



BC TREATY COMMISSION

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## Durable treaties require tough choices

VANCOUVER – All parties to the three treaties now being considered have had to make tough choices and show courage to reach agreement, according to the BC Treaty Commission.

Chief Commissioner Steven Point said, on the eve of treaty initialling ceremonies for Tsawwassen First Nation and Maa-nulth First Nations, “We have known for a long time that we had to resolve these land claims in British Columbia, and that it is not an easy task.

“In modern treaty negotiations no one comes to the table empty-handed. If we are to have fair and balanced agreements, there must be give and take by all parties. We applaud the parties for having done that,” said Point.

The Treaty Commission notes there has been broad consultation on these issues but at the end of the day the parties have to make the tough choices that will result in durable settlements.

The Lheidli T'enneh were the first to initial a treaty at a ceremony in Prince George, October 29. Tsawwassen First Nation will initial its agreement today and there will be a similar initialling ceremony tomorrow for the Maa-nulth First Nations on Vancouver Island.

Then there will be ample opportunity for careful and considered study by all British Columbians of the details of these agreements now awaiting ratification by First Nations, and the other parties.

“All of us have to find it within ourselves to move forward towards a more enduring basis for a new relationship,” said Point. “First Nations will have at long last found a place for themselves in Canadian society, and all British Columbians will benefit from having healthy First Nation communities.”

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