

**ELIGIBILITY &  
ENROLMENT**  
ROUNDTABLE  
END REPORT

## OVERVIEW

The Eligibility and Enrolment (E&E) Roundtable was hosted by the British Columbia Treaty Commission ('BC Treaty Commission' and 'Treaty Commission') as a virtual session on August 28, 2023. It provided a platform for presenters and participants to share their experiences and insights related to E&E – a critical aspect of ratification and the treaty negotiations process.

The Roundtable discussion brought together 52 individuals representing over 15 First Nations, the Government of Canada, and the Government of British Columbia to discuss E&E, and the interplay between communications, process, and long-term impacts. As noted by Chief Commissioner Celeste Haldane in her opening remarks, the sharing of information amongst the Parties (Canada, British Columbia and First Nations) is critical to successfully supporting ratification processes in the future.

Speakers reiterated the critical role that E&E activities play in building capacity, nationhood, and its significance in shaping the First Nations' self-determination and self-government. As First Nations progress and advance negotiations, the lessons learned and knowledge shared in this session will undoubtedly contribute to ongoing successes as more First Nations navigate the complexities of E&E.

This report provides an overview of key insights, discussions, and experiences shared during the session. The E&E Roundtable was recorded and is shared on the BC Treaty Commission website, [www.bctreaty.ca](http://www.bctreaty.ca), and on its YouTube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/@BCTreatyInformation>.

## BACKGROUND

As part of the BC Treaty Commission's mandate to support progress in the negotiations and to share public information, it has hosted a number of forums and roundtables on key topics related to negotiations, treaties and agreements. These engagements provide opportunities to share ideas, experiences, best practices, and tools, as well as support relationship and network-building amongst First Nations negotiation teams, and with Parties and partners in the negotiations process.

With First Nations advancing negotiations toward conclusion and ratification, the Treaty Commission understood that it was necessary and important to convene a roundtable on E&E, as these are fundamental to self-determination, self-government, and for the ratification process.

## PRESENTATIONS

The Treaty Commission invited several speakers to share their experiences in key topics related to E&E and the ratification process. The roundtable agenda consisted of three panel presentations and time for questions and answers (Q&A).

### 1. Government Interests and Objectives

*Gerald Chan (Finance) and Michael Horvath (Policy) - Government of Canada*

Representatives from the Government of Canada's Fiscal and Policy branch discussed how the eligibility and enrolment process supports self-determination by identifying rights-holders, their participation in the ratification process and, ultimately, the vote. They highlighted the collaborative development of eligibility criteria, dual enrolment mitigation measures, and the funding processes.

There are three steps to the fiscal timeline: offer and acceptance, fiscal commitments, and funding through the Indigenous Services Canada framework. In addition, each First Nation receives separate funding to carry out the activities, even in the case where multiple First Nations are negotiating as a collective (similar to the Maa-nulth First Nations).

### 2. Preparing the Team and Community

*David Try (Kitselas), Ashley Wright (K'ómoks / Consultant), and Coral Mackay (K'ómoks / Consultant)*

Each of the presenters are working with First Nations that are currently concluding negotiations for their respective treaty and moving towards ratification. Representatives shared their perspective from closing negotiations tables, discussing their approach to capacity-building, data management, work-planning, timelines, communications, and preparing for enrolment. They highlighted the importance of balancing the procedural and human components of the process, and how fostering relationships has a positive impact on the overall approach. In addition, it was highlighted that there will be additional team members specifically to support E&E that are separate from the negotiation team, and each team member has an important role to play specific to their responsibilities.

### 3. Sharing the Experience - Modern Treaty Nations

*Kwuntiltunaat - Kim Baird and Chemkwaat - Valerie Cross (Tsawwassen), and Grace Adams (Tla'amin)*

Representatives from Modern Treaty Nations that have successfully ratified treaties shared their experiences and the lessons they learned through the E&E process. They shared how E&E affected their communities, the way they provide services, and how they communicate and distribute resources pre- and post-ratification. They each gave valuable advice on the importance of data management, engagement, and accessibility as crucial components of pre-ratification preparations.

## KEY THEMES AND INSIGHTS

Throughout the day, several key themes and insights emerged from the presentations and the discussions.

### 1. Identity and Belonging

Across all presentations, a recurring theme was the importance of identity in the E&E process. Presenters emphasized the healing power of determining their own membership and/or citizenship processes. The presenters emphasized that it became more about the journey than the destination. The E&E process is seen as an opportunity to bring people home and have them re-engage or be introduced into their community. The E&E engagement is sometimes the first interaction that some have with their community and will inform their journey of knowing where they come from.

### 2. Communications and Community

Presenters emphasized the significance of involving the community as early and often as possible in the process. Community engagement emerged as a critical factor in building trust, transparency, and accountability in the E&E process. Timing and approach greatly influence the path to ratification and self-government. Presenters shared the importance of communicating shifts and changes in membership pre- and post-treaty, and of bridging the status-non-status member gap through unification and nationhood.

In addition, communicating the enrolment rationale, procedures, supports available, approaching inquiries candidly by dispelling myths and misinformation, and managing expectations all have a significant impact on the process. It is also important to cater to diverse learning styles through methods of communication, such as brochures, podcasts, videos, in-person engagements (home visits/family chats, Elders and Youth Groups), ensuring inclusivity and accessibility.

### 3. Data Management

Every presentation identified data management as a critical consideration in E&E and self-government. Presenters shared how effective data management is integral to various aspects of the process such as planning, coordination, communication, negotiations, and reporting. Deciding where to store data is essential; security measures, reporting features, and access controls need to be considered. It should be important to note that ensuring data confidentiality will be paramount for the First Nations.

#### 4. Capacity Building

The crucial role that the E&E Committee plays on the treaty team was highlighted by all presenters. Training and mentoring the E&E Committee fosters member-driven growth and trust-building. This is pivotal for conveying self-government capacity beyond eligibility and retaining historical knowledge. Comprehensive orientation packages assist in onboarding new treaty team members and administration staff. Having the right people for the right positions plays a role in building an effective team. After ratification and before effective-date, nations will have a 2-4 year period in which the nation is getting ready to implement the treaty; this will be a crucial time for all members, including the E&E Committee.

#### 5. Workplanning

When drafting an E&E workplan considerations could include but are not limited to:

- Anticipated timelines
- Creating and compiling training materials (orientation and onboarding packages)
- Hiring and training the E&E Coordinator and Team (take the time to invest in these roles)
- Engagement with Modern Treaty Nations and government to scope, document, and understand lessons learned
- Database development and troubleshooting
- Development and sharing of family trees, kinship lines, genealogy
- Drafting and creating enrolment forms
- Drafting procedures and terms of reference for E&E Committee
- Development and coordinating the E&E Committee
- Establishment of Enrolment Appeals Board
- Engagement with members and eligible members
- Preparation of data for Ratification Committee
- Monitoring and reporting

The workplan should outline the objectives, activities, deliverables, anticipated timelines, and who will be responsible for completing the activity, as these items will inform the budget and keep everything in working order throughout the progression of the ratification process.

## OPEN DISCUSSION, Q&A AND NEXT STEPS

Following the presentations, an open discussion allowed participants to ask questions and engage in meaningful dialogue. This interactive segment facilitated the exchange of additional ideas, challenges, and potential solutions related to E&E within the negotiations process.

During the discussion period, participants addressed topics such as the scope of funding for E&E ratification, federal government processes related to *Indian Act* Band lists, member transfers between Bands and other self-governing First Nations, what happens to committee staff post-ratification, the importance of bringing the E&E Committee and negotiating staff together, developing membership codes, drawing-down jurisdiction in advance of implementation, and the importance of keeping track of up-to-date membership information, including where in the world they reside.

The initial discussion on potential next steps included convening an engagement for E&E teams and others involved in the ratification process, developing resources, and continuing to share information amongst First Nations about to undertake E&E preparations. The Treaty Commission commits to continuing to support these engagements in various capacities (e.g. virtual, potentially in-person) and connecting individuals and teams with one another to share and support E&E and ratification processes.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The BC Treaty Commission extends its appreciation to all the presenters and participants who made this informative roundtable possible, and to the Government of Canada for their financial contributions to support this initiative.

Special acknowledgements to the presenters: Grace Adams, Kim Baird, Gerald Chan, Valerie Cross, Michael Horvath, Coral Mackay, David Try, and Ashley Wright.

Cover art by Alano Edzerza.



# Agenda

**August 28, 2023 | 9:30am - 3:00pm**

**Roundtable Chair:** Commissioner Angela Wesley, BC Treaty Commission

**Zoom Link:** <https://bctreaty.zoom.us/j/88594168807?pwd=ZUMwdzdMMlJnQW54QzdhTjh0V2hSdz09>

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**9:30am**                    **Opening and Welcome**  
*Chief Commissioner Celeste Haldane, BC Treaty Commission*

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**9:45am**                    **Panel #1: Government Interests and Objectives**  
*Gerald Chan (Finance), Michael Horvath (Policy) - Government of Canada*

- What is E&E?
- Key Processes
- Timelines and Funding

Questions and Answers

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**10:45am**                    **Break**

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**11:00am**                    **Panel #2: Preparing the Team and Community**  
*David Try (Kitselas), Ashley Wright (Ashley Wright Consulting / K'omoks), and Coral Mackay (K'omoks)*

- Building the E&E Team — what does the team look like, where do you find them?
- Getting started — work planning, training and preparing for outreach and enrolment
- Engaging with citizens and community
- Data Management

Questions and Answers

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**12:00pm**                    **Lunch Break**



12:45pm

**Panel #3: Sharing the Experience — Modern Treaty Nations**

*Kwuntiltunaat - Kim Baird and Chemkwaat - Valerie Cross (Tsawwassen), and Grace Adams (Tla'amin)*

- Selecting the Team
- Engaging Citizens (At home, away from home, Elders, Youth, Middle Age)
- What worked ... what did not work?!
- Communications and Misinformation
- Challenges and Delays
- Leadership and Operationalization Perspectives
- Technology and Database Creation

Questions and Answers



1:30pm

**All Presenter Questions and Answers**



2:00 - 3:00pm **Next Steps and Closing Remarks**



# Biographies



**Celeste Haldane,**  
**Chief Commissioner**  
BC Treaty Commission

Celeste Haldane is serving her third term as Chief Commissioner and was first appointed in April 2017. She is Musqueam (Coast Salish) and Metlakatla (Tsimshian) from the Sparrow and Haldane families, and has European ancestry.

Celeste is a practising lawyer and was appointed Queen's Counsel in 2019. Drawing from over 25 years of experience, her specializations are in Indigenous law and corporate governance, and she previously practiced criminal defense and civil litigation. She is an active member of both the Indigenous Bar Association and the Canadian Bar Association. She holds a Master of Laws in Constitutional Law from Osgoode Hall Law School at York University.

Celeste serves on governance boards, including Brain Canada Foundation, Legal Aid BC, Hamber Foundation, UBC Board of Governors, the Musqueam Capital Corporation, and the Indigenous Bar Association.



**Angela Wesley, Chair**  
BC Treaty Commission

Angela Wesley is the provincial appointed Commissioner to the BC Treaty Commission since 2018. She is a citizen of the Huu-ay-aht First Nations (Nuu-chah-nulth). For more than 30 years, through her consulting company Wes-Can Advisory Services, she has worked with First Nations throughout British Columbia providing advisory and facilitation services in areas of strategic planning, community development and engagement, communications, and governance capacity building. She worked closely with her First Nation for more than 20 years in achieving a treaty that came into effect in April of 2011 and continues to work on implementation of the treaty and self-governance.

Angela has served and continues to serve as a Director on a number of First Nations and Provincial Boards. She is actively involved in international discussions on Indigenous governance and leadership.



**Coral Mackay**

K'ómoks First Nation

Coral, a proud member of the K'ómoks First Nation with mixed European ancestry, was raised in her home community on the K'ómoks reserve where she currently resides. Her experience in service and administrative roles has highlighted the importance of listening well, respect, and empowerment in all her interactions.

In 2021, she accepted the role of Eligibility and Enrolment (E&E) Project Manager with the K'ómoks First Nation. This experience deepened her understanding of treaty negotiations, process intricacies, and meaningful engagement. She recognized the value of collaboration, information-sharing, and nation-to-nation relationships.

In 2023, Coral was elected for her first term as a Councillor for K'ómoks First Nation, effectively stepping away from her role as E&E Project Manager. As an independent contractor, she offers technical services in communications, coordination, research, and planning. In parallel to her professional pursuits, Coral is nearing the completion of her Bachelors degree in Indigenous Studies and Political Science at the University of Victoria.



**Ashley Wright**

K'ómoks First Nation

Ashley Wright is a proud member of the K'ómoks First Nation. She grew up in the Comox Valley and attended post-secondary at Vancouver Island University and UBC Sauder School of Business.

She has worked in various capacities for the K'ómoks First Nation since 2014. She has worked in the Economic Development and Self-Government/Treaty sectors. Prior to that, she spent 7 years working for financial institutions in a multitude of roles from customer service, investing, secured and unsecured lending, and management.

Since 2018, she has been consulting her services to First Nations, her primary client is K'ómoks First Nation where she is the Treaty Manager, she manages the treaty team, capacity building, and projects. She has experience in community planning and engagement, project management, work planning and budgeting, people management and leadership, and preparing a Nation for self-government.



## Valerie Cross

Tsawwassen First Nation

Valerie has extensive project management experience through many significant initiatives, including working to transition the Tsawwassen band to a self-governing First Nation, and at the Naut'sa mawt Tribal Council, where she has worked for the past seven years. In addition, she is an elected member of the Tsawwassen First Nation Executive Council.

Valerie is a proud Tsawwassen First Nation member who was raised on the former Tsawwassen reserve by her grandparents — Isaac Williams, former chief of Tsawwassen, who had maternal ties to the Musqueam First Nation, and Pearl Williams, who had maternal ties to the Squamish First Nation.

Valerie has also worked as a teaching assistant at the SFU Beedie School of Business, helping to transform learning experiences to include Indigenous perspectives and pedagogies. Valerie has an EMBA in Indigenous business leadership from Simon Fraser University and an adult education diploma from Vancouver Community College.



## Kim Baird

Tsawwassen First Nation

Kim is a proud mother of three daughters and her ancestral name is *Kwuntiltunaat*. She has received a number of prestigious awards and believes strongly in supporting professional and leadership development of young women.

Kim is the current Interim Chief Administrative Officer for the Tsawwassen First Nation (TFN). She was also the elected Chief of the TFN for six terms, from 1999-2012. She negotiated and continues to support implementing the first urban treaty in BC, which took effect on April 3, 2009. She has since overseen numerous economic and institutional development projects for TFN. Kim was the first woman, who was not an MLA, in BC history to address the BC Legislature on October 15, 2007 when the British Columbia Treaty Legislation process was initiated.

She is also the owner of Kim Baird Strategic Consulting, which offers a wide range of services in relation to First Nation policy, governance and economic development, consultation, negotiations, communication and engagement. Kim also has First Nation and Industry clients on a range of issues.



**Grace Adams**  
Tla'amin Nation

Grace Adams is the Development Manager at Tla'amin Management Services. From 1998 to 2017 she served as a Negotiations Manager for the Sliammon Treaty Society and was instrumental in the Tla'amin Nation ratification engagement.

In addition to her work for the Tla'amin Nation, she has also worked at Justice Institute of British Columbia, and for the Laxkw'alaams Band.



**David Try**  
Kitselas First Nation

Dr. David Try, Ph.D., is the Kitselas First Nation Senior Treaty Negotiator / Director Treaty. He has been living in northern BC since completing a public service career in policy and management with the Canadian federal government in 2005. His work experience includes corporate management, supporting Deputy Minister and Assistant Deputy Minister communities. David's policy experience embraces diverse areas including post-secondary education, agriculture, health and corporate management policies, including HR.

David received his PhD in Management from Warwick University, UK and holds Master Degrees in both Research (Bradford University, UK), Master of Business Administration (Univ. of Ottawa), BA in Economics (Carleton), Certified Management Consultant and is an accredited Executive Coach.

David has worked as a consultant with a number of First Nations in the area of governance and management issues, and he has also served on many non-profit Boards.



**Michael Horvath**

Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC)

Michael Horvath is a Policy Analyst with Treaties and Aboriginal Government at CIRNAC since 2021.

Previously, he worked as a Budget Analyst with the Government of Saskatchewan. Michael holds a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Saskatchewan and studied public policy at the Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy at the Universities of Saskatchewan and Regina.



**Gerald Chan**

Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC)

Gerald Chan has been the Manager of Fiscal Negotiations at Crown-Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation and Northern Affairs Canada for BC treaty tables since 2018. Previously, he was Manager of Cost-Sharing and Land Claims Financial Negotiations.

Gerald holds a Master of Arts in Economics from University of British Columbia and in an earlier part of his career held the designation of Chartered Financial Analyst.