



For Immediate Release

MEDIA RELEASE

Canada and British Columbia to sign Agreement-in-Principle for Kitselas and Kitsumkalum

(July 24, 2015 - Terrace, B.C.) - The Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia will formally sign off on the Kitselas and Kitsumkalum Treaty Agreements-in-Principle (AIPs) on Tuesday, August 4, 2015. Both Kitselas and Kitsumkalum approved their AIP by membership voting in early 2013.

It is expected that Ministers from both Canada and British Columbia will participate in the signing ceremonies being organized in the communities of Gitau (Kitselas) and Kitsumkalum to commemorate this important milestone in the treaty process. The formal signing of the AIPs will commit all parties to address outstanding issues from Agreement-in-Principle negotiations. This will officially move both Kitselas and Kitsumkalum into Stage Five of the BC Treaty Commission process.

Alex Bolton, Chief Negotiator for Kitsumkalum Treaty stated, "We have long anticipated this day since our community voted "Yes" to the AIP. We have patiently waited for over 2 years and will now celebrate the approval signing by the Provincial and Federal governments. This is a success to our people, our community and the future of all Kitsumkalum generations."

Mel Bevan, Chief Negotiator for Kitselas adds, "Moving on to Stage Five is a major step towards settling the outstanding land-claim our grandparents asked us to finish for them. It will be up to the children and grandchildren to rebuild our community. A Treaty will give them the authority and the tools to do so."

An Agreement-in-Principle is not legally binding, but it is the critical framework to a concluded Final Agreement or Treaty. When the communities of Kitselas and Kitsumkalum voted "YES" to the AIP it mandated the negotiators to move forward with Final Agreement negotiations.

While the formality of signing has taken longer than anticipated, the Parties have continued negotiation requirements on many different issues over the past two years. Including establishment of a process to address fish and marine matters, which is especially significant as it had been off the table for a number of years. Both communities ratified their AIPs without a

fish chapter. Kitselas and Kitsumkalum have made it clear there is no Final Agreement without provisions for fish.

With the signing of the Agreements-in-Principle, Kitselas and Kitsumkalum will be working to conclude a Final Agreement within the next two years. Once a Final Agreement is complete a majority of Kitselas and Kitsumkalum eligible voters will need to approve it with another ratification vote.

-30-

For more information, please contact:

Hilary (Zornow) Lightening, Project & Communications Coordinator

Tsimshian First Nations Treaty Society

P: 250.635.5511

E: tfntreaty@gmail.com