

Maa-nulth treaty celebrations in Alberni

By [Staff Writer - Alberni Valley News](#)

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Members and supporters of the five **Maa-nulth First Nations'** are gathering in Port Alberni to celebrate advent of Vancouver Island's first treaty.

Originally scheduled to take place at Maht Mahs gym the celebration is taking place at the Alberni District Secondary School gym on Saturday with federal, provincial and treaty commission delegates attending.

The five Maa-nulth First Nations are the Huu-ay-aht, Ka:yu:'k't'h'/Che:k'tles7et'h', Uchucklesaht, Toquaht and Yuu-cluth-aht.

The treaty final agreement contains a comprehensive package of land, cash and governance items that will apply to the tribes' 2,143 band members.

The Maa-nulth is receiving 24,550 hectares of treaty settlement land including 2,084 hectares of former Indian reserve, 22,375 hectares of former provincial Crown land and 92 hectares of private lands from willing sellers.

The treaty settlement lands will be in the form of fee simple title.

Federal, provincial and tribal law will apply to the lands, which are located in Barkley and Kyuquot Sounds'.

The nations are also receiving \$73-million in capital transfers over ten years, \$1-million in revenue sharing for 25 years.

Some \$10 million per year is being provided in ongoing funding for programs and services, as well as \$47-million in time-limited funding for treaty implementation and transition.

Tax exemptions under the Indian Act will be phased out in Maa-nulth over eight and 12 years, and their tribal governments will be able to levy taxes on their members within treaty

settlement lands only.

The cost of the treaty is being underwritten by the federal and provincial governments.

In the governance category, the Indian Act will no longer apply to Maa-nulth First Nation Lands or members except for determining Indian status.

Instead, constitutionally-protected self-government provisions are being phased in.

These provisions will enable the Maa-nulth to make their own decisions on matters related to cultural preservation, exercising their treaty rights and government operation.

Each Maa-nulth First Nation will become a member of their local regional district - four with the Alberni Clayoquot Regional District and one with the Strathcona Regional District.

The Maa-nulth can also enter into service contracts with local governments for community service delivery.

In fisheries, the Maa-nulth will continue to have the right to harvest fish and aquatic plants for food, social and ceremonial purposes, but the provincial and federal governments' retain management authority.

And a Maa-nulth commercial fishing will be integrated within the general commercial fishery on the West Coast.

Celebrations at ADSS start at noon.

reporter@albernivalleynews.com

Read the full final agreement [here](#).

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