
News Release Communiqué

DOGRIB LAND CLAIM AND SELF GOVERNMENT AGREEMENT-IN-PRINCIPLE SIGNED

RAE-EDZO, NWT (January 7, 2000) - The Dogrib Comprehensive Land Claim and Self-Government Agreement-in-Principle (AIP) was signed today by representatives of the Dogrib Treaty 11 Council, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and the Government of Canada.

Grand Chief Joe Rabesca, Chief Charlie Nitsiza, Chief Archie Wetrade and Chief Joseph Judas, Dogrib Treaty 11 Council, Premier and Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs, Jim Antoine, Government of the Northwest Territories and the Honourable Ethel Blondin-Andrew, Secretary of State for Children and Youth and Member of Parliament for the Western Arctic, signed the Dogrib Agreement-in- Principle in Rae-Edzo, NWT.

"Signing the Dogrib Agreement-in-Principle today means that the Dogrib are one step closer to achieving self-government. I am pleased that the Dogrib people can now focus on reaching a final agreement," said Grand Chief Rabesca.

"The Dogrib have worked for so many years to achieve an Agreement-in-Principle. It has taken a long, hard struggle, many hours, many sacrifices and the end results are well deserved. This is substantial progress. Land claim settlements create a positive and stable climate for investment and self-government is the basis for creating stable, self-reliant Aboriginal governments that can participate in the economic growth of the NWT and Canada," said Ms. Blondin-Andrew, on behalf of Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Robert Nault.

As the GNWT signatory to the AIP, Premier Antoine said "This is a proud day for everyone in the Northwest Territories as we celebrate this important step in the development of the Dogrib comprehensive claim and in the development of new forms of governance in the North."

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 paid over a period of years, as well as a share of resource royalties collected annually by government from activities in the Mackenzie Valley.

A clause in the AIP also provides that nothing in the final Dogrib Agreement would be construed to affect, recognize or provide any rights under section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982* for any Aboriginal peoples other than the Dogrib First Nation.



Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada



Canada

.../2



The AIP recognizes a wide range of law-making powers for the Dogrib First Nation Government on Dogrib lands and over Dogrib Citizens on those lands and in the four Dogrib communities. The three Parties would negotiate an Intergovernmental Services Agreement (ISA) before a Dogrib Final Agreement. The ISA provides for the joint delivery of key services, such as health care, education, and other social programs and services, to all people living in the four communities.

Approximately 3,000 Dogrib live mainly in the communities of Behcho Ko (Rae-Edzo), Wha Ti (Lac la Martre), Gameti (Rae Lakes) and Wekweti (Snare Lake) in their traditional territory within the area commonly known as the North Slave region of the Northwest Territories.

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

The Dogrib AIP is available on the Internet at:

www.mnac.gc.ca/subject/agree/dogrib/dogrib.html (English)

and at www.mnac.gc.ca/subject/agree/dogrib-dogribf.html (French)

For further information:

**Dogrib Treaty 11
Council:**

John B. Zoe
Chief Negotiator
Dogrib Treaty 11 Council
P.O. Box 412
Rae-Edzo, NT
X0E 0Y0

(868) 392-6381
(867) 392-6389 (FAX)
jzoe@nt.sympatico.ca

**Government of the
Northwest Territories:**

Sue Enge
Communications Advisor
Ministry of Aboriginal
Affairs
GNWT

P.O. Box 1320
Yellowknife, NT
X1A 2L9
(867) 920-6989
sue.enge@gov.nt.ca

Government of Canada:

Steven Outhouse
Media Relations
DIAND,
Ottawa
(819) 994-2044

Melissa Cousins
Media Relations
DIAND,
Yellowknife
(867) 669-2579

BACKGROUNDER

DOGRIB LAND CLAIM AND SELF-GOVERNMENT NEGOTIATIONS

Background

Approximately 3,000 Dogrib live in the four communities of Rae-Edzo (Behcho Ko), Wha Ti (Lac la Martre), Gameti (Rae Lakes) and Wehweti (Snare Lake) in the claim area within the North Slave region of the Northwest Territories (NWT). The Dogrib Treaty 11 Council is the fourth Aboriginal group in the NWT to commence land claim negotiations with the federal government. The Inuvialuit Final Agreement was signed in 1984; the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement came into effect in 1992 and the Sahtu Dene and Métis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement came into effect in 1994.

Combined Land Claim and Self-Government Negotiations

In August 1995, the federal government released the Inherent Right to Self-Government Policy which stated that self-government arrangements could be negotiated as part of comprehensive land claim agreements. The Dogrib land claim negotiations were paused while a joint land claim and self-government mandate was sought. The Government of the Northwest Territories, recognizing that its involvement as a party to the negotiations was necessary to resolve questions around self-government, formally joined Canada and the Dogrib First Nation at the negotiating table.

In August, 1996 the Dogrib Framework Agreement was signed outlining the process, subject matters, scope and parameters for negotiation of a land claim and self-government agreement-in-principle (AIP) and a final agreement. A new mandate to negotiate a land claim and self-government AIP was approved in April 1997. An AIP was initialled by the three chief negotiators on August 9, 1999 in Gameti. Now that the AIP has been approved by the Parties and signed, negotiations to conclude a Dogrib Final Agreement will commence immediately.

Interim Measures

Until the final agreement comes into effect, two interim agreements are in place. The Interim Land Withdrawal Agreement ensures that no new mining rights can be granted in approximately 13,000 square kilometres of land surrounding the four Dogrib communities. The Interim Measures Agreement provides the Dogrib Treaty 11 Council with representation in the government processes which regulate land and water uses in their traditional territory.

Settlement Area

The traditional territory of the Dogrib First Nation is that area of the Northwest Territories commonly known as the North Slave region. The "settlement area" is the area in which most of the rights and benefits of the Dogrib under a Dogrib Agreement would apply. Its boundaries have not been defined yet. The issue of finalizing the boundary lines of the settlement area will be addressed before the Dogrib reach a final agreement. The Dogrib Treaty 11 Council would meet with the Deh Cho First Nations, the Yellowknives Dene and other NWT Treaty 8 First Nations.

Issued jointly by the:
the Dogrib Treaty 11 Council
the Government of the Northwest Territories
and the Government of Canada
January 7, 2000.