



BC TREATY COMMISSION

203 –1155 W. Pender St.
Vancouver B.C. V6E 2P4
604 482 9200, Fax 604 482 9222
info@bctreaty.net. www.bctreaty.net

Newsletter Update: February 2000

First Nations reject initial offers

Five treaty tables are looking at offers of land and cash made by Canada and BC over the last three months, but the optimism voiced by the Treaty Commission last year has faded.

In its 1999 annual report, the Treaty Commission noted that negotiations on lands and resources were accelerating and the Treaty Commission looked forward to positive results in the coming months. First Nations reactions to overall offers and to the amount of land and cash being put on the table has forced a reconsideration of those predictions.

None of the parties have walked from negotiations but it is now difficult to say when an agreement in principle will be achieved at any of the tables where an offer has been made.

There is significant disagreement at some tables over whether "offer" is even the right word to describe what is being put forward by Canada and BC. Some First Nations negotiators say that "proposal" is a more accurate term, given the preliminary nature of the talks.

Canada and BC, in a joint news release, describe an offer as "the governments joint proposal for core components that would be the basis for further negotiations toward an agreement-in-principle."

In addressing the Gitanyow, for example, BC and Canada said:

"This offer is made without prejudice. It is made on the understanding that a final agreement on any of the following matters is conditional on the Parties resolving all outstanding issues in negotiation ... Acceptance of this offer would only be a first step toward achieving an AIP."

With respect to the amount of land and cash being put on the table, Canada and BC say that they are prepared to consider alternative arrangements to meet the interests of all parties.

"We don't see it as essential that we have the same objectives. We do see it as essential that the Parties acknowledge each others' objectives and find ways to accommodate our interests to the extent that we are all sufficiently comfortable with the agreement that we negotiate," federal and provincial negotiators told one First Nation.

The packages that have been put on the table by Canada and BC include provisions for self government, as well as lands, resources and cash.

Although land and cash amounts differ from table to table, there are some common elements:

- First Nations would have law making powers over their own people in matters which are integral to their culture and identity, such as education, family and child services, health services, and policing.
- The Indian Act tax exemption would be phased out, in eight years for GST and 12 for income tax.
- First Nations would have the right to levy direct taxes on their citizens living on settlement land.
- Lands held under treaty would be held in fee simple by the First Nation and would not be regarded as Indian reserves.
- The approach to certainty that was used in the Nisga'a treaty would be adopted. That is, aboriginal rights would continue to exist but they would be modified as set out in the final agreement.

Main table meetings are being held to give local communities and First Nations members an opportunity to learn more about the state of negotiations. Full details of the offers or proposals made by BC and Canada are available at the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs web site which is accessible through www.bctreaty.net.

First Nations	Population: approx.	New land: approx.	Cash
Ditidaht	550	1,802 hectares	\$17.0 M
Pacheedaht	225	834 hectares	\$5.5 M
In-Shuck-ch	1,055	16,024 hectares	\$29.8 M
Gitanyow	714	19,960 hectares	\$13.50 M
Snuneymuxw	1,250	1,863 hectares	\$40.3 M
Sliammon	845	3,462 hectares	\$16.75 M



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Newsletter Update: February 2000

Chief Commissioner Richardson appears before Senate committee

The Nisga'a treaty must be ratified so that treaty making in British Columbia will not be delayed or derailed, the Treaty Commission has told the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Peoples

Appearing before the Senate committee in Ottawa on February 23, Chief Commissioner Miles Richardson stated, "A failure to ratify the Nisga'a treaty will seriously harm the honour of the Crown. And it would make it difficult, if not impossible, for Canada to continue with treaty negotiations in British Columbia."

The chief commissioner repeated several of the points he made to the federal Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development in Victoria on November 18.

The chief commissioner stated, "the government of Canada must remain true to the commitments it has made in entering treaty negotiations with First Nations in British Columbia and it must honour the agreements it has entered into in good faith.

"First Nations, at this tense time know that Canada and this Province remain committed to treaty making. The Nisga'a treaty is an expression of that commitment."

The entire presentation to the Senate is available at www.bctreaty.net or by contacting the Treaty Commission.



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Newsletter Update: February 2000

Sliammon receive treaty offer

Canada and BC are optimistic their proposal to the Sliammon Indian Band will help move the table toward an agreement in principle.

Sliammon's initial response to the overall proposal was disappointment. Chief Denise Smith said her community would not be accepting the proposal as it does not reflect their cultural ties to the land, nor does it address the co-management model sought by Sliammon.

Canada and BC presented the joint proposal on January 28. It identifies Crown land that could be transferred to Sliammon along with a cash settlement to be paid over a number of years.

Key elements of the BC/Canada proposal are:

- 3462 hectares of Crown land (in addition to existing reserve lands), resources on these lands would be owned and managed by Sliammon;
- willingness by Canada and BC to negotiate Sliammon's participation in planning processes for fisheries, watersheds, wildlife, parks and the environment;
- release of aboriginal rights not set out in the treaty; and
- a \$16.75 million cash transfer, to be paid out over time.

Chief Smith, in a published statement, said, "The offer is incomplete and is not acceptable to the Sliammon people. This offer does not come close to providing for the future of our people."

Joe Gallagher, Sliammon's negotiator, said, "We have no mandate to negotiate away 99% of our lands."

Canada's Chief Negotiator Vince Collins said, "The offer is a good starting point" and there is "lots to talk about."

The three parties will continue negotiations in late February when Sliammon will formally respond to Canada and BC's proposal.

The Sliammon Treaty Society had presented a land and resources proposal to Canada and BC in July 1999 identifying core settlement lands and co-management lands in their traditional territory.

Key elements of the Sliammon's proposal include:

- core settlement lands including existing reserve lands;
- co-management lands where Sliammon would have shared jurisdiction on forestry, fisheries, wildlife, foreshore and subsurface tenures and environmental assessments;
- lands for economic and development purposes; and
- five important areas where aboriginal rights need protection:
 - a. Desolation Sound Marine Park
 - b. Okeover Inlet and Watershed
 - c. Theodosia Watershed
 - d. Sliammon/Appleton Creek Watershed
 - e. Powell Lake Watershed



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Newsletter Update: February 2000

Treaty proposals reveal wide gap between parties at Nanaimo

Snuneymuxw (Nanaimo) First Nation made public its proposal for a treaty on January 21 and Canada and BC responded by making public their announcement of an offer on January 24.

None of the parties have accepted the others offer but are working towards continuing negotiations in an effort to reach an agreement.

Summary of Joint Offer to the Snuneymuxw First Nation from Canada and British Columbia:

Land and Resources

In a Snuneymuxw treaty the federal and provincial governments are seeking:

- to create Snuneymuxw treaty settlement lands with six new parcels totaling approximately 1862 hectares in addition to existing Snuneymuxw reserve lands of approximately 266 hectares.
- Agreement on Snuneymuxw's right of consent for the removal of the protected status of Newcastle Island.
- First Nation ownership of forest and subsurface resources on treaty settlement lands.
- to facilitate negotiations of an agreement between Snuneymuxw First Nation and the Greater Nanaimo Water District for the servicing of treaty settlement lands.
- to clarify fish allocations for Snuneymuxw.
- to clarify Snuneymuxw rights to harvest wildlife and birds including a guaranteed annual elk allocation of up to ten elk; agreement on Snuneymuxw's participation in any wildlife management advisory processes affecting the wildlife harvest area with the province continuing to exercise final authority for wildlife management.

Governance

Canada and BC are seeking:

- that the Indian Act no longer apply to Snuneymuxw First Nation.
- Adoption of a Snuneymuxw Constitution that sets out the fundamental aspects of the Snuneymuxw government; Snuneymuxw's legislative authority in a number of specific areas such as government structures and operations, education, adoption, child and family service, culture and heritage, and treaty land management.
- that First Nation laws apply to Snuneymuxw citizens on treaty settlement lands. Federal and provincial laws will apply.
- meaningful involvement by non-Snuneymuxw people living on treaty settlement lands.
- the end of the tax exemption for Snuneymuxw members and for Snuneymuxw First Nation government having the power to levy direct taxes to apply to Snuneymuxw citizens on Snuneymuxw treaty settlement lands.

Capital Transfer

In a Snuneymuxw treaty the federal and provincial governments are seeking:

- a capital transfer to the Snuneymuxw First Nation of \$40,300,000 (1999\$).

Summary of Snuneymuxw First Nation Treaty Proposal:

Land and Resources

In a treaty Snuneymuxw are seeking:

- to retain 9% of their traditional territory of approximately 500,000 acres (46,000 acres or 18,750 hectares); special management zones for important cultural and sacred sites outside treaty settlement land;
- a portion of the available water in the Nanaimo River;
- to retain hunting and fishing rights, subject to conservation; a role in the management of these resources.
- rights to at least 150,000 cubic metres of wood and ownership of all forest, mineral and gas resources on or under Snuneymuxw treaty lands; a share of royalties, taxes or stumpage from resources taken from Snuneymuxw traditional territory.

- to keep parks public, including Newcastle Island; shared title and management over parks.

Governance

Snuneymuxw are seeking:

- self-governance over a wide range of subject areas necessary to protect the lands, resources, culture, health and future of the Snuneymuxw people;
- accountability to its members according to their constitution, with non-Snuneymuxw citizens having input into decisions that significantly and directly affect them;
- to retain their tax exemption;
- certainty and predictability so that rights, responsibilities and jurisdiction are clearly defined and coordinated and there is a stable climate for business investment and economic development.
- to harmonize land-use planning and zoning with the City of Nanaimo, Regional District of Nanaimo and Islands Trust if mutually desired.

These offers were both made after extensive consultation with the Nanaimo community. The Snuneymuxw First Nation has been negotiating towards an agreement in principle since September 1996. They first entered the treaty process in December 1993.



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Newsletter Update: February 2000

Status Report as of January 31, 2000

As of January 31, 2000 there are 51 First Nations, in 42* sets of negotiations, participating in the BC treaty process. There are 38 First Nations in Stage 4 agreement-in-principle negotiations and one First Nation in Stage 5 negotiations to finalize a treaty. A table refers to a negotiation table at which three parties sit - one or more First Nations, Canada and BC.

First Nations in Stage 2: 1

Council of Haida Nation

First Nations in Stage 3: 11

Cheslatta Carrier Nation
Katzie Indian Band

At one table:

Winalagalis
Kwakiutl First Nation
Namgis First Nation
Da'naxda'xw/Awaetlala First Nation
Gwa'Sala - 'Nakwaxda'xw First Nation
Quatsino First Nation
Tlatlasikwala First Nation

Lake Babine Nation
Musqueam Nation
Squamish Nation

First Nations in Stage 4: 38

At one table:

Carcross/Tagish First Nation [transboundary negotiations]
Champagne and Aishihik First Nations [transboundary negotiations]
Taku River Tlingit First Nation
Teslin Tlingit Council [transboundary negotiations]

At one table:

Ditidaht First Nation
Pacheedaht First Nation

Cariboo Tribal Council
Carrier Sekani Tribal Council
Esketemc First Nation
Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs
Gitxsan Hereditary Chiefs (in suspension)
Haisla Nation
Heiltsuk Nation
Homalco Indian Band
Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group
In-SHUCK-ch/N'Quat'qua
Kaska Dena Council
Klahoose Indian Band
Ktunaxa/Kinbasket Tribal Council
Kwakiutl Laich-Kwil-Tach Council of Chiefs
Lheidli T'enneh Band
Nazko Indian Band
Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council
Oweekeno Nation
Sliammon Indian Band
Snuneymuxw First Nation
Sto:Lo Nation
Te'Mexw Treaty Association
Tsawwassen First Nation
Tsay Keh Dene Band
Tsimshian Nation
Ts'kw'aylaxw First Nation
Tseil-Waututh Nation
Westbank First Nation
Wet'suwet'en Nation
Xaxli'p First Nation
Yale First Nation
Yekooche Nation

First Nations in Stage 5: 1
Sechelt Indian Band

* Several First Nations are negotiating at common tables.



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Treaty offer disappoints Gitanyow

The response to Canada and BC's treaty offer by the Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs is disappointment, but negotiations will continue.

Key elements of Canada's and BC's joint offer to the Gitanyow chiefs are:

- A treaty land component of 19,960 hectares would be added to the existing 862 hectares of reserve land. All land would be held in fee simple, not as Indian reserves. The treaty land would be divided into seven parcels lying within seven of the eight House territories. The eighth House territory is largely included within Swan Lake Kispiox River Provincial Park.
- BC believes that the park designation would protect many Gitanyow interests in that area. It is prepared to negotiate the exercise of defined Gitanyow treaty rights within the park and to explore a cooperative park management regime.
- The Gitanyow would own and manage forest resources on treaty land and own the sub-surface resources under that land. Over the rest of their traditional territory, the Gitanyow would have non-exclusive fishing and hunting entitlements and would be able to participate in public regional wildlife and fisheries management issues.
- On treaty lands, the Gitanyow would have the ability to make laws relating to those lands (e.g., land management, resource management and planning, land tenure and access, environmental management) and integral to their culture and identity (e.g., culture and heritage, education, marriage, adoption). Gitanyow would also have law-making authority on treaty lands over health services, policing, emergency response services, traffic and transportation, and public works management.
- Some of these authorities and functions could be drawn down over time.
- In certain areas key to maintaining Gitanyow culture and internal to the First Nation (language, education, child welfare and adoption), Gitanyow laws would prevail over conflicting federal and provincial laws.
- Gitanyow would have the power to levy sales, income and property taxes on Gitanyow citizens on Gitanyow treaty land.
- The Gitanyow Constitution would, as part of the treaty, be protected under the Canadian Constitution. It should essentially be a representative government, but with some traditional elements to be negotiated.

- There is a capital transfer (cash component) of \$13.5m.

The Gitanyow criticized the joint offer for conforming to a fixed model that ignores their perspective on an appropriate treaty partnership throughout their traditional territories. They requested that further negotiations take greater account of this perspective. The Gitanyow had put forward a comprehensive draft proposal in September covering their entire traditional territory.

They have also sought added assurance that the finalization of the Nisga'a agreement will not limit what the Gitanyow can negotiate and what aboriginal rights they can exercise. The Gitanyow and Nisga'a are neighbours with a large overlap of traditional territories.

During the negotiations, Canada and BC consulted extensively on local government issues with the Skeena Treaty Advisory Committee and on other issues with the Gitanyow Advisory Committee, made up of third party interests, area residents, and local government.



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Interim Measures Watch

New to Update is the Interim Measures Watch, a look at what is happening currently with interim measures in the BC treaty process.

In November the Treaty Commission reported that the federal and provincial governments had developed a new type of interim measure referred to as "treaty-related measures" or TRMs.

The two governments developed TRMs in response to a federal, provincial and First Nations report of February 1999. The report concluded that all parties wished to accelerate negotiations and create opportunities for earlier access to lands and resources that will be secured in treaties.

According to Canada and BC, TRMs can be used for several purposes:

- information gathering and studies to support negotiations;
- protection of Crown lands that are targeted for treaty settlements;
- enhanced First Nations participation in land, resource and park management;
- protection of cultural artifacts;
- enhanced access to lands and resources prior to a final treaty settlement;
- land acquisition for treaty settlement (under the willing buyer/willing seller principle);
- economic development opportunities; and,
- developmental measures in support of self-government.

Canada and BC have said TRMs are intended to be catalysts for the conclusion of agreements and will require a high level of common understanding at the table of the items under negotiation.

Canada and BC have now completed their cost-sharing negotiations and have instructed negotiators to explore how TRMs can apply to individual negotiating tables. To date, no table has a TRM.

There are other developments on the interim measures front. These include:

- In November 1999, Canada and BC agreed to protect for two years the 12 parcels of settlement land in the Sechelt Agreement in Principle, to allow time to complete the Final Agreement.
- Four Nuuchahnulth tribes are negotiating an extension of the Central Region Interim Measures Agreement, which covers economic development and First Nation participation in land and resource management in parts of Vancouver Island.
- BC purchased and are protecting lot 6351 which lies between the Taku River Tlingit reserve and cemetery. The property had been slated for development and was a major source of tension between the parties.
- The Haida negotiated a six-month reprieve from logging in the portion of their territory known as Duu Guusd. This reprieve is to last until April 1, 2000, to allow Canada, BC and the Haida to negotiate a forest management agreement. (These negotiations were suspended as of February 21 due to Haida litigation.)
- Snuneymuxw is completing negotiations with Canada and BC to acquire Petroglyph Park and another five hectare parcel of Crown land on Gabriola Island that has several petroglyphs.
- The Northern Nations Summit are well along in negotiating to participate in the management of limited access hunting in northern British Columbia.
- The Northern Nations Summit are well along in negotiating to participate in the management of limited access hunting in northern British Columbia.
- The Haisla have successfully completed the terms of reference with Canada and BC for an Environmental Pilot Project (EPP). The province is seeking to delay its implementation until local support is more favourable. The EPP would provide the Haisla a seat on a board which can call for studies of projects that may have major environmental impacts within a defined portion of the Haisla traditional territory
- The Carrier Sekani Tribal Council are focusing exclusively on negotiating a Forestry Interim Measures Agreement with Canada and BC. They are concerned that increased logging is scheduled within their traditional territory. Revenue sharing, a First Nation timber allocation and protection/consultation are the key topics under negotiation, but no agreement has yet been reached. Recent logging by one CSTC member band without provincial permits illustrates the level of frustration. The Carrier Sekani Tribal Council are focusing exclusively on negotiating a Forestry Interim Measures Agreement with Canada and BC. They are concerned that increased logging is scheduled within their traditional territory. Revenue sharing, a First Nation timber allocation and protection/consultation are the key topics under negotiation, but no agreement has yet been reached. Recent logging by one CSTC member band without provincial permits illustrates the level of frustration.
- The Cowichan Nation, of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group, is sitting at a Forestry Interim Measures table with Canada and BC. Those negotiations are at an early stage.

As well, several bands are negotiating for Canada and BC to devolve authority to deliver health and social programs, such as child and family services, directly to their communities.



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How much will treaties cost Canada and BC?

There is some controversy regarding treaty negotiations among First Nations, Canada and BC. Much of it centres on the net costs and net benefits of treaties.

Three points need to be made at the outset. First, there is much debate about the variables and assumptions used by consultants to estimate the net costs and benefits of treaties (see sidebar).

Second, the value of the studies is of limited relevance, regardless of their perspective, because all measure the net costs or net benefits of treaties against a faulty benchmark. And third, in determining the cost of making treaties, the cost of the alternatives for both public governments and First Nations must be factored into the calculations. Public government costs may differ from First Nation costs, but both are real enough.

There have been many studies of the net costs and benefits of treaties. Though they often reach different conclusions, common to all of them is their use of a benchmark that assumes the status quo that ignores, or fails to anticipate, recent rulings of Canada's Supreme Court.

This benchmark assumes that British Columbia and Canada hold clear title to Crown lands even though the 1997 Supreme Court of Canada decision in *Delgamuukw*, as well as several of its earlier rulings, make it clear that this is not the case. Aboriginal title continues to exist in British Columbia because it was never extinguished. However, the courts have not yet defined the specific areas where aboriginal title exists.

If Crown and aboriginal title cannot be reconciled through treaty negotiations, it is unlikely that the situation will revert to the pre-*Delgamuukw* status quo. It is more likely that individual First Nations will use the guidelines in *Delgamuukw* and turn to the courts.

It follows then that the true cost of any treaty must be related to the cost of the likely alternative, namely the expected outcome of litigation. In litigation, there will, of course, be a winner and a loser.

To illustrate, if the expected cost to the Crown of the court's decision is the transfer of 300 square kilometres, but treaty negotiations establish First Nation settlement lands of 100 sq. km., it would be incorrect to base the cost of the treaty on the value of the 100 sq. km. that was Crown land. Given the expected outcome of court action, there is in fact a net benefit to the Crown from having the treaty. The expected benefit is the monetary value of the additional 200 sq. km. the court might have awarded, less the cash component of the treaty. This simple illustration ignores such considerations as the Crown's litigation expenses and the opportunity cost of any delayed investments due to the uncertainties that prevail throughout the years of litigation.

For example, analysts can readily make subjective estimates of the expected cost to the Crown of a court decision using a variety of techniques. To demonstrate the basics, assume that a First Nation lays claim in court to 20,000 sq. km. of their traditional territory. The subjective probabilities or likelihood of various outcomes can be set out as:

- 40 % chance that the claim will be dismissed
- 30 % chance that the court will find for aboriginal title over 5000 sq. km.
- 25 % chance of 10,000 sq. km.
- 5 % chance of 20,000 sq. km.

In this hypothetical case, the expected cost to the Crown would be the loss of 5,000 sq. km.¹

It would be wrong to conclude that First Nations in the BC treaty process have decided against the alternative of litigation because of subjective judgments they hold around the likely outcomes. In fact, the pattern of more recent decisions of Canada's Supreme Court might lead them to be optimistic about going to court. However, the cost of drawn out litigation and years of appeals are likely to be major deterrents. The repeated urgings of the courts that the parties negotiate also may have a bearing.

The most compelling reason is probably the fact that once the issue of title is settled, a host of other aboriginal rights remain to be dealt with on a case by case basis. As well, political issues will remain to be negotiated in any case, and with some degree of urgency. For example, First Nations will need to negotiate with Canada and British Columbia over governance over the territory where courts have confirmed aboriginal title.

Given these considerations, it is easier to understand why most aboriginal leaders believe that longer-term relationships with their non-aboriginal neighbours, and fuller participation in Canadian society, are best achieved through the compromise of negotiated treaties rather than through the vagaries of legal confrontation.

¹ Using the calculation $(.4)(0)+(.3)(5000)+(.25)(10,000)+(.05)(20,000) = 0+1500+2500+1000 = 5000$ sq. km., the expected cost to the Crown in this case would be the loss of 5000 sq. km. In other words, the expected cost, by definition, is the sum of the various possible outcomes multiplied by the probability of each outcome.



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Consultation key to successful treaties

Consultation is essential in the BC treaty process and is the responsibility of all three negotiating parties - Canada, BC and each First Nation.

What is the purpose of consultation?

Bill Seymour, an independent consultant working with all levels of government on consultation in the Prince George area says consultation is "a means to initiate constructive dialogue between government,

First Nations, third parties and local community government in a safe and non-threatening environment."

Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs spokesperson Jose Villa Arce, mandates branch executive director, explains the goal of consultation is to determine the interests of those who may be affected and the anticipated impact from a policy or legislative change. "By becoming better informed and gaining a deeper understanding one outcome of consultation is we develop options that we hadn't seen before. We also may come to see that options we were considering are not applicable or won't work."

The federal and provincial governments consult primarily with citizens of BC.

First Nations must consult with their members.

The BC Claims Task Force Report provides the direction to the parties on consultation:

.for First Nations the decision to ratify a treaty will come from their people. It is essential that the same people who will ratify the treaty support the organization which is negotiating on their behalf.

Similarly, Recommendation 10 requires that:

Non-aboriginal interests be represented at the negotiating table by the federal and provincial governments.

The BC Claims Task Force Report further comments:

If treaties are to establish a workable new relationship, it is essential that these groups have the opportunity to contribute to their development. To achieve this, the federal and provincial governments must establish effective ways of consulting with non-aboriginal interest groups.

To achieve these requirements the federal and provincial governments have established a various advisory groups to represent sectoral, regional, local government and community interests.

Some mandates have province-wide application and are influenced through consultation with the Treaty Negotiation Advisory Committee whereas other mandates are more regional or table specific and will be influenced through consultation with Regional Advisory Committees (RACs). Treaty Advisory Committees (TACs) represent local government interests and are a consultation body of only the provincial government. Mandate development continues to evolve and new issues arise so it is important that these advisory committees meet regularly with governments.

Developing mandates is no easy task notes Lucie Zaharoff, public information and consultation manager, Federal Treaty Negotiation Office. "Many times we face a situation where the views of the various parties are inconsistent. It is the role of government to balance these different interests so everyone's interests can be protected."

Ultimately it will be local people and local areas that will have to make treaties workable by building strong positive relationships with First Nations after the negotiations are finished.

"Treaties are about building new relationships," says Zaharoff. "Consultation provides the opportunity to learn how the parties feel that new relationship should be built."

Bill Seymour echoes that sentiment. "Consultation facilitates relationship building which is a key part of the treaty process. It's not just a raw exchange of information. it's a meeting of people and minds that help reach a settlement that is a fair and just one."

To find out how you can participate in treaty negotiations in your area, contact: the Federal Treaty Negotiation Office at 1-800-665-9320 or the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs at 1-800-880-1022 or see the Treaty Commission web site at www.bctreaty.net for a list of public negotiation sessions.



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Keeping people informed a priority

Keeping people informed about the treaty process and treaty negotiations in British Columbia is a key responsibility of the Treaty Commission.

It publishes an annual report and, throughout the year, the newsletter Update. The Treaty Commission's web site at www.bctreaty.net is a source of current information for journalists, teachers, students, researchers and anyone interested in learning more about the treaty process. There were more than 17,000 unique visits to the web site in 1999.

The Treaty Commission maintains a toll-free telephone inquiry line at 1 800 665-8330 and an email inquiry line at info@bctreaty.net to respond to questions and requests for information. Anyone interested in receiving information will be added to the Treaty Commission mailing list.

A resource directory of information available from the Treaty Commission, the governments of Canada and British Columbia and the First Nations Summit is available at www.bctreaty.net or in booklet form from the Treaty Commission.

The Treaty Commission provides speakers and information for a variety of events and treaty-related meetings.

A display has been developed by the Treaty Commission to raise awareness of treaty negotiations in the province. The display uses touch-screen technology to deliver answers to commonly asked questions. Various participants in the treaty process provide the answers through video clips. Two identical displays were constructed for use in various parts of the province.

Viewers can choose from six questions and many different responses to the questions:

- Why are we negotiating treaties in BC?
- What are the alternatives?
- What is being negotiated?
- What is the role of the Treaty Commission?
- How long will it take?
- How will treaties affect the future of BC?

Popular articles from previous Treaty Commission annual reports are getting wider circulation as brochures:

A Lay Person's Guide to Delgamuukw from the 1998 annual report gets an updated introduction and includes a detachable response form common to all of the brochures.

After Delgamuukw: The Legal and Political Landscape from the 1999 annual report is updated throughout to capture the most recent events in the treaty process.

Treaty Commission: Through treaties aboriginal rights and title are clearly defined, also from the 1999 annual report, is a primer on treaty making in British Columbia.

All of the brochures are available in printed form from the Treaty Commission or at www.bctreaty.net.

A poster, available from the Treaty Commission, promotes awareness of its web site and the toll free telephone number people can call to get information about treaty making in BC.