



The First Nations of Maa-nulth Treaty Society

Huu-ay-aht First Nations | Ka:'yu:'k't'h'/Che:k'tles7et'h' First Nations
Toquaht Nation | Uchucklesaht Tribe | Ucluelet First Nation

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“Youth Today, Leaders Tomorrow”

On July 13th & 14th youth from each of the five Maa-nulth First Nations attended the Maa-nulth Youth Forum at the University of Victoria. For those of you who were able to attend, it was great to spend a couple of days together! For those who were unable to attend, we wanted to provide you with this brief overview of the events and highlights of our busy weekend.

Members were bussed from Campbell River, Ucluelet, and Port Alberni to University of Victoria on Friday morning, arriving just in time to grab a bite to eat for lunch and head into the David Lam Auditorium. The Huu-ay-aht delegation provided a Prayer Song to commence the day in a positive way. Hereditary Chief, Andy Thomas of the Esquimalt First Nation welcomed the delegates and provided some inspiring words. The two co-chairs of the two day's events were our young leaders: Charlie Cootes Jr., Uchucklesaht Tribe and Evan Touchie, Ucluelet First Nations. These two were a good balance of professionalism, humour and set a relaxed atmosphere for all of us, thanks so to both of you!



A panel of our own experienced and knowledgeable treaty negotiators provided our delegates with their perspective and personal stories on the following three topics;

“From a Rich History to a Dependent State – Traditional System to the Indian Act System” Huu-ay-aht First Nations, Chief Councillor, Robert Dennis

“Advantages of a Treaty Today – Taking Control of our Resources in a Rapidly Changing Environment” Uchucklesaht Chief Treaty Negotiator, Charlie Cootes

“Trials and Tribulations of Treaty Negotiations – Overcoming the Challenges and Changing Mandates” Huu-ay-aht Chief Treaty Negotiator, Tom Mexsis Happynook

We were very fortunate to attend a tasty banquet dinner and evening full of culture at the Esquimalt Long House. The Esquimalt people acknowledged all of the Hereditary Chiefs in the House in a sacred ceremony. It was a truly unique experience, and one that many of us will remember for a long time.

On the second day, the delegates were guided to three break-out groups, where informal discussions and group interaction took place in the following areas;

1. Jobs/Employment/Careers
2. Self Determination/First Nations Constitutions
3. Life Before and After Treaty



Here are just a few captions of your voices in the three group sessions;

Jobs/Employment/Careers

There will be opportunities in Economic Development, our youth have plans to become everything from surf shop owners, biologists, chefs to lawyers and many, many others – too many to list. It's clear we will be well taken care of! Way to go youth!

- There will be Commercial Recreation Opportunities – a 15 year window after Effective Date
- We will have ample Water Resources – there may be export opportunities in the future (\$\$\$\$\$)

Our Youth want to see economic development to be prioritized in First Nations affairs

Self Determination / First Nations Constitutions

- You would like to see Hereditary Chiefs have training in their roles in our future governments
- You hope to see more housing, more education, and more jobs.
- You would like to see our people being becoming prepared for a post Treaty environment with our own Constitution structures in place

Life Before and After Treaty

- You were encouraged to find out that our nations will have absolute control over Post Secondary Education funding, we will come up with our own criteria for what programs will be funded. Example: trades, academic etc.
- You were happy to learn that your resources and land base will increase in order to accommodate members who may want to move back home.
- There are also provisions in the treaty to help those people who choose to stay living off of Treaty Settlement Lands (TSL).

We are fortunate to have had Mike Watts in attendance at this forum and with the great footage Mike captured over the two days, you can expect to see a DVD of the forum similar to the Overview DVD you have recently received. Please keep your communications worker updated on your current address.

We were very fortunate to have many generous donations that were distributed to delegates as door prizes, thank you to the Ucluelet, Toquaht and Huu-ay-aht First Nations, Tom Mexsis Happynook, Angela Wesley and First Nations Training and Consulting Services for your kind gestures to our young people! Because of your generous hearts, there were many smiles at the event. We were exceptionally delighted to see the ear to ear grin on the face of our grand prize winner: Mitchell Cootes, Uchucklesaht Tribe who is the proud owner of a laptop computer and printer. Way to go Mitchell!



"This Treaty is for you (the youth). Everything that we have fought for over the years has been for you. Soon the fight will be yours, but you will be better equipped to succeed in ways we couldn't imagine."

-Vi Mundy, Chief Councillor, Ucluelet First Nation