

- Skip to main content
- Skip to footer

British Columbia News

New agreement lays foundation for reconciliation of Haida Nation Title and Rights

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/25148>

Friday, August 13, 2021 2:00 PM

Haida Gwaii - The Council of the Haida Nation and the federal and provincial governments have signed the GayGahlda “Changing Tide” framework agreement, setting the stage for reconciliation negotiations.

This historic agreement is based on recognition of the Haida Nation’s inherent Title and Rights with respect to the Haida Gwaii terrestrial area, including the inherent right to self-government. Discussions will be founded on the understanding that Haida inherent Title exists, rather than having to be proven. The agreement also commits to negotiations in good faith to reconcile interests, including laws and management of resources, in the marine area of Haida Gwaii.

The negotiation agenda includes priority and long-term topics for reconciliation that will redefine the relationship between the Haida Nation, Canada and the Province. The agreement also commits to a series of good faith measures as a starting point, which may include forestry measures, resources for governance capacity, social and cultural measures, business opportunities and fisheries and marine matters. It also describes a path forward based on a series of agreements that build on each other over time to implement Title and Rights.

A principle for negotiations is that private land and the operation of municipal governments will remain under provincial jurisdiction. Any acquisition of private lands by the Haida Nation will be on a willing seller-willing buyer basis.

The relationship between negotiations and the legal title case filed by the Haida Nation is described in the agreement. The parties have agreed that negotiations and litigation can continue concurrently. However, the parties will not go to trial while negotiations proceed in good faith.

Both the federal and provincial governments have passed legislation to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and GayGahlda is a unique agreement that reflects this approach. The reconciliation negotiations will be a process of Tii Yahda “making things right” with the Haida Nation.

Quotes:

Gaagwiis Jason Alsop, President of the Haida Nation –

“GayGahlda represents an important opportunity to begin the process of Tii Yahda ‘making things right’ between the Crown governments and the Haida Nation. By shifting away from the denial politics of the past and moving to a place of truth through acknowledgment of inherent Haida Title, a strong foundation for negotiations is established. Together we have set the k’yuu ‘pathway’ to realize peaceful co-existence between the people of Haida Gwaii and between governments without compromise to the objectives of the Haida Nation.”

Carolyn Bennett, federal Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations –

“Today’s announcement is an historic and exciting milestone for the Haida Nation, Canada and B.C. Through the recognition and affirmation of Title and Rights, we are building a foundation of trust, respect and partnership.”

Murray Rankin, B.C.’s Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation –

“This agreement is the starting point and guide for negotiating a number of agreements that will lead, step by step, to the implementation of Haida Title and Rights in Haida Gwaii. We have always maintained that negotiation is the way forward to resolve questions of Title and Rights in British Columbia and with this agreement we are working collaboratively with the Haida Nation to create certainty and stability for everyone.”

Jennifer Rice, MLA for North Coast –

“This unique and groundbreaking GayGahlda agreement addresses matters of First Nations Title and Rights through negotiating as equal partners. The Haida have always been at the forefront of Title and Rights and we are proud to be moving forward together with them, the federal government and all Haida Gwaii.”

Dluujuu Kris Olsen, mayor, Village of Queen Charlotte, and director, North Coast Regional District –

“The GayGahlda ‘Changing Tide’ framework is a historic move forward for both the federal and provincial governments by recognizing Haida Title and Rights on Haida Gwaii. This framework is a path for the Council of the Haida Nation and all levels of government to work together in designing a future that will support a healthy environment and create a sustainable island economy.”

Danny Robertson, entrepreneur –

“As a resident and entrepreneur on Haida Gwaii with several businesses in various industries, I celebrate and welcome this exciting news. The necessary recognition of Haida Title will remove uncertainties and provide a foundation that our communities and local economy can build from with confidence in balance with the environment.”

Quick Facts:

- Haida Gwaii is located approximately 100 kilometres west of the northern coast of British Columbia, and is an isolated group of more than 200 islands, large and small, totalling approximately one million hectares (3,750 square miles). Haidas have been on Haida Gwaii since time immemorial.
- The Council of the Haida Nation (CHN), as a national government, was formed in 1974 and the Constitution of the Haida Nation was formally adopted in 2003. The constitution mandates the CHN to settle the issue of Title and Rights and ensure that the Haida relationship with Haida Gwaii continues in perpetuity.
- The CHN has negotiated and signed agreements with other coastal First Nations, non-governmental organizations and local communities and continues to work on agreements with both the federal and provincial governments.

Learn More:

Link to the agreement: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/download/310839B5BA0743D48E7A2FB052F90107>
(<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/download/310839B5BA0743D48E7A2FB052F90107>)

Learn more about the Haida Nation: www.haidanation.ca/ (<http://www.haidanation.ca/>)

Brady Yu

Director of Communications
Council of the Haida Nation
brady.yu@haidanation.com
250 559-4468

Stephen Binder

Senior Public Affairs Officer
Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation

stephen.binder@gov.bc.ca

778 677-2174

Ani Dergalstanian

Press Secretary and Communications Advisor

Office of the Honourable Carolyn Bennett

Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations

819 997-0002

Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada

Media Relations

RCAANC.media.CIRNAC@canada.ca

819 934-2302