

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Memorandum of Understanding advances Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Nations, Canada and British Columbia to final stage of treaty negotiations**

Xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish) and səfilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) VANCOUVER – The BC Treaty Commission congratulates Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Nations and the governments of Canada and British Columbia on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signing, transitioning the negotiations table from Stage 4 to Stage 5 of the BC treaty negotiations framework.

This MOU recognizes the Parties' shared vision to achieve and implement a tripartite treaty, and the Parties' commitment to renew Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw treaty negotiations that are informed and guided by the Foundation Documents. These include the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN Declaration), the *Recognition and Reconciliation of Rights Policy for Treaty Negotiations in British Columbia*, and *The Principals' Accord on Transforming Treaty Negotiations in British Columbia*.

“By signing the Memorandum of Understanding, the Parties affirm a shared vision of reconciliation and the recognition of Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw inherent rights and title, through treaty. The MOU solidifies the Parties' commitment to strengthening their ongoing nation-to-nation relationship,” says Chief Commissioner Celeste Haldane.

Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Nation has approximately 1100 members with many residing at the Tsulquate reserve where the community was relocated half a century ago. The traditional territory of the Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Nations spans from the northern tip of Vancouver Island to the BC mainland.

Chief Commissioner Haldane attended the celebration of the signing this afternoon on the territory of Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Nations.

### Quick Facts

- [Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw](#) joins seventeen other Nations in [Stage 5](#) of treaty negotiations
- In January 2018, the Principals expanded the Treaty Commission's mandate to include the support and implementation of the [UN Declaration](#), the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action](#), and the [Principles Respecting the Government of Canada's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples](#).
- In September 2019, the Principals endorsed a new [Recognition and Reconciliation of Rights Policy for Treaty Negotiations in British Columbia](#). This policy details how negotiations will be grounded in the recognition of Indigenous rights and ownership of Indigenous lands and resources. This is the first tripartite public policy recognizing and protecting Indigenous rights in British Columbia and is a framework to implement the UN Declaration.
- For all First Nations participating in the BC treaty negotiations process, please see the [2021 Annual Report](#).

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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**About the BC Treaty Commission**

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.