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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation

### **AGREEMENT WITH KLAHOOSE BUILDS ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES**

VICTORIA – B.C.’s second Incremental Treaty Agreement will expand economic development opportunities and advance treaty negotiations for the Klahoose First Nation, Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Minister Michael de Jong announced today.

“The Klahoose Nation is actively pursuing business opportunities to benefit their community,” said de Jong. “This agreement supports that by allowing the benefits of a treaty to flow to the First Nation earlier in the process. There’s no question in the government’s mind that ITAs provide a key tool in reconciliation opportunities for First Nations in the shorter term while laying the foundation for a treaty.”

Under the terms of the ITA, Klahoose First Nation will receive \$2.1 million, which they will use to purchase Tree Farm Licence 10, and \$150,000 in two instalments to advance treaty negotiations and build economic development capacity. The purchase of the tree farm licence will create jobs and new business opportunities for the Klahoose and surrounding communities.

“We now have closure on an issue that was not only creating difficulty for the Klahoose First Nation, but the government as well,” said Klahoose First Nation Chief Ken Brown. “For decades, the Klahoose First Nation realized no benefit from TFL #10 as the timber resources of our traditional territory passed through our reserve. The damage to our rivers and streams caused by questionable logging practices of the past have been repaired during the reconstruction of the road accessing our valley. As a result of the newly constructed roads and bridges we now have access into our traditional territory and an ability to pursue numerous economic opportunities, including a sustainable forestry program. This forestry license will play a pivotal role in our Nation becoming self sufficient once again with the benefits having a lasting impact on our community for generations to come.”

The Klahoose First Nation, located on Cortes Island in the Strait of Georgia, has been at Stage Four (Agreement-in-Principle) of the six-stage BCTC treaty negotiation process since 1997. This ITA commits Klahoose to re-engage in the treaty process and gives them incremental treaty benefits that become part of the Final Agreement.

This agreement with Klahoose builds on unprecedented success in the treaty making process. British Columbia’s first modern-day urban treaty, with the Tsawwassen First Nation, comes into effect this spring. Since initialling the Tsawwassen treaty on Dec. 8, 2006, the Province has completed a Final Agreement with five more First Nations – the Maa-nulth First Nations – and signed two incremental treaty agreements with the Tla-o-qui-aht and Klahoose First Nations. The Province also concluded treaty negotiations with the Yale First Nation, signing a bilateral agreement in November 2008. In addition, a number of First Nations are currently negotiating agreements-in-principle and final agreements.

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For more information about treaties and ITAs in B.C., please visit <http://www.gov.bc.ca/arr/index.html> .

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