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## NEWS RELEASE

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WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council  
Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation

### **WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council and B.C. explore new ways to achieve lasting reconciliation**

SAANICH – The WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council and the Province are signing a new letter of understanding (LOU) that commits both parties to work toward resolving the priority issues identified by WSÁNEĆ communities, a key step toward building lasting reconciliation.

The WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council represents the communities of Tsartlip and Tseycum First Nations.

“This letter of understanding signals an important change in the relationship between WSÁNEĆ and the provincial government,” said Chief Don Tom, Chair of the WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council. “Seven generations of WSÁNEĆ have pushed for meaningful discussions on the issues which continue to negatively impact the lives and livelihoods of our people. Today, British Columbia and the WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council have made a commitment to have those discussions, in conjunction with the federal government, and we look forward to working together to create a better future for our WSÁNEĆ communities.”

The LOU creates an incremental approach to strengthening the relationship between the Province and the WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council.

“This a significant step in building a strong relationship with the WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council, and creates further opportunities for B.C. to engage with the WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council on priorities,” said Murray Rankin, Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation. “I raise my hands to all those involved and I am excited to start a new chapter in the relationship with the WSÁNEĆ Peoples.”

The specific areas for discussion under the LOU include (but are not limited to):

- Douglas Treaty Rights recognition and implementation;
- acquisition of lands;
- education;
- wildlife harvesting;
- revenue sharing;
- engagement with BC Ferries, the Royal BC Museum and others; and
- local government relations.

This work will include seeking to clarify shared understanding of the Douglas Treaties and how to move forward together.

The LOU also provides an opportunity to have discussions with the federal government to collaboratively explore options for a tripartite reconciliation agreement.

**Quick Facts:**

- The W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council represents the communities of Tsartlip and Tseycum First Nations, with a mandate to promote the interests of the W̱SÁNEĆ Nation.
- As an organization focused on self-determination, the W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council works to enhance recognition of, and respect for, W̱SÁNEĆ Douglas Treaty rights and W̱SÁNEĆ Aboriginal rights and title.
- W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council executive consists of one chief and two councillors from each member Nation.

**Learn More:**

Learn more about the W̱SÁNEĆ leadership council: <https://wsanec.com/>

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