

News Release Communiqué

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DOGRIB AGREEMENT-IN-PRINCIPLE INITIALLED IN GAMETI

GAMETI (RAE LAKES), NWT (August 9, 1999) - The first combined land claim and self-government Agreement-in-Principle (AIP) in the Northwest Territories was initialled today at the Dogrib Annual Assembly in Gameti. The agreement is among the Dogrib First Nation, the Government of Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories.

By initialling the AIP, the negotiators are recommending it to their principals and, if approved by them, the AIP will be signed and negotiations will commence to complete a final agreement.

"I am very pleased to see that the hard work put in by the negotiators has paid off. This is an important first step leading to a signed AIP and to negotiations that will culminate in a final agreement with the Dogrib Treaty 11 Council and the Government of the Northwest Territories," said Robert Nault, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

"The Agreement-in-Principle is a milestone, it represents the fulfilment of a Resolution made by the Dogrib General Assembly back in 1992. It was with the support and patience of the Elders and the rest of the community that the Dogrib negotiators were able to complete this work. Now it is up to the Dogrib people to send us forward toward a final agreement," said John B. Zoe, Chief Negotiator for the Dogrib Treaty 11 Council.

"This is an historic day, not only for the Dogribs but for the whole NWT," said Premier Jim Antoine. "We all take pride in the fact that this First Nation has taken a major step towards implementing their inherent right to self-government. The territorial government looks forward to developing a productive relationship with this new Aboriginal government."

Under the AIP, subject to existing rights, the Dogrib First Nation Government would own a single block of approximately 39,000 square kilometres of land, including subsurface resources. It would receive \$90 million (1997 dollars) paid over a period of 15 years, in addition to a share of resource royalties collected annually by government from activities in the Mackenzie Valley.

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The AIP also provides the Dogrib First Nation Government with a wide range of law-making powers on Dogrib lands and over Dogrib Citizens on those lands and in the four Dogrib communities. The Dogrib and the GNWT would cooperate to deliver key services, such as health care, education, and other social programs and services, to all people living in the four communities.

Highlights of the AIP initialled today are included in the attached backgrounder.

Approximately 3,000 Dogrib live mainly in the communities of Behcho Ko (Rae-Edzo), Wha Ti (Lac La Marte), Gameti (Rae Lakes) and Wekweti (Snare Lake) in their traditional territory in the area commonly known as the North Slave region of the Northwest Territories. Other communities in the region are the City of Yellowknife and the Yellowknives Dene communities of Ndilo (within the city of Yellowknife) and Dettah, across Yellowknife Bay from the city.

This news release and backgrounder are also available on the Internet at www.inac.gc.ca

The Dogrib AIP will also be available on the Internet at www.inac.gc.ca/subject/agree/dogrib/dogrib.html (english) and at www.inac.gc.ca/subject/agree/dogrib/dogrib.f.html (french)

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