traditional and cultural uses of land, and for the development and validation of a land and resource decision-making process. Another proposal that received funding was to support a technical intern who will be learning wildlife and fisheries inventory skills with the B.C. Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, and migratory bird and wetland management with the Canadian Wildlife Service.

These initiatives are designed to build capacity for post-treaty land and resource management. In the short term, they will also enhance the First Nation's capacity to deal with current consultation matters.

The flow of funds for successful proposals began in October. Monies will be forwarded for the projects on a monthly basis, provided that recipients meet accountability requirements through regular reports to the Capacity Initiative Council.

A call for project proposals to begin in the 2000 – 2001 fiscal year also went out in October. Proposal guidelines and an application form was mailed out to B.C. First Nations in the middle of the month. The due date for this round of proposals is December 15, 1999.

Projects approved for funding for 2000 – 2001 will begin receiving funds in April 2000.

Further information about the Capacity Initiative, and projects that received funding for 1999 - 2000 may be obtained from Alice Wong, Secretariat, Capacity Initiative Council at (604) 775-5118, toll free at 1-800-665-9320 or by e-mail [wonga@inac.gc.ca](mailto:wonga@inac.gc.ca). You may also refer to the [June 1999](#) issue of Treaty News for more background information about the initiative, and to read biographies of the members of the Capacity Initiative Council.

[Table of Contents](#)

---



[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)



## How does the Nisga'a Final Agreement ensure equality?

Equality among citizens is a principle that Canadians cherish. It is also a value embedded in the Nisga'a Final Agreement.

The Final Agreement provides that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms will apply to the Nisga'a Government and to everyone on Nisga'a Lands. The Nisga'a Government, like other governments in Canada, will respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of all citizens.

Because they were here before the arrival of others, Aboriginal people have unique rights which are protected by section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. Through the practical arrangements set out in treaties, these unique rights are reconciled with the rights of other Canadians and the sovereignty of Canada. The Nisga'a Final Agreement sets out specific provisions whereby the Nisga'a will be empowered to pursue their aspirations as Aboriginal people, while respecting the equality of all Canadians.

While there are presently very few non-Nisga'a citizens living on Nisga'a Lands, the Final Agreement addresses their rights. The Final Agreement ensures non-Nisga'a citizens resident on Nisga'a Lands an effective voice when the Nisga'a Government contemplates decisions that may significantly and directly affect them.

In addition, non-Nisga'a residents of Nisga'a Lands will have rights of appeal and rights of recourse to the courts for judicial review of administrative decisions made by the Nisga'a Government or Nisga'a Public Institutions.

Finally, non-Nisga'a residents will have the right to vote for, or become members of, Nisga'a Public Institutions, such as school boards, when institutional activities could directly and significantly affect them.

[Table of Contents](#)



[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)



---

## Credits

Treaty News is published by the Federal Treaty Negotiation Office. It is distributed to organizations and individuals interested in the progress of treaty negotiations in British Columbia. Readers are invited to reprint articles from Treaty News in other publications.

The Federal Treaty Negotiation Office of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development represents all federal departments, agencies and the people of Canada in treaty negotiations with First Nations in British Columbia.

### **Federal Treaty Negotiation Office**

PO Box 11576  
2700-650 West Georgia Street  
Vancouver, BC  
V6B 4N8

Telephone: (604) 775-7114 or 1-800-665-9320  
Facsimile: (604)775-7149

[Table of Contents](#)

---



[\[Publications\]](#) [\[Back to List\]](#) [\[Français\]](#)