

## **West Coast First Nations vote to accept new treaty**

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### **[CBC News](#)**

Four West Vancouver Island First Nations voted in favour of a treaty settlement with the provincial and federal governments over the weekend.

The Ucluelet, Toquaht, Uchucklesaht, and Kyuquot First Nations approved the Maa-nulth treaty, which was accepted earlier by the Huu-ay-aht First Nation.

It will give the five nations a capital transfer of \$73.1 million, annual resource royalty payments averaging \$1.2 million for 25 years and approximately 245 square kilometres of land.

The Maa-nulth First Nations are made up of approximately 2,000 members.

"If the Maa-nulth treaty experience has taught us anything, it is that a historically unjust relationship can be transformed if there is a vision of a better future, the courage to pursue that vision and the confidence to do so respectfully," said Maa-nulth lead negotiator Gary Yabsley.

"It has also taught us that the opportunity to make such a transformation is rare."

Tom Happynook, a member of the Huu-ay-aht First Nation, said the vote means all five nations will now take their rightful place in the social, cultural and economic fabric of B.C. and Canada.

"The Maa-nulth First Nations are demonstrating strength, confidence, and self-determination," said Premier Gordon Campbell.

The provincial government said it would table legislation shortly to ratify the agreement. It will also have to be ratified by the federal government.

Federal Indian Affairs Minister Chuck Strahl called the ratification a significant achievement for the Maa-nulth First Nations and a major advancement of the land treaty settlement process in B.C.

"It demonstrates that working together to find common solutions at the negotiating table is the best way to resolve these important issues," he said in a statement.

The Maa-nulth agreement will be the second modern-day treaty to come before the legislature for ratification by the province this year. On July 25, the Tsawwassen First Nation voted in favour of a treaty.

The province says there are now seven First Nations in British Columbia who have concluded modern day final agreements.