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## First Nation delegates elect newcomer to Treaty Commission

VANCOUVER – Celeste Haldane, Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council treaty manager, will join incumbent Commissioner Robert Phillips as the newly elected commissioners of the BC Treaty Commission following First Nations Summit elections Thursday.

Haldane received the most votes from Summit delegates on the first ballot. Shana Manson, who served on the Treaty Commission since November 2009, lost on the second ballot. A third ballot was required to see Commissioner Phillips re-elected.

“Commissioner Manson has a good grasp of the issues in treaty negotiations and in the treaty process and her knowledge and experience were a real asset to the Treaty Commission,” said Sophie Pierre, chief commissioner. “We are fortunate that Celeste has a similar understanding of the issues and a legal background, which will ensure a seamless transition.

“Robert has gained considerable experience working with the parties at the tables over the past four years,” said Pierre. “Our task as keeper of the process will be difficult in the days ahead and we will benefit from the knowledge and experience these two individuals bring to the Treaty Commission,” said Pierre.

The Treaty Commission will continue pressing the federal government to end the delays and fully engage in treaty negotiations and will ask the new Premier to pursue interim solutions and continue the work on revenue sharing and shared decision making, said Pierre. All governments are being urged to make treaty completion a priority and First Nations are being encouraged to resolve their territorial issues and prepare for self government.

This will be Commissioner Phillip’s third, two-year term. He is a member of the Northern Secwepemc te Qelmukw (Shuswap) of the Canim Lake First Nation. He is a former chief negotiator with a background in aboriginal justice and economic development.

Phillips and Haldane join federal appointee Jerry Lampert and provincial appointee Dave Haggard as commissioners.

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*The Treaty Commission is the independent body responsible for overseeing treaty negotiations among the governments of Canada, BC and First Nations in BC. It has three roles: facilitation, funding, and public information and education. For more information please visit [bctreaty.net](http://bctreaty.net).*