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Office of the Premier  
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada  
Lheidli T'enneh Band

## GOVERNMENTS, FIRST NATION INITIAL HISTORIC AGREEMENT

PRINCE GEORGE – British Columbia Premier Gordon Campbell, the Honourable Jim Prentice, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, and Lheidli T'enneh Chief Dominic Frederick today witnessed the joint initialling of the first Final Agreement reached under the British Columbia Treaty Process.

“Today we witnessed a significant milestone in the history of reconciliation of First Nations rights and title in British Columbia,” said Campbell. “We are building a new relationship with the Lheidli T'enneh Band, one that will create economic certainty in the region, and provide opportunities, independence and prosperity for generations to come. I commend Chief Frederick and all the negotiators for demonstrating their leadership and commitment to the treaty process.”

“Today’s initialling represents what can be achieved through community leadership and through co-operation among Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities,” said Minister Prentice. “This treaty will help Canada, British Columbia and Lheidli T'enneh develop a new government-to-government relationship that will benefit local businesses and citizens by clarifying the rights, responsibilities and jurisdictions of each level of government. The treaty package also includes a series of benefits that will enhance Lheidli T'enneh’s economic, social and cultural opportunities.”

The Final Agreement includes self-government provisions and defines Lheidli T'enneh’s rights to resources such as wildlife, fish, timber and sub-surface minerals. The land component of the treaty is 4,330 hectares. The cost of the Final Agreement will be shared by British Columbia and Canada. The capital transfer is \$13.2 million and Lheidli T'enneh will receive resource revenue payments of \$400,000 per year for 50 years.

“The Final Agreement represents a lot of hard work, sacrifice and compromises by all parties,” said Chief Frederick. “The negotiators have taken it to this point, now it is in the hands of the community to accept or reject it. Our community has set a high threshold to accept the Final Agreement. The community wishes will be respected. The community has set the acceptance at 70 per cent.”

Representing more than 300 Carrier people from the Prince George area, Lheidli T'enneh signed an Agreement in Principle in 2003, which provided the framework for negotiating the Final Agreement.

Lheidli T'enneh will now proceed to hold a community vote on the Final Agreement in the coming months. If it ratifies the agreement, British Columbia and Canada must then pass settlement legislation before the agreement can come into effect.

The Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia are also engaged in Final Agreement negotiations with other First Nations: the Maa-nulth First Nations on west central Vancouver Island, Tsawwassen First Nation in the Lower Mainland, Sliammon First Nation on the Sunshine Coast, Yekooche Nation near Fort St. James, and Yale First Nation north of Hope. In addition, over 40 First Nations are currently in the process of negotiating Agreements in Principle with Canada and British Columbia.

More information about the Lheidli T'enneh Final Agreement is available online at: [www.gov.bc.ca/arr](http://www.gov.bc.ca/arr); [www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/bc/treapro/ston/nwdev/nwdev\\_e.html](http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/bc/treapro/ston/nwdev/nwdev_e.html) and [www.lheidli.ca](http://www.lheidli.ca).

For more information, please call the toll-free line for the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, 1 800-880-1022.

1 backgrounder(s) attached.

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