Province, Maa-nulth strengthen treaty relationship

VICTORIA – British Columbia and the five Maa-nulth First Nations are strengthening and affirming their treaty partnership through a new government-to-government agreement.

This unique agreement was signed today by the Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation and leaders of the Maa-nulth First Nations.

The government-to-government agreement between the B.C. government and the Maa-nulth First Nations creates regular forums to discuss, prioritize and collaborate on topics of mutual interest, including land, resource management and treaty implementation issues.

“This agreement continues the great, innovative work happening through the Maa-nulth treaty. It outlines ways we can work better together, which is good news not only for Maa-nulth First Nations, but also their neighbouring communities,” said Scott Fraser, Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation and MLA for Mid Island-Pacific Rim. “Ownership and jurisdiction over their treaty lands and resources is allowing each of the Maa-nulth First Nations to grow and develop their economies and societies in the manner they determine best. Treaties are a powerful foundation, but it takes respectful, ongoing government-to-government relationships to make them effective.”

Maa-nulth First Nations are important contributors to the economic and cultural life of the west coast of Vancouver Island, and the agreement is another avenue to explore opportunities and ideas. Developing practical and flexible ways to address natural resource, land and treaty issues benefits Maa-nulth citizens, industry and the greater region.

“Today’s monumental signing, which celebrates the government-to-government relationship the Yuuluʔiłʔatḥ Government has with the provincial government, is a positive step to implement the Maa-nulth treaty. Collectively, we need to revitalize our relationship and work collaboratively on common issues and concerns,” said Yuuluʔiłʔatḥ Government President Les Doiron. “This is an added advantage of a modern treaty government’s place in B.C. and a relationship that needs to be cultivated for all our citizens.”

“Signing the Maa-nulth treaty was an important step for our Nations, but it is essential that we continue to work hard to make the most of the opportunities the treaty offers,” said Huu-ay-aht First Nations Chief Councillor Robert J. Dennis Sr. “By continuing to build on our relationship with the Province, we show what can be accomplished with true reconciliation.”

“We view this agreement as one more step towards fulfilling the promise that treaty has created for our people,” said Uchucklesaht Tribe Chief Councillor Charlie Cootes. “We look forward to strengthening our relationship with British Columbia through shared recognition and application of mutual respect in our dealings. Our goal, like B.C.’s, is co-operation between
Our governments to our shared advantage and benefits to both.”

“This is an important agreement, which will facilitate the implementation of our treaty and help guide us in implementing our Nations’ strategies for moving forward by developing and sustaining a government-to-government relationship with B.C., an essential step in reconciliation,” said Toquaht Nation tyee ha’wilth Anne Mack.

“The Ka:‘yu:’k’t’h’/Che:k’tles7et’h’ First Nations are pleased to enter into this Maa-nulth and British Columbia Government to Government Forum Agreement,” said Ka:‘yu:’k’t’h’/Che:k’tles7et’h’ First Nations Legislative Chief Peter Hanson. “It completes the suite of venues to achieve orderly, collaborative and respectful implementation of the Maa-nulth treaty in partnership with British Columbia. We truly look forward to our new relationship.”

The agreement supports improved co-ordination of natural resource development and land management across treaty land and adjacent Crown lands; it will also address issues where provincial jurisdiction applies on treaty land, such as environmental protection, highways, wildlife, or foreshore marine areas.

It also provides the B.C. government and Maa-nulth First Nations the ability to explore new economic development opportunities, and to address issues related to health, education and social development.

Quick Facts:

- Maa-nulth First Nations:
  - Huu-ay-aht First Nations (Hoo-ay-at)
  - Ka:‘yu:’k’t’h’/Che:k’tles7et’h’ First Nations (Ka-yu-ket/Chek-le-set)
  - Toquaht Nation (Toe-kwat)
  - Uchucklesaht Tribe (U-chuck-le-sat)
  - Yuuluʔiłʔatḥ (You-thloo-ith-at)

- Maa-nulth means “villages along the coast” in the Nuu-chah-nulth language. Maa-nulth First Nations are located on the west coast of Vancouver Island surrounding Barkley Sound and Kyuquot Sound. They have a combined population of approximately 2,000 citizens.

- The Maa-nulth First Nations Final Agreement is the first modern treaty on Vancouver Island and the first multi-nation treaty negotiated through the B.C. Treaty Commission process. It came into effect on April 1, 2011.

Learn More:

Maa-nulth treaty, government-to-government and other agreements: ow.ly/ZEHb30ghQng
Maa-nulth First Nations: maanulth.ca
Huu-ay-aht First Nations: huuayaht.org
Ka:‘yu:’k’t’h’/Che:k’tles7et’h’ First Nations: kyuquotbc.ca
Toquaht Nation: toquaht.ca
Uchucklesaht Tribe: uchucklesaht.ca
Yuuluʔiłʔatḥ: ufn.ca
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