

Great News!

This week the Laich-Kwil-Tach Treaty Society, Canada and BC are issuing a joint news release to announce that we have signed an agreement that will advance our treaty negotiations. The agreement is called "We Wai Kai Transition to Stage 5 Negotiations under the BC Treaty Process." A link to the agreement will be posted on our Facebook page and our web page (LKTS.ca) as soon as possible.

Community engagement on these negotiations began in January 2019 and was an important topic of discussion at all of our community meetings. Council approved the agreement in April and it is now signed by all three Parties. The agreement transitions We Wai Kai to Stage 5 negotiations where we will negotiate the bigger issues that were difficult to discuss in Stage 4 because of the governments' limited resources and mandates for Stage 4 tables. During Stage 5, the treaty team will work collaboratively with Canada and British Columbia to build a comprehensive land package, a shared-decision making process for the territory and a revenue sharing model. We will complete fiscal chapters and agreements and we will negotiate fisheries.

The Commitment Agreement moves us forward in negotiations and fulfills our commitment to the community to advance negotiations towards a full treaty package for your consideration and eventual vote. As we go, we will continue to engage the community to ensure you are informed and to ensure that the community continues to inform negotiations and our negotiating positions. We are pleased with this opportunity and look forward to advancing the negotiations and sharing more information at our upcoming meetings. Please watch Facebook and our website for meeting dates and times. We look forward to seeing you.

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
IRR-94502
Aug. 16, 2019

Ministry of Indigenous Relations and
Reconciliation

Canada, British Columbia and We Wai Kai Nation Advance to Final Stage of Treaty Negotiations

CAMPBELL RIVER – The governments of Canada, British Columbia and the We Wai Kai Nation have signed a new agreement that will advance reconciliation and treaty negotiations.

Chief Brian Assu of the We Wai Kai Nation, the Honourable Carolyn Bennett, federal Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, and the Honourable Scott Fraser, provincial Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, signed the We Wai Kai Transition to Stage 5 Negotiations Under the BC Treaty Process. This Agreement moves the We Wai Kai Nation to Stage 5, Final Treaty Negotiations and supports the momentum recently built in these negotiations. It also guides the three parties in the development of a treaty that defines a new relationship between the We Wai Kai Nation, Canada and British Columbia.

In Stage 5 negotiations, the three parties will continue to use a collaborative approach to treaty making to negotiate land ownership and stewardship, law-making authorities and governance. This approach recognizes that Aboriginal rights are inherent and will not be extinguished or surrendered. These principles will be written into a constitutionally-protected treaty and result in a government-to-government relationship that is central to reconciliation.

In this way, Canada, British Columbia and the We Wai Kai Nation are working together to negotiate a treaty that is flexible and able to adapt to changing circumstances over time. This is key to achieving reconciliation and supporting healthy and prosperous Indigenous communities in Canada, which benefits We Wai Kai citizens and all British Columbians and Canadians alike.

Quotes:

Chief Brian Assu, We Wai Kai Nation –

“This Agreement speaks to the considerable momentum in our negotiations and is a product of our collaborative, interest-based work with Canada and British Columbia. We have a shared interest in expediting negotiations towards a treaty that recognizes our inherent rights and is informed by the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This agreement is important as we seek to become full participants and partners in the future of Canada and British Columbia and as We Wai Kai citizens, we are excited about this important step towards treaty.”

Carolyn Bennett, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations –

“Congratulations to the We Wai Kai Nation on the hard work they have done to make their vision of self-determination a reality. Through flexible and innovative approaches we are advancing treaty negotiations and moving forward on our shared journey of reconciliation and a better future for the We Wai Kai Nation and all Canadians.”

Scott Fraser, Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation –

“Our work with We Wai Kai has been based on mutual respect, open dialogue and practical approaches – qualities that have allowed us to move forward to the final stage of treaty negotiations. Together we have created a framework for a treaty that recognizes the inherent rights of Indigenous peoples, is based on lasting government-to-government relationships and reflects the principles of the United Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.”

Learn More:

- [We Wai Kai Transition to Stage 5 Negotiations Under the BC Treaty Process](#)
- [We Wai Kai First Nation](#)
- [BC Treaty Commission](#)

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