

Kitselas Treaty and Kitsumkalum Treaty Overview Fact Sheet

After more than three decades, the Province of British Columbia (B.C.), the Government of Canada (Canada), Kitsumkalum First Nation (Kitsumkalum) and Kitselas First Nation (Kitselas) have concluded negotiations on two modern treaties. Initialling the treaties in summer 2024 signalled the conclusion of substantive negotiations, subject to certain caveats such as legal and technical review and ongoing consultation with neighbouring First Nations. It also set the stage for an approval process called ratification, in which the First Nation, B.C. and Canada each seek approval to sign the treaty before it can come into effect.

In 2025, First Nations began the ratification process with eligible voters from each First Nation voting overwhelmingly in favour of ratifying their respective treaties and self-government constitutions —Kitselas in April and Kitsumkalum in November. Now B.C. and Canada are undergoing their own respective ratification processes, which will take a couple years to complete. On April 15, 2026, B.C. introduced provincial treaty implementation legislation — the Kitselas Treaty Act, 2026 — in the B.C. Legislature as the first step in the provincial government's ratification of the Kitselas Treaty. B.C. aims to introduce the Kitsumkalum Treaty Act in the Legislative Assembly in 2026 as part of provincial ratification.

Modern treaties are an important part of advancing reconciliation, righting past wrongs and recognizing First Nations self-governance and self-determination. Treaties create jurisdictional and operational certainty for everyone in the region where they are concluded, while supporting partnerships, economic development and community social well-being. Treaties are informed by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

Kitsumkalum and Kitselas worked together with B.C. and Canada at a common negotiation table to negotiate their treaties. For many years, organizations, businesses, interest holders, local governments and people in the Skeena area have been informed in these negotiations on various elements of the treaties and will continue to be informed as each government ratifies the agreements.

This fact sheet provides more information on the Kitselas Treaty and Kitsumkalum Treaty, and the process ahead to ratify and implement these treaties. Learn more at <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/KitselasKitsumkalumTreaties>. If you have questions, please contact: Kitselas.Kitsumkalum@gov.bc.ca.

THE FIRST NATIONS

Since the early 1990s, Kitselas and Kitsumkalum have been involved in treaty negotiations with Canada and B.C. Kitselas and Kitsumkalum are Tsimshian tribes whose combined territory spans the northwest coast and the lower Skeena River of B.C., including the Prince Rupert and Terrace areas. Kitselas First Nation has approximately 745 members. Kitsumkalum First Nation has approximately 825 members.

The Nations' histories, cultures and connection to the land are foundations for thriving today and into the future. Their shared language, Sm'alg yax, is a dialect of the Tsimshian language. In Sm'alg yax, Gitselasu (Kitselas) means 'people of the Canyon' referring to the Kitselas Canyon and Gitsm'geelm (Kitsumkalum) refers to the riffles in the water as it runs over the rocks or 'people of the Plateau'.

Both Kitselas and Kitsumkalum are active in the regional economy and have positive, long-standing relationships with local governments.

MODERN TREATIES

Modern treaties are one of the most comprehensive forms of reconciliation between First Nations, B.C. and Canada. They are constitutionally protected, comprehensive agreements that create clarity on jurisdiction, recognize First Nations' rights and title, and provide for First Nation self-government. Modern treaties create predictability and transparent processes for managing land and resources together between B.C., Canada and the First Nation. This supports economic certainty and helps ensure all people can build a good life in the province.

Advancing reconciliation builds a stronger B.C. and Canada. Treaties are an important part of this work. Partnerships and agreements like treaties create predictable relationships and help build a better future for everyone. Decades of hard work with local and First Nations governments, Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, organizations and businesses have created a strong foundation for reconciliation. Modern treaties in B.C. show that mutual trust and shared goals result in healthier communities, new investments and prosperity, good jobs, sustainable land, water and resource stewardship, certainty and stability.

SUMMARY OF KITSELAS TREATY & KITSUMKALUM TREATY

The Kitselas Treaty and Kitsumkalum Treaty will:

- Recognize pre-existing rights and title, and confirm lands owned by Kitselas and Kitsumkalum
- Replace *Indian Act*-imposed band administration with recognized Treaty Nation governmental authority and a means for participation by all members of the Treaty Nations
- Recognize and fund self-government on treaty lands, including law-making authority on land uses, culture and heritage, and services
- Provide one-time federal transfer payments, and stable ongoing funding for self-governance
- Enable taxation powers to fund services and infrastructure on treaty lands
- Provide for constitutionally protected rights to harvest fish and shellfish, wildlife, migratory birds, timber and plants
- Identify opportunities to work together to improve resource management under provincial laws and processes for joint responsibility of decision-making across the Treaty Nations' territories, and
- Establish predictability with a clear framework for working together and resolving disputes

TREATY NEGOTIATIONS TIMELINE



GOVERNANCE

Treaties recognize First Nations' right to self-government with accountability between the treaty government, its public service, and its members. Treaties and the First Nations' constitutions must be voted on and approved by the First Nation members whose rights the treaty represents. In 2025, eligible voters from each First Nation voted overwhelmingly in favour of ratifying their respective treaties and self-government constitutions —Kitselas on April 10 and Kitsumkalum on November 1.

Treaties set out law-making authorities over matters integral to the Treaty Nation's governance of lands, programs and services for Nation members, and culture and heritage. They also provide for participation in regional government bodies.

Under the treaties, Kitselas and Kitsumkalum laws, provincial laws and federal laws would all apply on treaty lands. Kitselas and Kitsumkalum areas of responsibility include the delivery of health services, education, land management and public works.

Kitselas and Kitsumkalum would have law-making authority for management, planning, zoning and development on treaty lands. The Treaty Nations will work collaboratively with local government to harmonize land-use planning.

Treaty law-making authorities have conflict provisions to clarify limits of each party's authority, offering transparency, stability and certainty for governance of the land and people. Treaties have provisions for dispute resolution if disputes arise between Canada, B.C. and/or the First Nations, and have the ability for the treaty partners to periodically review the treaty.

Do the treaties include shared decision-making?

Unlike previous modern treaties, these treaties will include a process to enable the Treaty Nations' governments to negotiate shared decision-making and co-management arrangements with Canada or B.C. outside their treaty lands within their territories. If approved for negotiation, these arrangements will consider the interests of the public and any First Nations that share the territory.

LAND AND RESOURCES

The treaties will confirm ownership of land parcels by the Treaty Nations from Kitselas and Kitsumkalum's current Indian Reserves and Crown land, mostly comprised of former provincial Crown land. This includes 466 km² that Kitsumkalum would own in fee simple and 382.2 km² that Kitselas would own as in fee simple.

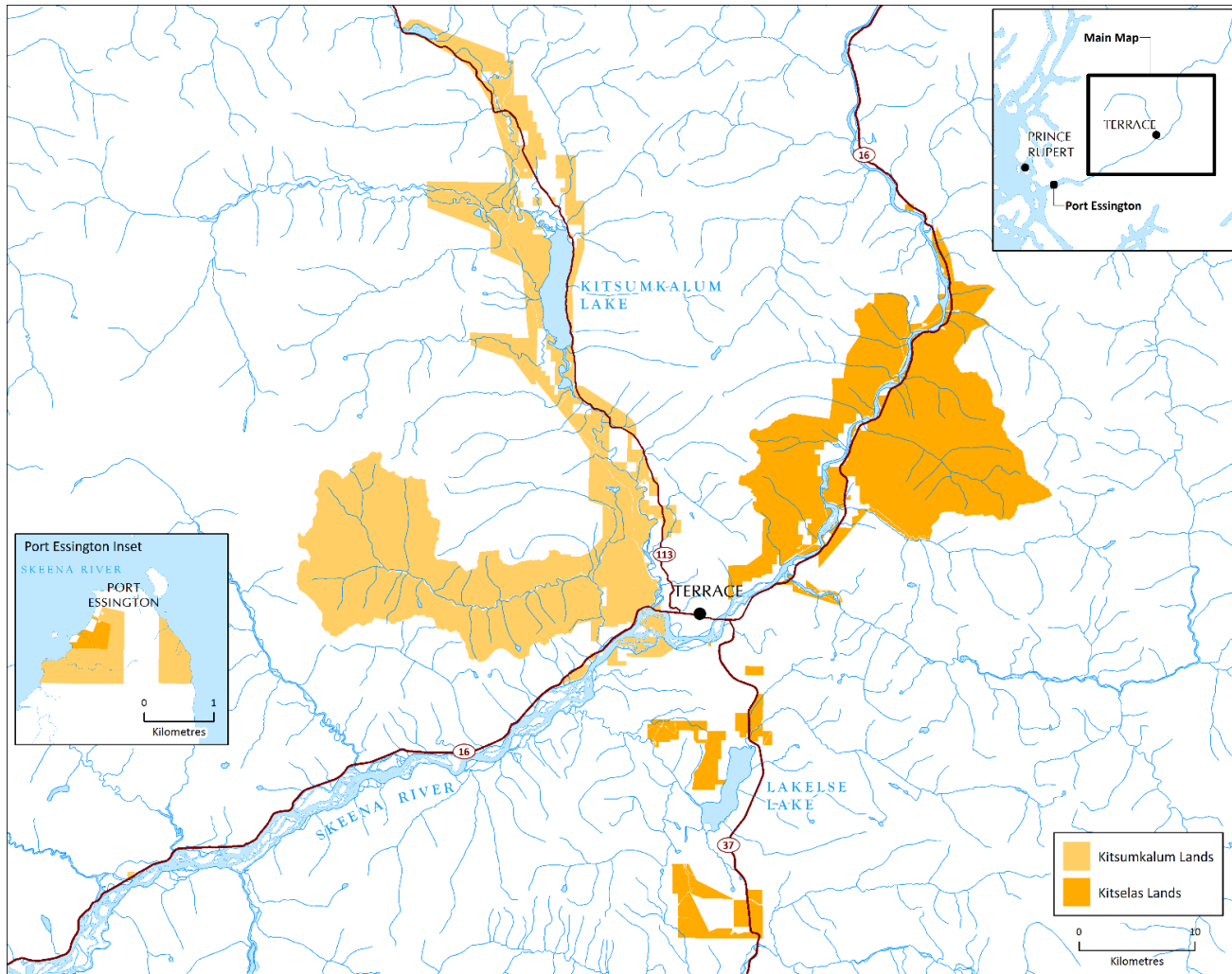
Most of the treaty lands would remain accessible to the public for recreation, hunting and fishing. Existing tenures and other authorizations to use Crown land would be replaced or continue under current terms. Public access to provincial roads and navigable waters would be maintained. Access for law enforcement, emergency response and public utility installations would also continue. Public roads and highways and major resource roads through treaty lands would continue to be managed by the provincial government and access maintained.

The treaties include funding and support to work together on management and stewardship of wildlife, parks, water, and forests in the broader Kitsumkalum and Kitselas territories.

Parts of these territories are shared between the two First Nations, with other Tsimshian First Nations, and other First Nations. The treaties clarify that these territories, apart from privately owned lands, are non-exclusive areas and therefore enable continued access and use for other First Nations to exercise their Aboriginal or Treaty rights.

Kitselas and Kitsumkalum would continue to be consulted and participate in land and resource decisions in their territories, such as new park designations, environmental assessments, public planning and major development projects.

KITSELAS AND KITSUMKALUM TREATY LANDS



For information purposes only

NEXT STEPS

The negotiating teams from KitseLas, Kitsumkalum, Canada and B.C. have worked for decades to get to this stage. The next step for the KitseLas Treaty and Kitsumkalum Treaty is the introduction of provincial implementation legislation as part of the provincial government's ratification of the treaty. On April 15, 2026, B.C. introduced provincial treaty implementation legislation — the KitseLas Treaty Act, 2026 — in the B.C. Legislature as the first step in the provincial government's ratification of the KitseLas Treaty. B.C. aims to introduce the Kitsumkalum Treaty Act in the Legislative Assembly in 2026 as part of provincial ratification. Around the same time, Canada will seek the necessary authorities to sign the treaties and draft federal implementation legislation.

Following the passage of provincial treaty legislation and once the required federal authorities are obtained, all Parties will sign the treaties and then federal treaty implementation legislation is introduced and passed.

Ratification is fully complete when the treaty is signed and provincial and then federal treaty implementation legislation is passed and brought into force on the treaty effective date, which is typically a few years after the legislation is given Royal Assent. Once agreed to by all parties, the effective date is set and typically occurs following a transition period after Royal Assent has been granted. This transition period allows all parties to be prepared for the treaty's implementation.

