

# HANDOUT



## The Saskatchewan Treaty Land Entitlement Framework: The Costs

Saskatchewan is legally obligated to participate in Treaty Land Entitlement settlements due to the *Natural Resources Transfer Agreement (1930)*. Under this agreement, Canada transferred to Saskatchewan all Crown lands, minerals and other

unoccupied Crown lands no longer exist in Saskatchewan to settle outstanding Treaty Land Entitlement, the Province has agreed to share with Canada the cost of providing money to Entitlement First Nations to purchase private and Crown lands.

The Saskatchewan Treaty Land Entitlement Framework Agreement provides for Entitlement First Nations receiving approximately \$595 million over 12 years to buy up

to 2.28 million acres of land to add to its reserves.

The minimum provincial contribution to the costs of Treaty Land Entitlement will be 30%.

According to the terms of the cost-sharing agreement, the Province could contribute up to an additional 19% based on actual provincial savings from the transfer of northern communities to reserve status. The total cost to

the Province will be between \$182 million and \$277.2 million.

Two separate tax loss compensation funds, totalling a maximum of \$50 million, were also established under the Framework Agreement. The purpose of the funds is to help offset the loss of tax revenues experienced by Rural Municipalities and Rural School Divisions when taxable land is purchased by Entitlement First Nations and then set apart as nontaxable reserve land under the Framework Agreement. These funds are paid directly to the municipalities.

While this may seem like a lot of money, it must be remembered that it is through the Treaties that the people of Saskatchewan have been able to legitimately use and develop all land in Saskatchewan. To put things into perspective, it is estimated that the value of the land opened up for settlement by the Treaties exceeds \$61 billion.

**Since sufficient unoccupied Crown lands no longer exist in Saskatchewan to settle outstanding Treaty Land Entitlement, the Province has agreed to share with Canada the cost of providing money to Entitlement First Nations to purchase private and Crown lands**

natural resources within the Province, subject to a number of conditions. One condition was that Saskatchewan would provide unoccupied Crown lands to enable Canada to fulfill its obligations under Treaties with First Nations. Since sufficient

### Questions for Consideration

1. How does The Saskatchewan Treaty Land Entitlement Framework Agreement account for lost tax revenues for municipalities when their land is sold under the Agreement?
2. Given the value of the land opened up for settlement through Treaties, do you believe the costs are justified?