

Local First Nations, Governments Eye New Relationships

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By Keven Drews

They'll meet to find common ground in a post-treaty era.

Next week, representatives of the Ucluelet First Nation, Ucluelet council and the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District will discuss how they can better work together.

The meetings, called Finding Common Ground, are scheduled to take place March 27 and March 29 at the UFN Community Hall.

"There is going to be a new relationship," said Chief Coun. Vi Mundy, of the UFN. "Why not start building that up right now."

Mundy said the UFN and District of Ucluelet share common issues like water, midden sites and municipal planning.

Tuesday night, Ucluelet council directed staff to see if the meeting could take place March 29, the same day the UFN is scheduled to meet with the ACRD.

Ucluelet council cited several public hearings March 27.

In December, the Maa-nulth First Nations – Ucluelet, Huu-ay-aht, Toquaht, Ka: 'yu: 'k't'h'/Che;k'tles7et'h', and Uchucklesaht – initialized a final treaty agreement with provincial and federal governments.

Under the agreement, all five First Nations, with a total population of some 2,000 people and living in the Barkley Sound and Ucluelet areas, will receive 24,550 hectares of Crown land and tens-of-millions of dollars.

The UFN will become the largest land owner of the west coast.

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