

April 2016



This is a time of learning, questioning, listening, and considering. It is a time to understand what is in the Final Agreement, and what it means for our future. It is a time to think carefully and decide—as a unified Lheidli T'enneh Nation—the best path forward for our future.

One people, moving forward together

The Lheidli T'enneh will have another opportunity to consider and vote on the Final Agreement negotiated between our nation and the governments of Canada and British Columbia before the Agreement expires.

This is an opportunity to use your voice to make your choice to help us create a path to our future.



We are the Lheidli T'enneh

We are on a path of self-determination, united as a strong, independent and prosperous First Nation. We have long been leaders in the effort to have B.C. Aboriginal rights and land title recognized.

In 2006, after years of negotiation, a Final Agreement was reached with the governments of Canada and British Columbia, and a Constitution was drafted that would allow the Lheidli T'enneh to govern ourselves.

The membership of the Lheidli T'enneh voted on the Final Agreement and Constitution in 2007. The Constitution was accepted, but the Final Agreement was defeated.



Why are we voting again?

After the 2007 vote, our Lheidli T'enneh leadership asked a Governance Working Group to listen, learn and understand why the Final Agreement was not accepted. While there were many reasons, many people felt they did not have enough information or knowledge about what is in the Agreement; others felt the time was not right.

The Governance Working Group was also asked to review the Agreement and explore other options that might be available. In the end, the Working Group believed that the Final Agreement provided the best way forward. They recommended, and the membership decided, that before the Final Agreement expires later this year, the Agreement should be put to another vote.



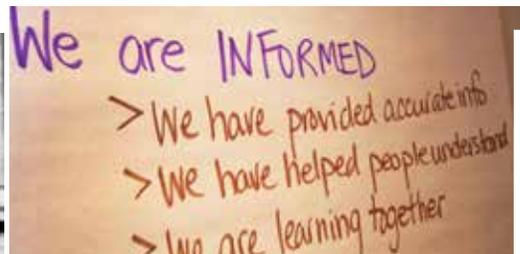
Why is it important? What's different this time?

The last time our people were asked to vote on the Final Agreement, many felt they didn't have enough information. Not everyone felt they understood the Agreement or had the chance to ask questions. This time, Lheidli T'enneh is working hard to be sure that every Lheidli T'enneh member has access to clear, easy-to-understand, factual information about the Agreement.

When everyone has the facts they can make an informed decision about the Final Agreement; about

our future. For a decision this important, one that will be historic and set the course for our future, it is important we make our collective voice heard, and heard clearly.

Leading up to the vote in October 2016, there will be many community-based opportunities to learn about the Agreement, talk about the strengths and the weaknesses of this path—and other paths—and determine the right choice for our future. It is up to us as Lheidli T'enneh people to use our voice and make our choice for our united future.



What are the benefits of the Final Agreement?

The Agreement provides certainty in a number of areas such as land ownership, governance, and harvesting rights, for example, which will allow us to build our future. The Agreement provides some clear and important benefits:

- clear ownership of Lheidli T'enneh lands
- defined and protected access to natural resources like timber, oil and gas
- rights and benefits related to the land, wildlife, and fish throughout the settlement area
- stable funding to operate a Lheidli T'enneh government and deliver services and programs
- a Lheidli T'enneh government with authority to make decisions for the benefit of our people

What are the limitations of the Final Agreement?

The Agreement has some limitations:

- a large part of our traditional territory will continue to be Crown land; we will have harvesting rights, but we will not own all the land, only portions of it
- we will not manage fish, wildlife and migratory birds on our own; other governments will have this management authority for the benefit of the Lheidli T'enneh and all Canadians
- the Agreement will be difficult, if not impossible, to change
- Lheidli T'enneh members will, over time, lose our tax exemption, however the taxes that will be collected will go to the Lheidli T'enneh government to help fund programs and services





Do we have other options?

If we do not approve the Final Agreement, we will not have the certainty about lands, governance and revenue that the Final Agreement provides, but that does not mean we cannot look for and pursue other ways of becoming self-governing and asserting our rights as other First Nations have done. For example:

- **We could go to court** to prove our title over more of our traditional lands. This path might—or might not—give Lheidli T'enneh title to a larger part of our claimed territory. Going to court would be a process that takes many years and would be very costly. There are no guarantees we would be successful or benefit more from this route.
- **We could negotiate “non-treaty” agreements** on individual topics such as land, forestry, or economic

development, for example. These agreements are not protected by the Canadian Constitution, but they are easier to change than the Final Agreement. Each agreement would be individually negotiated.

There are other options available. If we choose to look at other options the path is not clear, outcomes are not guaranteed, and the costs are not known.

The Final Agreement provides certainty and guaranteed outcomes that other processes cannot: we know what is in the Final Agreement. It is not a perfect agreement, but it would give us the ability to move forward now to develop our lands, create economic opportunities, make our own laws and generate income to run our government and serve the Lheidli T'enneh people.

 For more information on alternatives to the Final Agreement, refer to the fact sheet entitled: **Alternative Paths.**

your Voice. your Choice.
our Future

Whatever the outcome, this vote will be historic. As we walk this path, as we talk about and consider our future together, our people will become stronger. We will hold the conversations about our choices in an open and respectful way, where all thoughts and opinions will be valued; where we respect and learn from each other; where we decide our future together.

We are the Lheidli T'enneh.
 We have many voices
 But we are one proud people.
 We will move forward together
 To make a better future.