

How Modern Treaties Support Common Good

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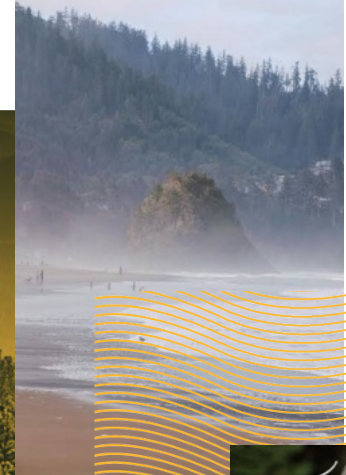
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Only elected officials have the privilege of the floor and can ask questions in the Q&A



How Modern Treaties Support the Common Good

UBCM Workshop · Sept 17, 2026

Facilitator Introduction & Workshop Orientation



Angela Wesley · Commissioner,
BC Treaty Commission

Workshop Agenda

Welcome & Context Setting – ADM Carolyn Kamper

Introductory Remarks – Minister Spencer Chandra Herbert

Overview of Modern Treaties – George Abbott, Chief Commissioner

Modern Treaties in Practice – John Jack, Chief Councillor, Huu-ay-aht First Nations

Economic & Regional Impacts – Andrew Robinson, Nisga'a Lisims Government

Local Government Perspective – Sean Bujtas, Mayor, City of Terrace

Federal Treaty Perspective – Angela Bate, Director General (CIRNAC)

Provincial Treaty Perspective – Nedinska Donaldson, Executive Director (MIRR)

Modern Treaty Governance – Maa-nulth Treaty Society video

Questions and Answers

Welcome & Context Setting



Carolyn Kamper, Assistant Deputy
Minister, Ministry of Indigenous
Relations and Reconciliation

Opening Remarks



Honourable Spencer Chandra Herbert,
Minister of Indigenous Relations and
Reconciliation



Modern Treaties: What they are and why they matter

George Abbott, Chief Commissioner,
BC TREATY COMMISSION

Modern Treaties: What they are and why they matter

Modern treaties benefit all Canadians and establish a constitutionally-protected nation-to-nation relationship based on recognition, rights, respect, cooperation and partnership for lasting reconciliation.



Modern Treaties: What they are and why they matter

BC's colonial and early provincial history is often at the root of contemporary Indigenous relations challenges.

BC resisted participation in treaty making for 120 years; tripartite agreement not reached until the early 1990s.

Treaty 8 agreements in northeastern BC of the late 1890s and early 1900s were negotiated by Canada and purposefully ignored by BC.

BC's policy, both pre- and post-Confederation in 1871, was to create Indian reserves synchronously with white settlement, creating extensive dispossession and dislocation.



Modern Treaties: What they are and why they matter

BCs historic settlement policies, in combination with joint processes like the McKenna-McBride Commission (1912-16), have produced -- and will produce -- many land disputes.

Courts, and most importantly the Supreme Court of Canada, have consistently concluded that Aboriginal title and rights must be respected (backstopped by sec. 35 of the *Constitution Act*).

Negotiation takes time, energy and money, but so too does litigation, and often with less predictable outcomes. There are no easy paths to reconciliation.

Land disputes are best resolved through negotiation (by treaties, foundation or other agreements)





Modern Treaties in Practice

Chief Councillor John Jack, Huu-ay-aht
First Nations

Legal Status of Modern Treaties

- Constitutionally protected rights and obligations
- Contracts between Indigenous peoples and the federal Crown, as well as either the provincial Crown or a territorial government
- Have the force of law, equal in force to any other statute enacted by the federal and provincial Crowns, or territorial governments



for All Canadians

- Clarify ongoing relationships between Indigenous peoples and Crown
- Define resource use and co-management
- Promote mutual understanding and cooperation
- Creates economic opportunity that benefits all of Canada



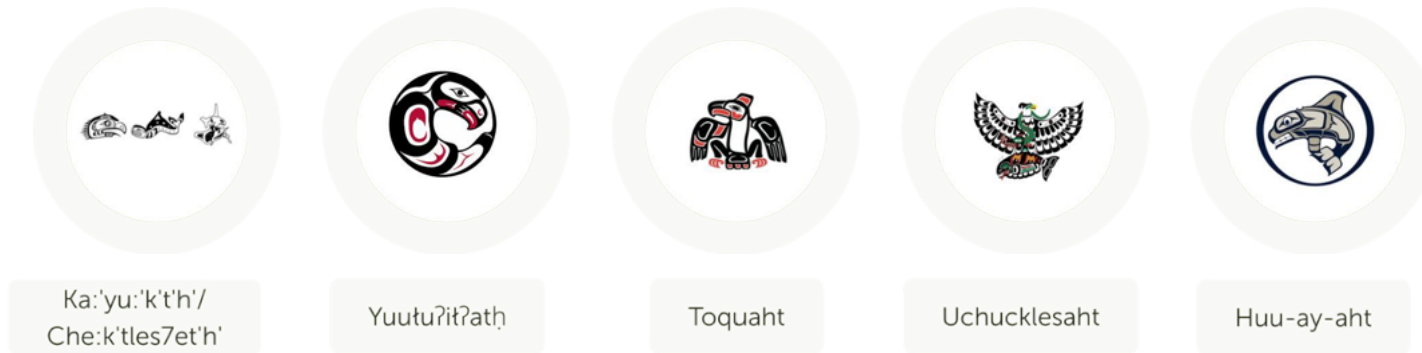


Early Journey in Treaty: Sharing the Maa-nulth and Huu-ay-aht experience

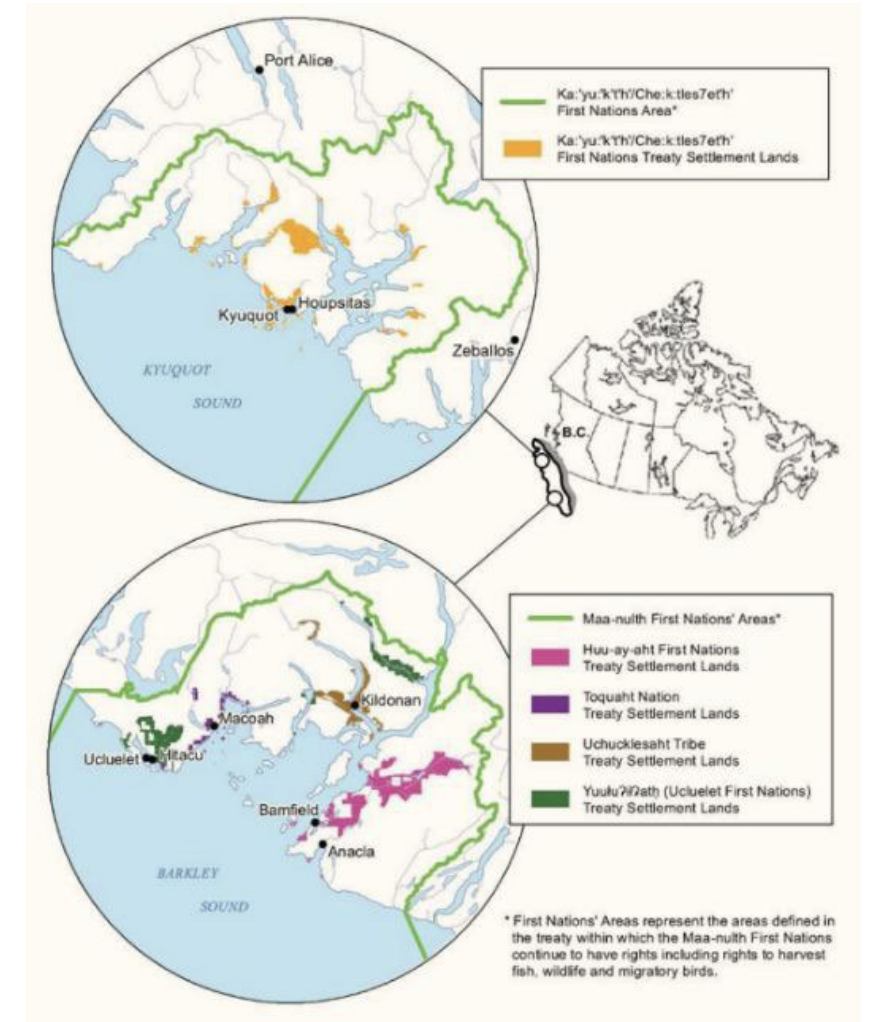
Treaty Stories

Maa-nulth Treaty

Agreement between (& distinct Maa-nulth First Nations,
British Columbia and Canada

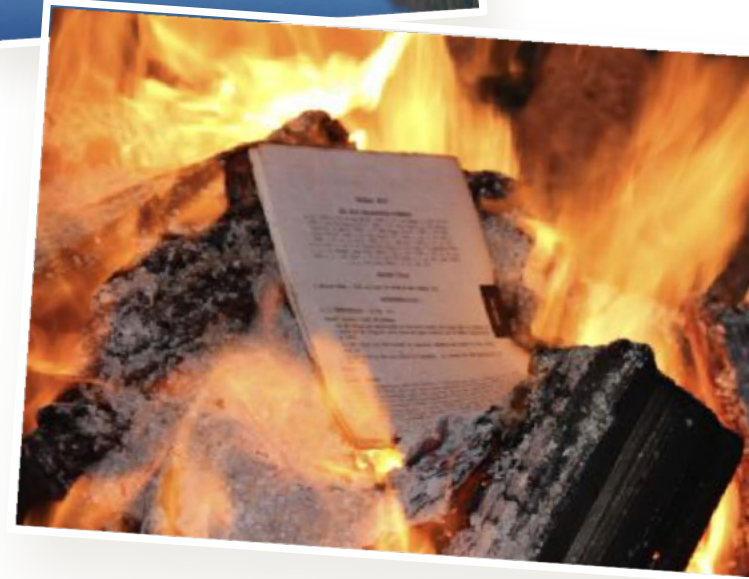
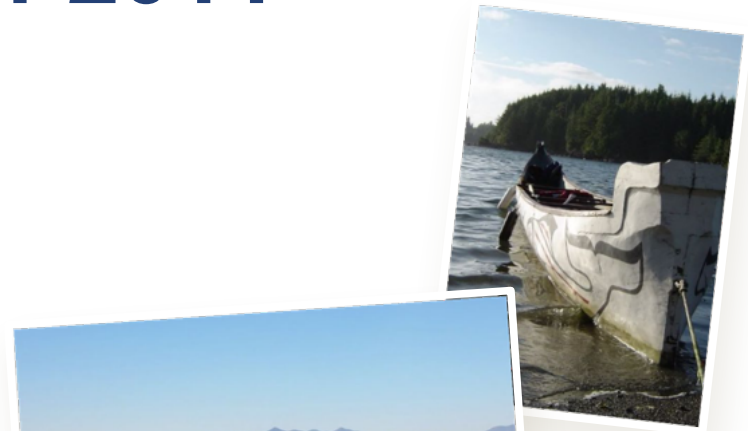


Communities are close to B a m fi Ucluelet,
Alberni Inlet and Kyuquot. In most Nations, between.
60% and 90% of members reside away from home.



Maa-nulth Treaty - Effective April 11 2011

- Certainty on h a h u (traditional territory) ownership
- Maa-nulth Treaty established 24,550 hectares of Maa-nulth First Nations lands and d e f i n e the Maa-nulth Domestic Fishing area.
- Decision-making ability, including infrastructure, housing, economic development, education, natural resources
- Opportunity for each Maa-nulth nation to hold a voting seat on the local government level.
- Government-to-government relations with Canada, B.C., and other First Nations



Governing Our Way

highest respect

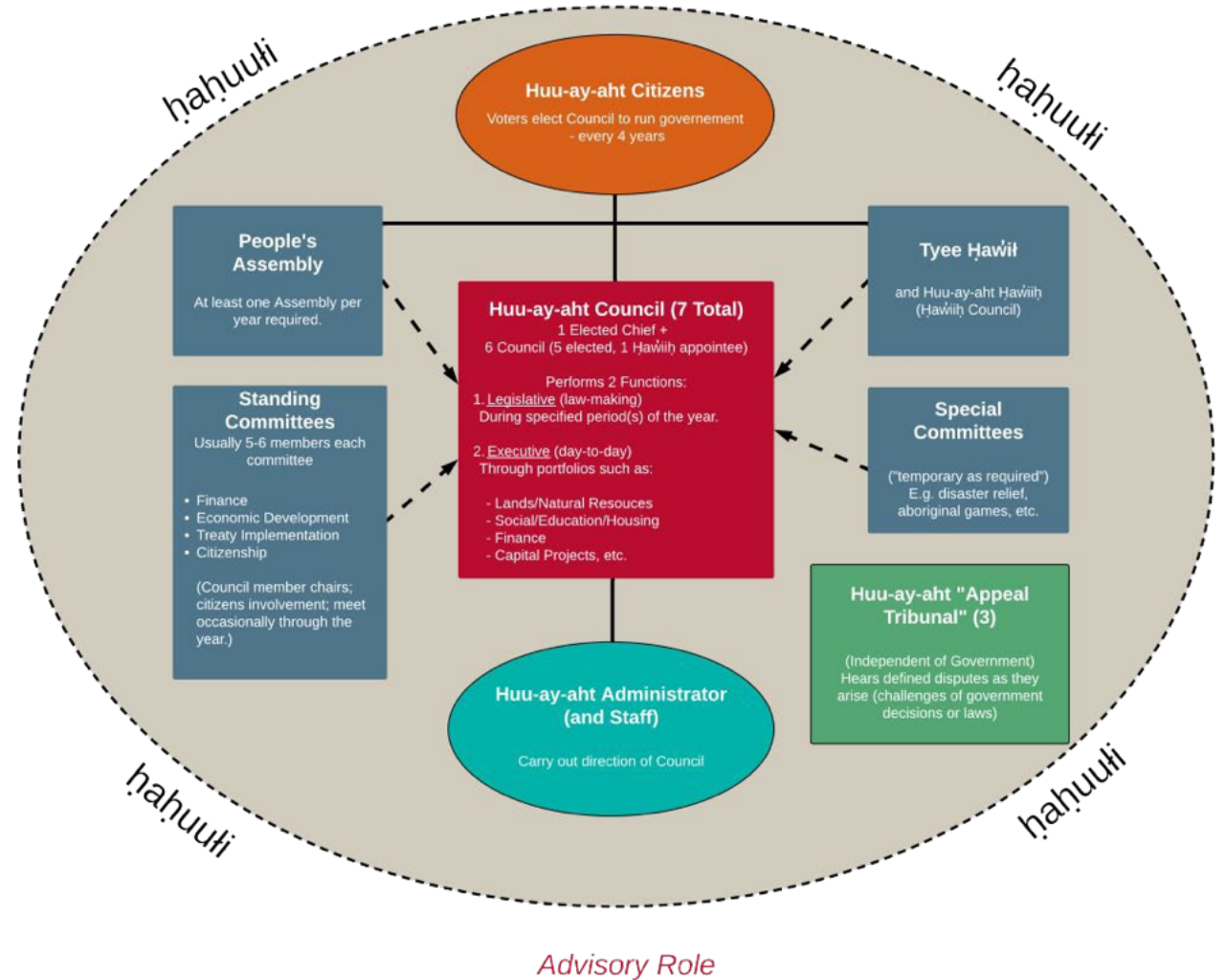
VxxVdxw

taking care of

hišuk Rlawak

everything is one/connected

Huu-ay-aht Government Structure Chart



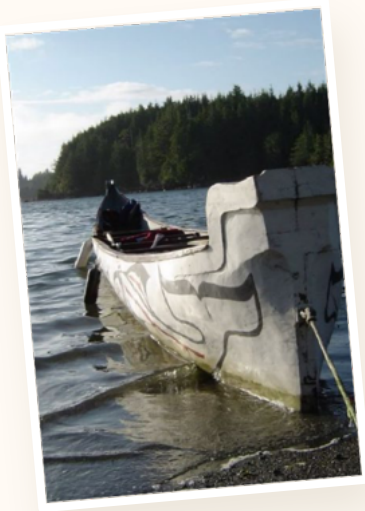
Huu-ay-aht Experience in Treaty

- Treaty negotiations provided an opportunity to re-build our Nations
- We were determined (whether or not we achieved treaty) to use the process to build a strong government and to gain additional resources and increased skills and capacity to make our world a better place
- We have no regrets
- We would rather make and learn from our own mistakes, than to continue to live with limited resources and opportunities under the control of a government with no idea of who we are and where we want to go in the future
- Who better than us knows what our needs and priorities are?



Huu-ay-aht First Nations Experience - Effective Date and Beyond

The Huu-ay-aht envision a strong, self-governing and self-reliant Nation. lisaak will guide us as we work together to foster a safe, healthy and sustainable community where our culture, language, spirituality and economy flourish for all.



Vision

First Nations Constitution

Organizational Development

Capacity Building

Change Management

Law and Policy Development

Setting up Trust

Developing Plans

Huu-ay-aht Group of Businesses

Natural Resources



HFN Gravel LP



HFN Fisheries LP



HFN Forestry LP

Tourism & Hospitality



B a m fi East Dock



The Market and Cafe



Pachena Bay Campground



Hacas Inn



Malsit Pub



Upnit Lodge



Awis Guesthouse

Leadership thoughts on

Governance

Self-government – PRICELESS!

Land

Control, manage or jointly manage about 91% of our territory

Natural Resources

Restoring our rivers (2 to 6000 return of chinook); reintroduced elk and population is growing; our people are eating our traditional foods

Economic Development

We are well on our way to rebuilding the economy in our homelands. Our Framework Plan will support the continued diversification of our economy

Finance

Financial position is now 36 times greater than when we entered treaty; we're able to enhance citizen programs and services

2025 Opening of Uumiiqsu (Mother's) Centre

“We went from having 40% of our children in care to 14% in an eight year period... And that's because of treaty.”

-Chief Councillor John Jack





Economic and Regional Impacts of Modern Treaties

Andrew Robinson, CAO, Nisga'a Lisims
Government

A photograph of a modern, two-story building with large windows and a dark roof, identified as the Nisga'a Lisims Government building. The building is surrounded by trees with autumn foliage in shades of yellow and orange. A tall, slender wooden sculpture stands in front of the building. The sky is a clear, pale blue.

The Nisga'a Treaty & Nisga'a Government

NISGA'A LISIMS GOVERNMENT – EXECUTIVE OFFICERS:

Eva Clayton, President

Charles Morven, Secretary-Treasurer

Debra Febril, Executive Chairperson

Alvin Azak, Chairperson - Council of Elders

Presentation Overview:

History of 113 Year Journey
Overview of Nisga'a Treaty
Where we are today



HISTORY OF THE NISGA'A NATION

1913 -Common bowl approach articulated in Petition to the Privy Council,

1955 -the Nisga'a Land Committee is re-established as the Nisga'a Tribal Council -Frank Calder is elected its first President -1913 Petition sets out mandate to seek a treaty,

1973 -SCC affirms existence of aboriginal title in Calder decision,





HISTORY OF THE NISGA'A NATION

1976 - Following the Calder decision, the Nisga'a Nation entered into negotiations under the new Comprehensive Land Claims Policy with Canada,

1991 - British Columbia formally joined negotiations in 1991,

1998- Nisga'a Treaty and Nisga'a Constitution are ratified and adopted by Nisga'a Nation,

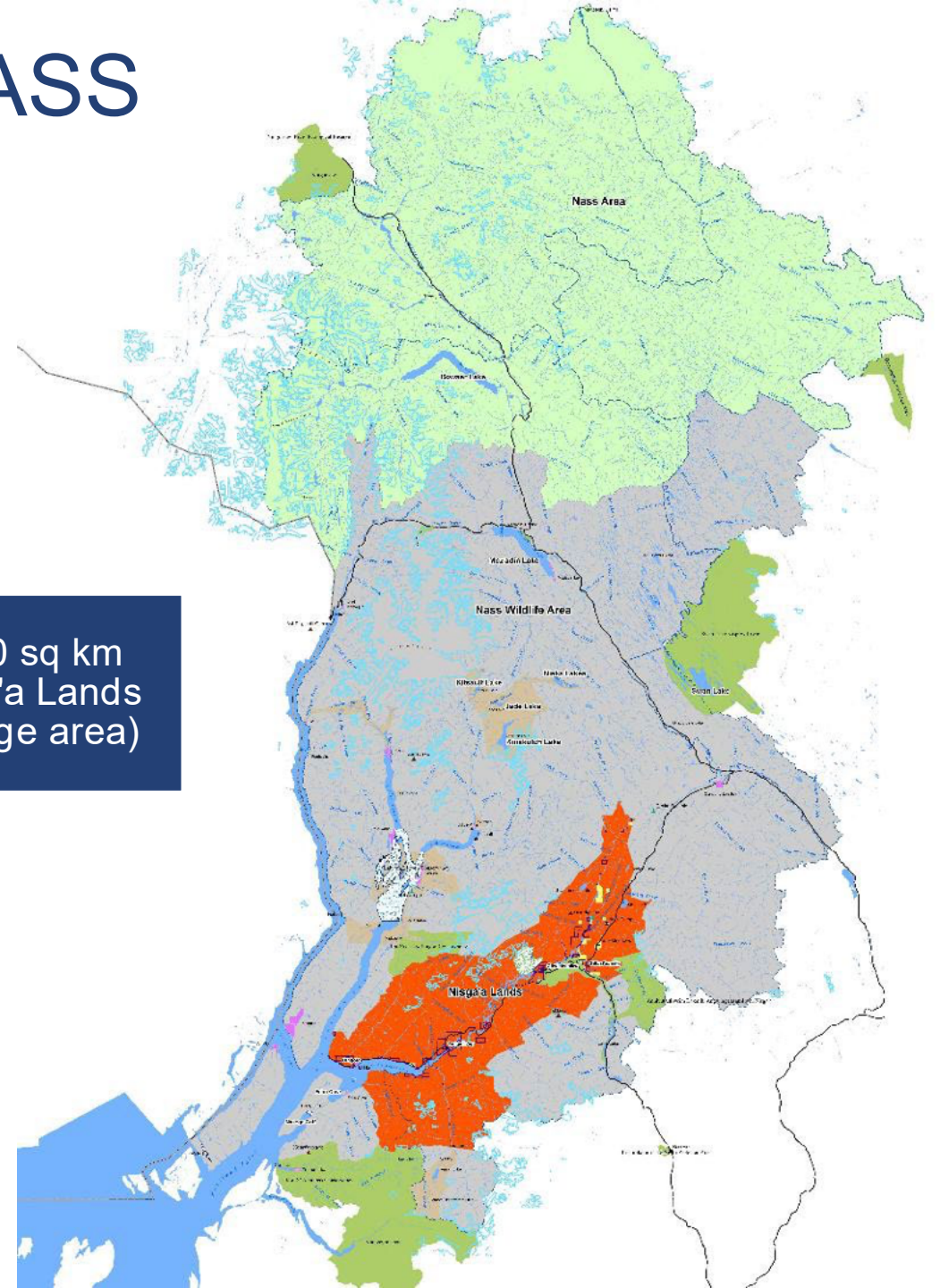
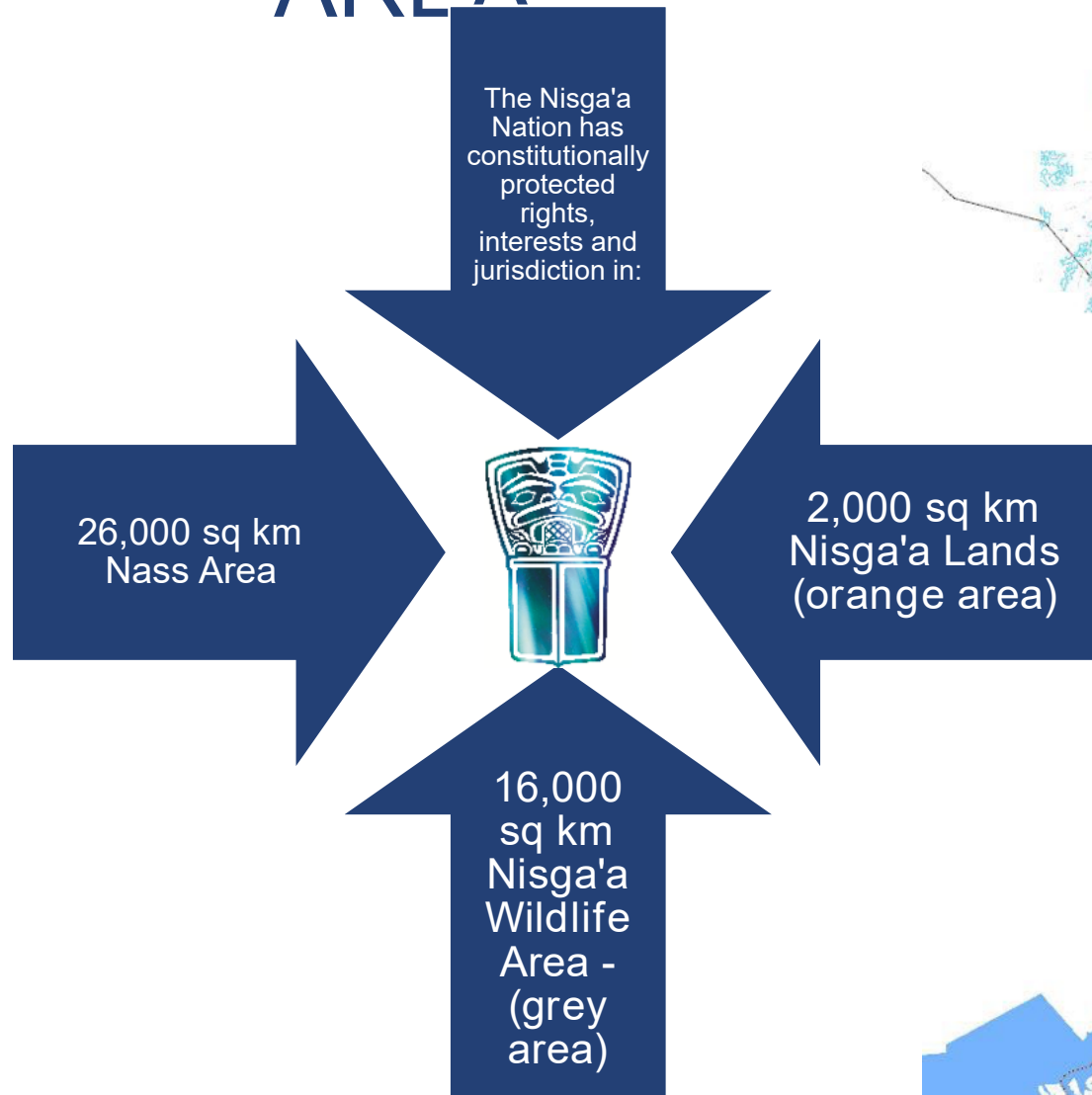
2000- May 11- the Effective Date of the Nisga'a Final Agreement and the first sitting of Wilp Si'ayuukhl Nisga'a (WSN) - the Nisga'a legislative assembly,

2026- Twenty-six years of administration and governance excellence, industry relations, partnerships, and alliances across the world.

42 years of negotiations with BC and Canada to finish off the 113 year journey

2000sq km of Nisga'a Lands,
\$190M in Capital Transferred over,
Rights to hunt for food, social and ceremonial purposes in 16,000 sq km of Nisga'a Traditional Lands,
Rights to fish for food, social and ceremonial purposes in 26,000sq km of Nisga'a traditional lands,
Repatriation of sacred artifacts and totem poles from B.C., Canada, and from around the world, and
24 technical team departments, 26 years of self-government, defining our jurisdiction and law-making authority.

NISGA'A LANDS & THE NASS AREA





NISGA LAW MAKING AUTHORITY

- Governance & administration
- Elections
- Fisheries and wildlife
- Public Safety
- Language and Culture
- Forestry
- Education - K-12 & Post-Sec
- Child Protection, custody, adoption Social Services, and
- Solemnization of Marriages Traditional healing practices.
- Emergency Preparedness
- Financial Administration
- Lands, Land Title, Assets
- Policing
- Health
- Environmental Protection
- Direct Taxation

NISGAA GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The Constitution of the Nisga'a Nation...

Provides for Nisga'a Lisims and Nisga'a Village Governments

including duties, composition, and membership:

Four national officers

President, Chairperson, Secretary-Treasurer, Chair-Council of Elders

Chief & Council of Nisga'a Village Governments

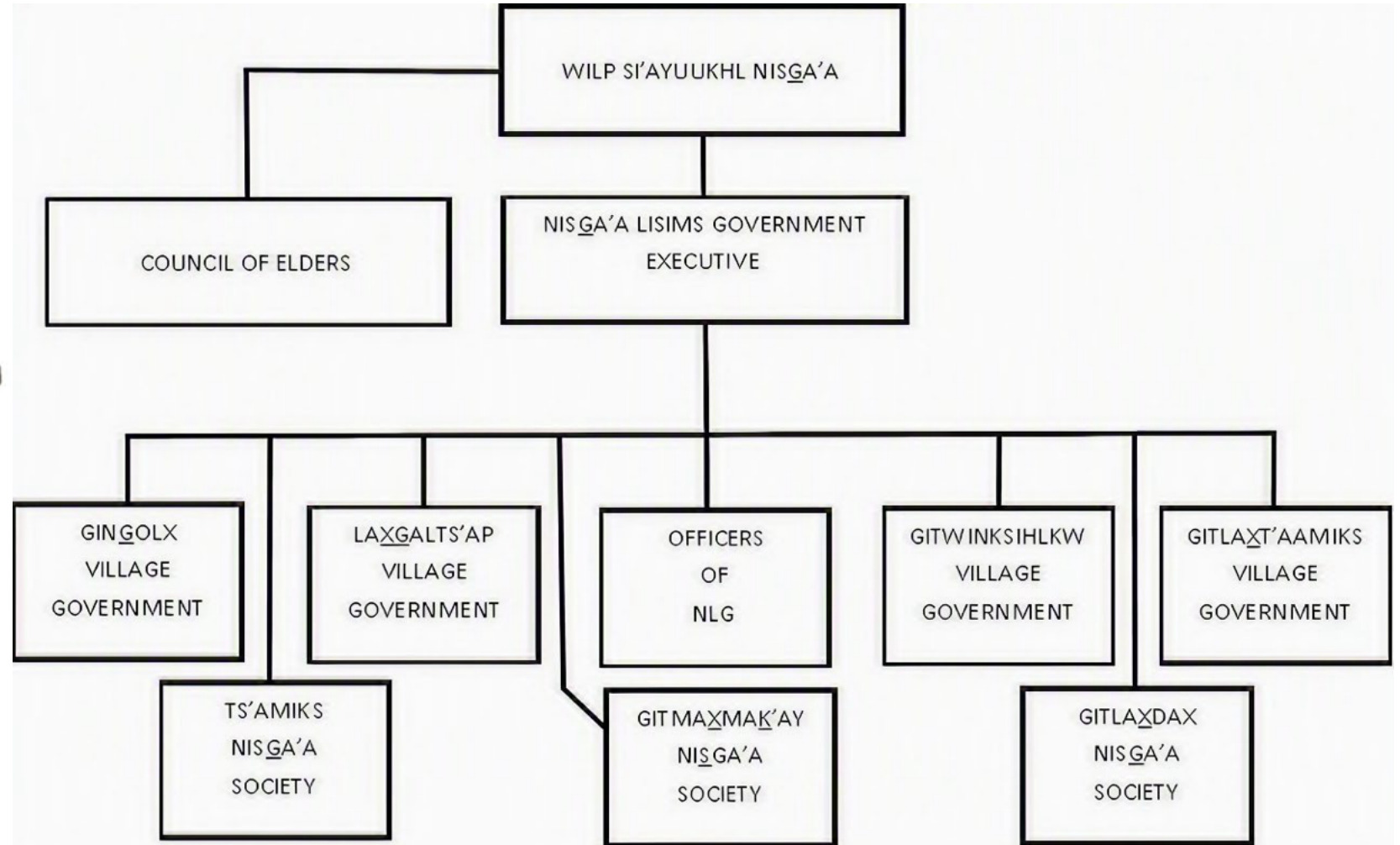
New Aiyansh, Gitwinksihlkw, Laxgalts'ap & Gingolx

Urban Local Representatives

Terrace, Prince Rupert/Port Ed., Vancouver



NISGA'A GOVERNMENT



Where we are today

As we approach 27 years of implementing the Nisga'a Treaty, the Nisga'a Nation is actively working on developing a sustainable economy that will provide long-term employment to our citizens

We have announced to the world, we are 'Open for Business',
Organization strategy plan with all Nisga'a entities, boards, and committees,

Special Assembly public feedback for growth,

Training and employment opportunities

Health, educations, and governance careers for the next generation,

Industry relations and development,

Partnerships and alliances across BC and Canada.

Supporting entrepreneur ventures

Nisga'a Business Development Fund

The Nisga'a Business Development Fund Act was established March 31, 2008, the act provides Nisga'a Business with alternative source business development funds.

Funds available right now:

Contributions / Grants

- ↳ For feasibility and or other specified development costs

- ↳ For capital investment for business infrastructure

- ↳ For developing business skills and management assistance.

How we further support our entrepreneurs

Businesss already have the monopoly of the 4 Nisga'a communities, the 4 village governments, 4 Nisga'a health organizations, 4 schools, Industry relations ensures our industry partnerships have our list of Nisga'a businesss to support local before going to non-local.

From best cuisines

to sacred art

to reliable transport

to supporting our law experts



Sustainable prosperity ventures

The Nisga'a Nation initiated and co-owns a suite of energy infrastructure projects designed to power economic independence and deliver clean Canadian energy to global markets.

Project	What it is	Nisga'a Role	Status
Ksi Lisims LNG	Floating LNG export facility. 12 MTPA capacity, powered by renewable hydroelectricity.	Co-proponent alongside Western LNG and Rockies LNG. Project sited on Nisga'a Nation-owned land.	All major permits received. Named a federal Project of National Importance. Construction target: early 2027. Operations: 2030.
Prince Rupert Gas Transmission (PRGT)	750 km natural gas pipeline from northeastern BC to Ksi Lisims LNG.	Equal co-owner with Western LNG.	Construction underway since August 2024. Operations: 2030.
Nass Valley Transmission Line (NVTL)	116.5 km, 287 kV line connecting the LNG facility to the BC Hydro grid.	Equal co-owner with Western LNG.	In pre-construction phase.



Other corporate partnerships

Nisga'a Growth Corporation

Nations Royalty

Treaty Creek Corporation

Port of Canal acquisition in partnership with
Tahltan Nation and Arrow

Four Village Government Economic Development
Ventures

Three Nisga'a Urban Economic Ventures



QUESTIONS

Contact:

Eva Clayton	President
Charles Morven	Secretary-Treasurer
Debra Febril	Executive Chairperson
Alvin Azak	Chairperson of the Council of Elders

NISGA'A LISIMS GOVERNMENT

www.nisgaanation.ca



Local Government Perspective

Mayor Sean Bujtas, City of Terrace

Engaging through the Kitselas and Kitsumkalum Treaty Process



Mayor Sean Bujtas
City of Terrace



Land Acknowledgment

We acknowledge that we are gathered on the unceded traditional territory of the x̱m̱ḵ'yam̱ (Musqueam), Sḵw̱é7mesh (Squamish), and sḵḻi ḻ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

I'd like to also recognize the Kitsumkalum and Kitselas Nations, whose traditional territories are home to the City of Terrace.

















Federal Perspective



Angela Bate, Director General,
Crown-Indigenous Relations (CIRNAC)



Mat Sargent, Senior Director, Crown-
Indigenous Relations (CIRNAC)

The British Columbia Treaty Process and Canada's Role

The British Columbia Treaty Process sets out a pathway for negotiating parties to work toward their common goal of reconciliation through treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements

The Recognition and Reconciliation of Rights Policy for Treaty Negotiations in British Columbia guides the negotiation of treaties, incremental agreements and other constructive arrangements. It makes clear that these agreements will not extinguish, surrender, or require the modification of rights

Canada works with the Province of British Columbia and participating First Nations, with the support of the British Columbia Treaty Commission, to reach agreements that advance Indigenous rights and self-determination, and support predictable, renewed Crown-Indigenous relationships

Key Priorities for Canada

Concluding agreements to resolve/address unresolved claims and provide stability for businesses and the public

Promoting economic diversification and growth, including through major project development

Answering questions and addressing concerns about treaties, Aboriginal title and private property

Addressing issues around shared territories and overlaps

Modern Treaties: Partnerships that Strengthen Canada

Constitutionally protected agreements that establish government-to-government partnerships among Indigenous, federal, provincial/territorial and local governments

Cover over 40% of Canada's landmass, including more than 80% of the North—areas central to Arctic sovereignty and economic development

The agreements create predictability over decision-making, certainty over land rights and ownership, and the stability that allows for effective partnerships

As Canada navigates a changing world - where economic competitiveness, Arctic sovereignty, environmental stewardship, and energy security are key priorities - constructive and reliable partnerships are necessary. Modern treaty partners are key to these national priorities, and treaties provide the path to work together

Modern Treaties: Partnerships in Action

Modern treaties create the conditions for partnership by providing:

- Legal certainty for land ownership, decision-making and consultation processes.

- Greater confidence for investment through clearer conditions for project proponents.

- Opportunities for co-development, with Indigenous governments, Canada and industry advancing projects of shared priority.

59% of projects and transformative strategies reviewed through the Major Projects Office have modern treaty intersections

- Nisga'a Nation - Proponent of the Ksi Lisims LNG project in British Columbia

- Tah Government - Advancing the Arctic Economic and Security Corridor in the Northwest Territories

- Qikiqtani Inuit Association - Advancing the Iqaluit Nukkiqsautiit Hydro Project





Provincial Perspective

Nedinska Donaldson, Executive Director, Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (MIRR)



Ministry of
Indigenous Relations
and Reconciliation

Treaties Create the Framework. Implementation Brings Them to Life

Modern treaties provide locally tailored pathways

Each treaty reflects the governance, geography and relationships of its region. The arrangements vary, but may include:

- Service and intergovernmental agreements

- Land-use and infrastructure coordination

- Regional district participation or membership

- Processes for addressing shared interests

Implementation happens across the BC government

Treaty commitments are given practical effect through everyday decisions about:

- Lands and resources

- Services and infrastructure

- Policy and funding

- Intergovernmental coordination

Implementation is distributed across provincial ministries. Treaties come to life through collaborative decisions and strong relationships.

Treaties Need Good Relationships for Success

Treaties provide the structure

Treaties establish:

- Rights and responsibilities
- Governance authorities
- Mechanisms for collaboration
- Processes for managing shared interests

Governments build the partnership

Modern Treaty Nations and local governments:

- Are responsible for their relationship as neighboring governments
- Communicate and engage early with each other
- Develop practical agreements and protocols
- Solve shared regional challenges together
- Build trust through experience over time

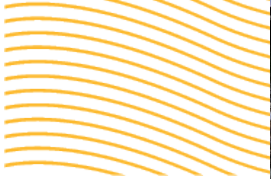
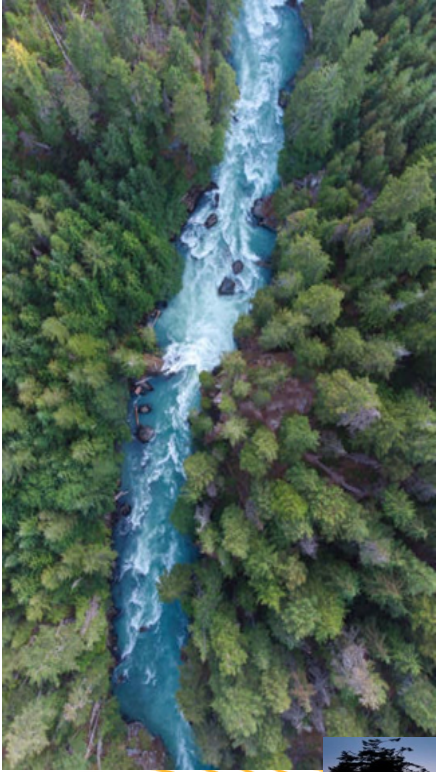
The Province supports implementation

British Columbia:

- Upholds its treaty commitments
- Supports coordinated implementation
- Provides legislative, policy and operational frameworks
- Helps create conditions in which relationships can succeed

The common good is built when neighbouring governments work together in practice.





Moderated Q&A

Closing Comments

For more information, please contact:

BCTC - communications@bctreaty.ca

BC - Nedinska.Donaldson@gov.bc.ca

Canada - Angela.Bate@rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca



**COMMON
GOOD** UBCM
2026



The Rural Coordination Centre of BC

In appreciation of our speakers today and with thanks for your contribution, UBCM has made a donation to the Rural Coordination Centre of BC. Since their inception in 2007, RCCBC has grown into a network of hundreds of people - rural physicians and other healthcare providers, healthcare administrators, community members, policymakers, educators, researchers, and non-profit organizations - guided by the principles of cultural safety and humility.