



NEWS RELEASE

Toquaht First Nations Overwhelmingly Approve Treaty

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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UCLUELET – The Toquaht First Nations voted 78% in favour of the Maa-nulth Treaty in this past week's vote on a treaty initialed last December 2006 by Maa-nulth First Nations, British Columbia and Canada.

The treaty requires that 50% plus 1 must vote in favour in order to ratify. 72 of the 80 eligible Toquaht voters voted to approve a treaty granting the Toquaht self-government, land, and cash as well as access to fisheries, forestry and other economic opportunities valued in the millions. Toquaht voters also approved the transfer of Band assets to the new Toquaht government.

"My father entrusted me to continue his quest for a treaty," said Hereditary Chief Bert Mack, "my people and I have succeeded beyond my expectations."

The Toquaht Ratification team worked tirelessly over the last twelve months, to ensure that Toquaht members were well informed about the Treaty and ready to vote.

"We can now make plans to develop a community," said Culture/Education Coordinator Anne Morgan, "The needs and aspirations of membership will evolve as we partake in Land Use Plans, Physical Development Plans, and training initiatives as Toquaht Nation Treaty Citizens. We'll govern as an autonomous society moving forward."

The treaty is expected to take effect in 2010 once the BC Legislative Assembly and the Parliament of Canada pass the Maa-nulth Final Agreement legislation.

"...I believe that we, the Toquaht people, will now walk a brighter path with the teachings of our great grandfathers while embracing the reality of greater prospects for our families now and forever", said Second Chief Kevin Mack. "The ratification of the treaty by the Toquaht membership provides us with the torch light and lays down the next stepping stone to achieve that greatness."

"One hurdle has been overcome" said Toquaht Communications worker Kirsten Johnsen, "We can now work towards creating a better, brighter future for generations to come."

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