

PUBLICATION: **Times Colonist (Victoria)**
DATE: 2007.02.08
EDITION: Final
SECTION: News
PAGE: A4
DATELINE: OTTAWA
SOURCE: CanWest News Service
WORD COUNT: 264

Treaty worth millions more than estimated, says Tory MP

OTTAWA -- The Tsawwassen First Nation treaty initialled by the federal and B.C. governments in December has a value of about \$300 million -- more than four times the official \$70-million estimate provided, says a Tory MP.

John Cummins' estimate of the market value of the 434 hectares of land the band is getting from the Agricultural Land Reserve was endorsed by an official with the Corp. of Delta.

"As far as I know that's pretty close," said Kip Gaudry, Delta's director of community planning.

Cummins said neither the band nor government officials are acknowledging the enormous value of the 207 hectares that will be removed from the ALR.

That land, according to evaluations by Colliers International, has a market worth of \$1.1 million per hectare, he said.

The other 227 hectares of Crown land going to the Tsawwassen that will remain within the ALR is worth about \$106,000 per hectare, he said, bringing the total land value to \$254 million. With the cash transfers valued at \$45.5 million added in, the deal totals \$300 million, he said.

The deal, if ratified, will set a new benchmark in the B.C. treaty process that will result in dozens of other bands seeking a similar "windfall," he warned.

Tim Koepke, chief federal negotiator on the Tsawwassen deal, said the \$70.1-estimate includes the \$24.6 million valuation for the two parcels of ALR property.

The rest -- \$45.5 million -- is to cover other transfers, including a cash payment, as well as money for self-government matters. He refused to comment on Cummins' evaluation, noting the land's value depends on what the band does with the property.

Tsawwassen Chief Kim Baird, who called Cummins' assessment "misleading" and "extreme," said the band hired an appraiser who put the land value at \$66.7 million.