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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation

### **THREE MORE FIRST NATIONS SIGN TREATY-RELATED AGREEMENT**

DEROCHE – As another demonstration of British Columbia’s commitment to concluding treaties, the In-SHUCK-ch Nation signed a bilateral understanding with the Province that formally concludes treaty negotiations between the two parties, Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Minister Michael de Jong announced today.

“We are experiencing unprecedented momentum with treaty negotiations in British Columbia and we are celebrating today’s milestone with the formal acknowledgment it deserves,” said de Jong. “In-SHUCK-ch has demonstrated great leadership and vision to reach this understanding with us and it will bring tremendous benefits to their communities as we move closer to settling another important final agreement in British Columbia.”

The signing of an understanding is an interim step prior to a treaty agreement between the Province, In-SHUCK-ch Nation and Canada.

The proposed Final Agreement includes approximately 14,976 hectares of provincial Crown land and 1,284 hectares of existing reserve lands. Capital transfer funds will also assist In-SHUCK-ch with business capacity and economic opportunities.

“My communities will benefit from finally getting connected to the hydro grid by the end of 2010,” said Gerard Peters, Chief Negotiator for the In-SHUCK-ch Nation. “We will also benefit from improvements to the forest service roads that my communities, and the residents of Lillooet Lake, currently rely on and this will increase the economic development in our area,” added Chief Patrick Williams of Skatin First Nations.

The In-SHUCK-ch Nation represents three First Nations communities – Douglas First Nation, Samahquam Nation and Skatin First Nations – located along the Lillooet River Valley between Harrison Lake and Mount Currie in southwestern British Columbia. The In-SHUCK-ch Nation is currently composed of approximately 933 members and 18 reserves.

“We are excited about bringing our members home as we currently have fewer than 200 members living on-reserve”, said Chief Keith Smith of the Samahquam Nation. “We look forward to participating in the economic development of our economy,” said Chief Donald Harris of Douglas First Nation. “The capital and resources resulting from an agreement will help us improve the entire region.”

The In-SHUCK-ch was the first group to enter the treaty process when they tabled their statement of intent to negotiate on December 15, 1993. N'Quat'qua joined them in 1994, but chose to leave the treaty process in late 1999. Since 2002, In-SHUCK-ch has negotiated independently under the BC Treaty Process, signing their Agreement-in-Principle on October 28, 2006.

The agreement with In-SHUCK-ch builds on unprecedented success in the treaty making process. British Columbia's first modern-day urban treaty, with Tsawwassen First Nation, comes into effect this spring. Since initialling the Tsawwassen treaty on December 8, 2006, the Province has completed a Final Agreement with five more First Nations – the Maa-nulth First Nations – and signed two incremental treaty agreements with the Tla-o-qui-aht and Klahoose First Nations. The Province has also concluded treaty negotiations with the Yale First Nation, signing a bilateral agreement in November 2008. In addition, a number of First Nations are currently negotiating agreements-in-principle and final agreements.

For more information about treaties in B.C. visit <http://www.treaties.gov.bc.ca/>. For more information about the In-SHUCK-ch Nation visit [www.inshuckch.com](http://www.inshuckch.com).

1 backgrounder(s) attached.

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