

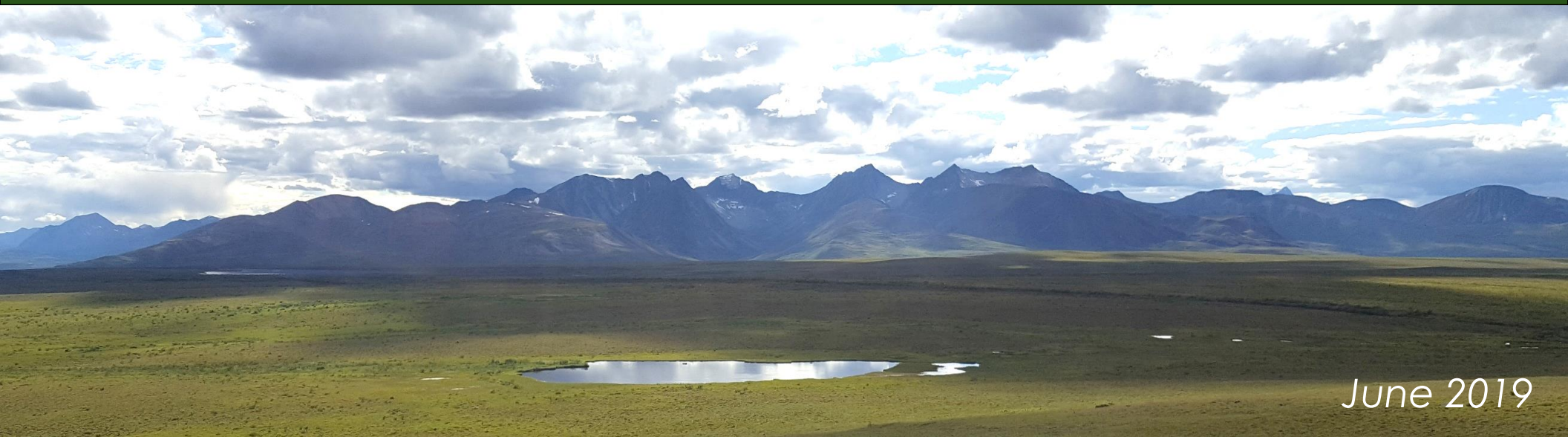
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## PROPOSED JOINT MOUNTAIN CARIBOU PLAN

# Nío Nę P'ęné Begháré Shúhta Go?epé Nareh?á

*Trails of the Mountain Caribou*

*Prepared by the Nío Nę P'ęné Working Group*



June 2019

Níó Nę P'ęné Begháré Shúhta Goᑭępę Nareᑭá – Trails of the Mountain Caribou Plan was prepared by the Níó Nę P'ęné Working Group, and written from their information by Janet Winbourne, Independent Consultant.

An initial version of this draft plan was prepared in fall 2017 for review and approval by members of the Níó Nę P'ęné Working Group. It was then presented to the leadership and communities of Tu Łidlini (Ross River), Tulít'a, and Norman Wells for review. This second version is an updated draft that was revised following the feedback heard at those regional engagements.

In June 2019, at a joint leadership meeting held in Tu Łidlini, a resolution was passed to approve the draft plan as follows (for the full resolution, see Appendix G):

**Whereas**

- The *Níó Nę P'ęné Begháré Shúhta Goᑭępę Nareᑭá – Trails of the Mountain Caribou* is based on the historical cross-boundary relationships and ways of life of Tulít'a and Tłegóhtł Shúhtaot'łnę and Tu Łidlini Dena.
- The plan has been developed through a long process of collaboration among Tulít'a and Tłegóhtł Shúhtaot'łnę and Tu Łidlini Dena that dates back to 1989, and was renewed in 2014, with community engagements in spring 2018 and a joint meeting on June 12-13, 2019.

**Therefore be it resolved that**

- The *Níó Nę P'ęné Begháré Shúhta Goᑭępę Nareᑭá – Trails of the Mountain Caribou* plan be submitted to Tulít'a, Tłegóhtł, Tu Łidlini leaders for formal review and approval.

This plan is pending approval by Tulít'a, Norman Wells and Tulít'a District leaders and should not be distributed or cited without permission. All Indigenous knowledge in the plan is the intellectual property of Shúhta Dene and Métis people. It cannot be used without written consent through the Níó Nę P'ęné Working Group. Contact the Working Group Chair, Leon Andrew, at [lamountaindene@theedge.ca](mailto:lamountaindene@theedge.ca).

All original artwork by Robby Dick. Cover photo: view from Dechenla Lodge, Janet Winbourne

*If we care for our land, then our land will provide. Mary Maje*

## Dene ɁəɁ / Dene a' nīzīn – as told by Tu Ɂidlini (Ross River) Dena elder Charlie Dick

Long ago, Dena Kayeh was a scary place. Massive animals wandered around that were dangerous to our Dena ancestors. Giant Eagles, Giant Beavers, Mammoths and other huge animals lived on our land at that time. Some of these animals actively hunted the Dena and feasted on their flesh. It is said that at that time there was little harmony in the world – aside from the threat of living with so many dangerous animals, the Dena were also often at war with one another. It was a dangerous time for the Dena.

This was also a time when the world shared one language. Our Dena ancestors and all the animals that walked on the ground, flew in the sky, and swam in the water, were able to communicate with one another in a universally understood language. Not only did they share language, but there were also those that shifted form between Dena and animal. Mesgā Dena (Raven Person), Nōgha Dena (Wolverine Person), and Debē Dena (Sheep Person) are just a few of those that could shift form.

One day a powerful person came into the world. His mother was living alone and all she had to eat was the tail of a salmon in her caribou skin pack. From this salmon tail, the woman gave birth to a boy, who grew into a person that would be celebrated in legends to this day. As a young boy he was concerned with the state of the world – he did not like to see his people living with so much fear and disharmony. He quickly grew into a young man known as Súgíya. Súgíya carried with him some very strong medicine that had been gifted to him by the Creator. He would go on to travel all over the world in a quest to make things better. This is why Súgíya has different names in different places – he is Yamóqzha in the Sahtú and Yamárahya in Dehcho.

Súgíya met many different people on his journey – some tried to stop him and some helped him. He defeated anyone that tried to stop him and he defeated many of the big animals that were so dangerous. Some of these animals Súgíya put under ground, others he put into the ocean and they became whales, others he made smaller and he instructed them to stop killing the Dena. For some, such as the Giant Eagle that feasted on human flesh, Súgíya made them smaller and taught them how to hunt fish instead. He then sent Grayling up many creeks so that these smaller eagles would have a plentiful source of food.

After removing so many of these dangerous animals from the world, Súgíya introduced a code of conduct for the Dena to live by so that they could live in harmony with one another and the others that shared the world with them. This code of conduct is called “Dene ɁəɁ / Dene a' nīzīn” – it is a powerful code that guides the way Dena relate to the world around them. It teaches how to live in balance with the mountains, the water, the stars, and one another. It is thanks to the gifts from Súgíya that we have this code and we all have a responsibility to live by it and to pass it on to younger generations. If we continue to respect Dene ɁəɁ / Dene a' nīzīn and follow these teachings, we can maintain the harmony in the world that Súgíya brought to us.



## *Máhsí / Souga Sénlá / Acknowledgements*

This draft plan would not have been possible without the passion and dedication of those that went before us. So many people have raised their voices for so long to try and protect this area, the creatures that inhabit it, and Shúhta (Mountain) Dene ways of life. The trails left by their footprints continue to guide us. Many Tu Łidlini (Ross River) Dena, Métis, Shúhtaot'Inę and other Sahtú Dene knowledge holders have given freely of their time, energy and knowledge since our meetings began in 2014. Efforts culminated in 2017 with a week-long workshop in the Mackenzie Mountains led by Stuart Cowell (Conservation Coaches Network Australia); we are so grateful to Gah Cho for his guidance, humour and warmth. We are also grateful to the Dechenla Lodge for providing a beautiful setting, a supportive staff, and amazing food while we were there. It was that workshop that gave rise to the content and outline for this plan. Everyone that has contributed along the way has made an important contribution to this product. A list of workshop and meeting participants is included in **Appendix A**.



*Participants in 2017 planning workshop at Dechenla, photo: Stuart Cowell*

# The Working Group and Partners

A core Working Group has evolved during our planning process. It was initially an outgrowth of the 2017 Dechenla Workshop, and has expanded to ensure strong representation from organizations of the three communities, as well as representatives of supporting partners and resource people. The Working Group functions with an open and fluid membership, intended to invite participation and inclusion as needs, capacity and interests arise. Current team members, partners and collaborators are listed below.

## Indigenous partners

- ʔehdzo Got'Inę Gots'ę Nákedı (Sahtú Renewable Resources Board)
- Norman Wells ʔehdzo Got'Inę (Renewable Resources Council)
- Tulít'a Dene Band
- Tulít'a ʔehdzo Got'Inę (Renewable Resources Council)
- Tu Łıdlini (Ross River) Dena Council

## Indigenous Working Group

- Derrick Redies
- Dorothy Dick
- Frederick Andrew
- Gordon Peter
- Gordon Yakeleya
- Leon Andrew
- Norm Sterriah
- Rhea McDonald
- Robbie Dick
- Rocky Norwegian

## Resource people

- Alexandra Frances
- Deborah Simmons
- Faye D'Eon Eggertson
- Janet Winbourne
- Jennie Vandermeer
- Josh Barichello
- Kris Brekke
- Micheline Manseau
- Norman Barichello
- Stephanie Behrens
- Stuart Cowell
- Tee Lim
- Tracey Williams

## Supporting Partners

- ʔehdzo Got'Inę Gots'ę Nákedı
- Canada Parks Agency
- Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society
- Conservation Coaches Network
- Environment and Climate Change Canada
- Náats'ıhch'oh National Park Reserve
- Nature United (formerly TNC Canada)
- NWT Environment and Natural Resources
- Yukon Environment

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- NWT Environment and Natural Resources
- Tides Canada - Full Circle Foundation
- NWT Species at Risk Stewardship Program
- NWT Education, Culture and Employment
- National Indian Brotherhood Continuing Our Journey Trust Fund

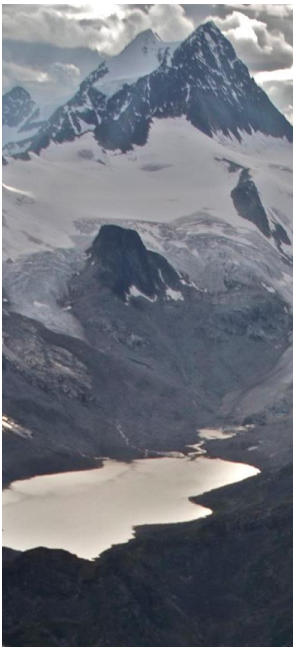
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# Introduction

*My grandmother had special knowledge. We used to call her ʔehtsq ʔidakale (White Haired Grandmother), but her formal name was Jane Yáts'ule Andrew. One day my grandmother said, 'Last night I had a dream. I saw the Dāho (Mackenzie River) ice moving downriver and there was no end to it. The ice filled the valley, and I could just see shúhtá (the mountaintops). I had no idea what that meant.' My brother Norman says, the elders had already provided the meaning of her dream. 'ʔqhdakə kakerəđi hídó Dene gha shúhta epé k'áodí gha – the elders have predicted that in the future the caribou will remain in the mountains for Dene.' – Leon Andrew*



*Łubeh (Keele Peak), bull caribou, photos: Norm Barichello; drumming for hand games at Tu Łidlini, photo: Deb Simmons*



## Background

### Our Duty as Indigenous Stewards

In the beginning of time, everything was equal, and people shared a universal language with the natural world around them. This increasingly caused chaos and conflict, so the Creator sent down Yamózha/Súgíya Dene to establish order and respectful relationships on this earth. They assigned ɬeɬa/Dene a' nīzīn (laws or code of ethics), roles, and responsibilities to everything. People were given the role of land stewards, looking after everything on the land for future generations. To this day, Shúhtaot'íne, Métis, and Tu Łidlini (Ross River) Dena are practicing this law across Shúhta Dene néné / kayeh (Mountain Dene / Tu Łidlini Dena homeland).

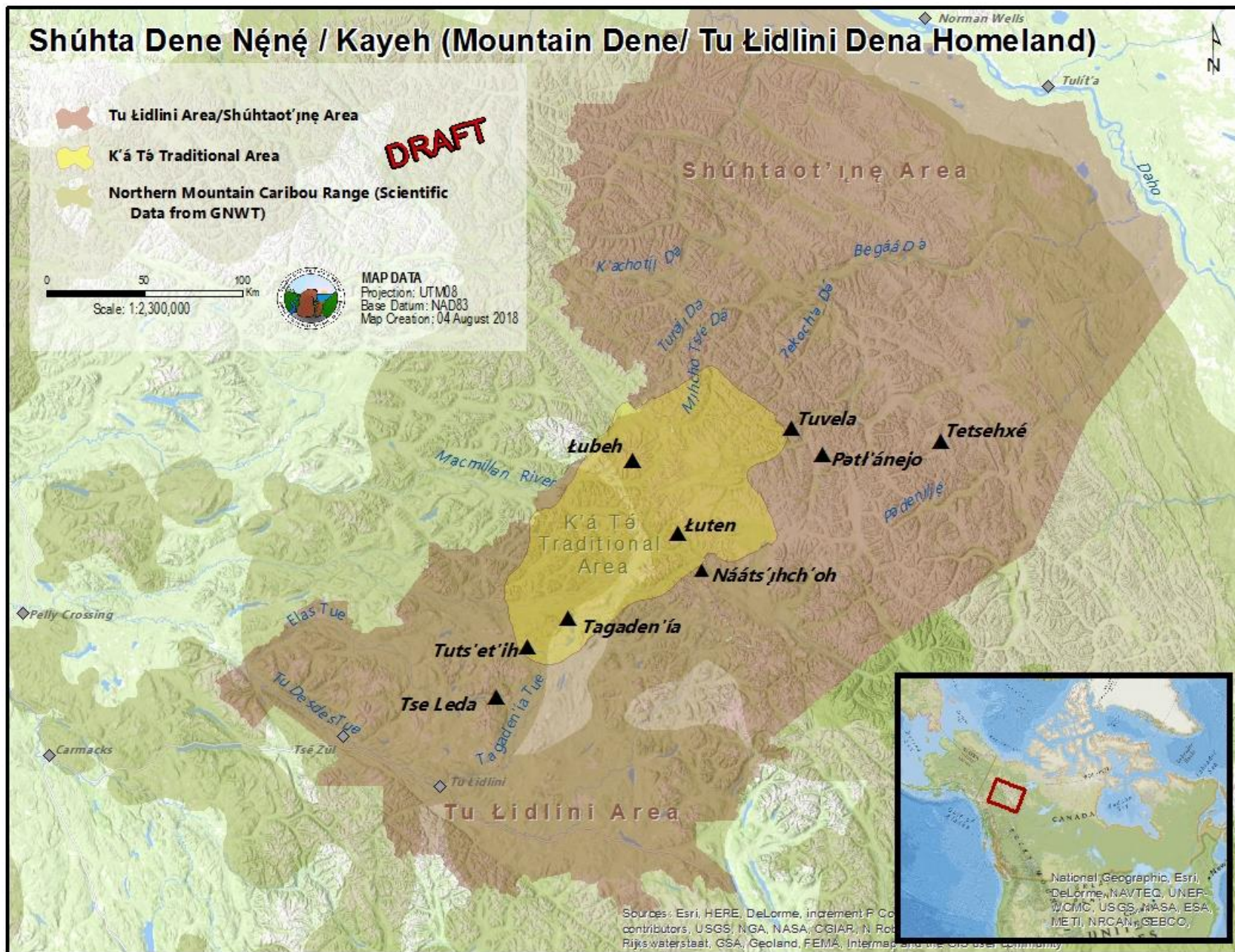
### Mountain Dene Homeland

Shúhtaot'íne, Métis, and Tu Łidlini Dena share a large homeland centered around Dechłq / Dechenla (the land at the edge of the treeline) – a mountainous region spanning parts of what are now called the Yukon Territory (YT) and Northwest Territories (NWT). We are responsible for maintaining relationships with the land, the people, and other beings in this area, and we work in many different ways to reclaim and maintain our role as stewards within our homeland. A map of our shared homeland area is shown on the next page.



Norm Sterriah, photo: Josh Barichello

We call ourselves Dena people regardless of where we live, either from Colville Lake, Fort Good Hope, Délíne or elsewhere. We have the same code of ethics when it comes to protection of the land; I hear that from the people we work with, the elders, the land stewards. We have traditional laws that go along with traditional knowledge. We call them Súgíya Dene. You guys call it Yamózha. This told us, 'This is your responsibility as a caretaker of this land.' *Norman Sterriah*





## The Need for a Plan

In July 2014, the Tu Łidlini Dena Council invited Sahtú delegates to Tu Łidlini (“where the two waters meet”, community of Ross River, YT) to discuss what was happening around Dechłq / Dechenla. People that were spending time on the land in that area were growing increasingly concerned about what they were witnessing. They saw human activities causing more and more damage and disruption, the land and weather were changing, and perhaps most importantly, the large herds of caribou that used to colour the landscape had dwindled. Approximately 50 people took part in the meeting, with participants from Tu Łidlini, Tulít’a (also “where the waters meet”), Norman Wells (Tłegqhlı – “where the oil flows”), Yellowknife and Délıne. There were representatives from the Government of the Northwest Territories, Renewable Resource Councils (RRCs) and Boards, small business, research and youth.



*Three generations of Kaska Dena at the 2014 Joint Mountain Caribou meeting, photo: Deborah Simmons*

The 2014 meeting was an opportunity to share concerns – not only about shúhta goʔepé / bedzih / gūdzjh (Northern Mountain Caribou) and ne káravé / kayeh (their habitat), but about moose and all the other animals and things we depend on, about development, the impacts that it is having on our lifestyles, our social life, political life, and economic life. We discussed ways of moving forward and a strong commitment to work together in finding solutions.

In 2016, a second meeting was held, this time co-hosted by the Tulít'a and Norman Wells ʔehdzo Got'ıne (RRCs) in Tulít'a, NWT. Twenty-five people attended this meeting, with representatives from nearby communities and local management organizations, regional co-management boards, RRCs, conservation organizations, parks, territorial and federal governments. Again, people expressed concern about what they were seeing happen around important Dene places like K'á Tá (Willow Flats). They also expressed frustration that not enough actions were being taken to address the problems.

Many possible solutions were discussed in 2014 and 2016, including the idea of collaborating on a joint community-led caribou plan.<sup>1</sup> In July 2017 work began to draft that plan, when approximately 40 Shúhtaot'Iné, Métis, and Tu ɫidlini Dena, plus representatives of other local and regional governments and organizations came together for a week at Dechenla Lodge in the Mackenzie Mountains. We chose a community-driven planning process in order to address:

- Acute conservation concerns with respect to shúhta goɔepé / bedzih / gūdzih.
- Lack of a forum for community involvement in stewardship
- Lack of respect for Indigenous ɔɛɔa/ɔa (laws).

The plan was reviewed and revised following community engagements in 2018, and was given approval by participants at a joint leadership meeting in June 2019. It will help us to achieve our vision and goals for shúhta goɔepé / bedzih / gūdzih, K'á Tá, and nɛ káravé / kayeh in the future.



*Robert Kochon, Frederick Andrew, and Norm Barichello at Dechenla planning workshop, photo: Janet Winbourne*

## Scope

This plan covers Shúhtaot'Iné / Shúhta Dene nɛnɛ / kayeh – a large area spanning both sides of the Yukon/NWT border and encompassing the Mackenzie Mountain barrens – an expansive, high alpine, tundra plateau near the headwaters of the Keele, Mɫhcho Tsíé Dá (Caribou Cry), Hess, Turáɫ Dá (Twichya), and MacMillan Rivers. It is important ecologically because it provides rare summer/fall nɛ káravé / kayeh for shúhta goɔepé / bedzih / gūdzih that come from many different places. It is important culturally as our Tu ɫidlini Dena and Shúhtaot'Iné ancestors knew that they could rely on finding animals here at certain times of the year, and would travel here to harvest, hunt, gather materials, and share with their neighbours. Shúhtaot'Iné names such as Mɫhcho Tsíé Dá reflect the fact that bull caribou migrate to and use this area in the fall. Elders have long said that four or five different groups of shúhta goɔepé / bedzih / gūdzih rely on this area.

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<sup>1</sup> Reports on the 2014 and 2016 meetings are available from the Sahtú Renewable Resources Board (NT) and the Tu ɫidlini Land Stewardship Office (YT).



The planning context in this area is quite a complicated picture that encompasses present-day land ownership and planning frameworks, public and private interests in lands and resources, as well as the particular habitats and specific terrain the caribou need to survive. This creates many different layers that need to be considered as we move forward and make wise decisions. In order to present all these layers in a clear fashion, we decided to split the spatial information over two maps. The next map presents the planning context for our work; this is all the different **land uses and zoning in Nío Nę P'ęné** that we need to consider. The final map focusses on our response to this context – namely, the areas we know to be important and that we are putting forward as the draft **Tu Łidlini and Nío Nę P'ęné Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area**.



Shúhtaot'įnę would go there a long time ago, before the white people even exist or come around. There used to be a lot of geese there when they shed their feathers; that's where they get the feathers for their arrows. That is an important area not only for caribou going back and forth too, but our ancestors that walked before us. *Frederick Andrew*

*Frederick Andrew, Michael Neyelle, Edward Oudzi, and Leon Andrew at the 2014 Joint Mountain Caribou Meeting in Tu Łidlini, photo: Deborah Simmons*

## The Nío Nę P'ęné Planning Area (the backbone that holds everything together)

Nío Nę P'ęné refers to a series of ridges and peaks that stretches from the Turáji Dá (Twichya River) (actually Mįcho Tsíé according to Shúhtaot'įnę elders) down towards Nááts'įhch'oh Mountain. Nío Nę P'ęné is one of the biggest words for Dene; it is like a backbone for our people and encompasses all of nature – it's what holds everything together. It is the headwaters for important rivers such as the Turáji Dá (Twichya River), Keele and Mįhcho Tsíé Dá (Caribou Cry River), in the NWT, and Ross, Hess and MacMillan rivers in the Yukon. We all get our fresh water from there, when it rains it flushes and cleans everything out through both sides of the border – so it's very important to us. We say that Nío Nę P'ęné preserves nature for us. We chose to name the larger planning area Nío Nę P'ęné, and the plan **Nío Nę P'ęné Begháré Shúhta Goęepé Narehǰá** (Trails of the Mountain Caribou) because this honours the importance of Nío Nę P'ęné to Dene, and refers to the trails that cover the landscape.

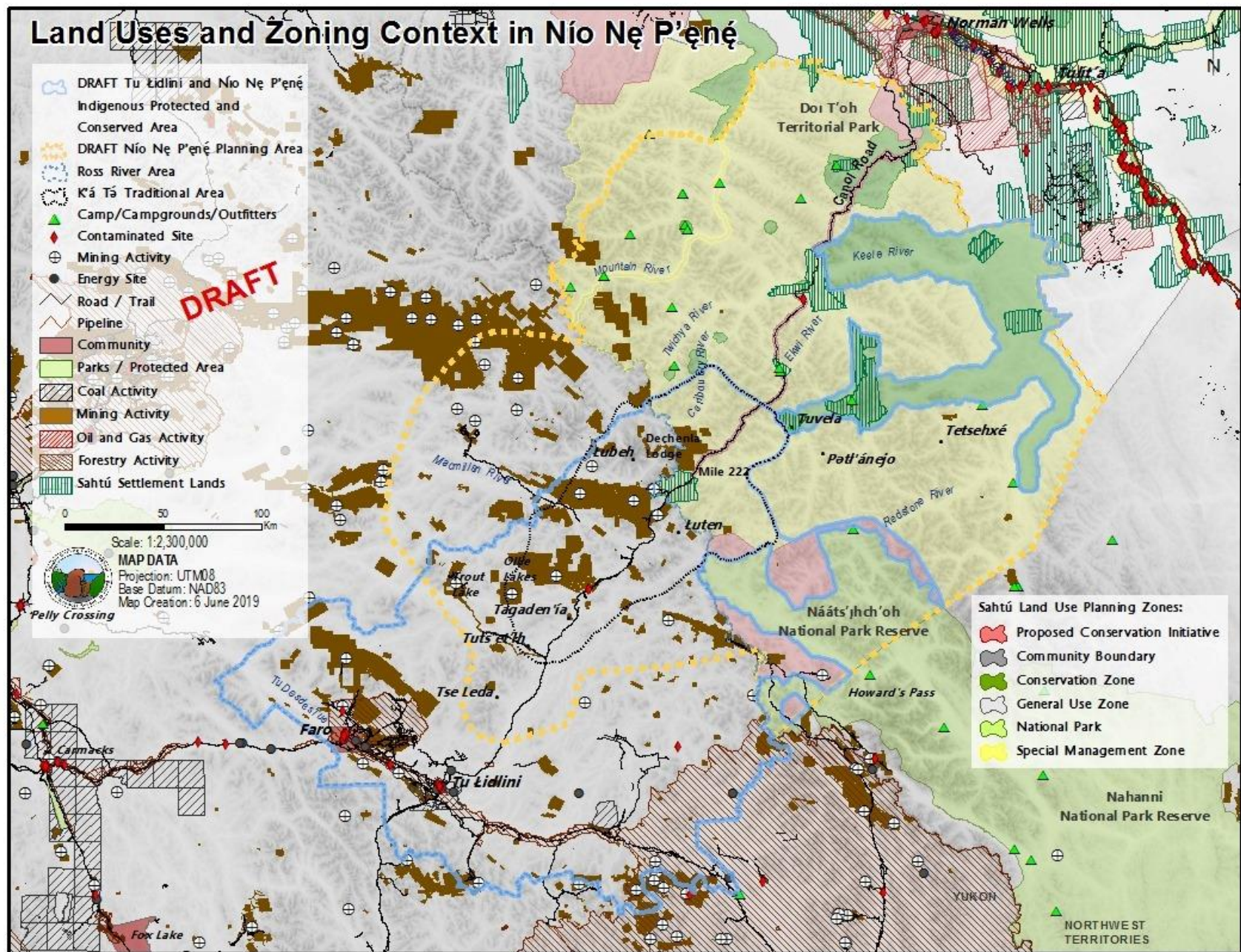
### TI'ule Setl'uni

There is more than one way to describe the area where we are focusing our planning efforts. One is Dechįlq / Dechenla – the land at the edge of the tree line. K'á Tá refers to a specific area of willow flats. Kaska Dena also say “TI'ule Setl'uni” which refers to the land being “strung out like a string”. This term describes high points of land or mountain tops, where water divides or goes two different ways. This term would refer to that part of the YT/NT border where it follows the continental divide. Until further language work can be done, Tu ǰidlini Dena expressed support for using the Shúhtaot'įnę term Nío Nę P'ęné to refer to the planning area.

We know that animals are attracted to special places like this. Since time immemorial the elders have recognized the power or energy of sites like Nááts'įhch'oh – which is like the centre of four corners or four nations for the Tu ǰidlini Dena, Naǰani people and Tulít'a people – and fought for their protection. All those places with mineral potential are powerful for Dene, as there is a spiritual energy that resides there. They also have a little bit of mineral release which attracts the animals on their annual migrations. It's why we don't want any mining or interference with these places – once the minerals disappear, there will be no way of controlling migration and the animals won't come anymore.

The map on the next page shows the all the current land uses and zoning in the Nío Nę P'ęné planning area. The draft boundaries for the planning area were drawn during our workshop at Dechenla, but were also strongly informed by the community engagement work we did. In the end, we decided to follow existing boundaries from the Sahtú Land Use Plan (SLUP) on the NWT side, and the area formally known as the Ross River Area on the Yukon side.





## The Proposed Tu Łidlini and Nío Nę P'ęnę Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area

To sustain shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / gūdzjh and our ways of life, we need to protect certain locations and habitats in the Nío Nę P'ęnę Planning Area. Because of our long history here, many sites have significance for us. One such place is K'á Tá – an open area of willows and dwarf birch that has always been important to Shúhtaot'įnę, Métis and Tu Łidlini Dena. This part of the Mackenzie Mountains is also critical to shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / gūdzjh and many other types of mammals, birds, and fish. Within K'á Tá, a unique ecological area called Xai Chu / Hanachu (Mackenzie Mountain Barrens) was designated as an International Biological Program Site in 1975, through a United Nations program to identify areas of significant natural heritage. There continues to be no protection for this significant and fragile place; it is at the heart of our proposed Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area (IPCA).

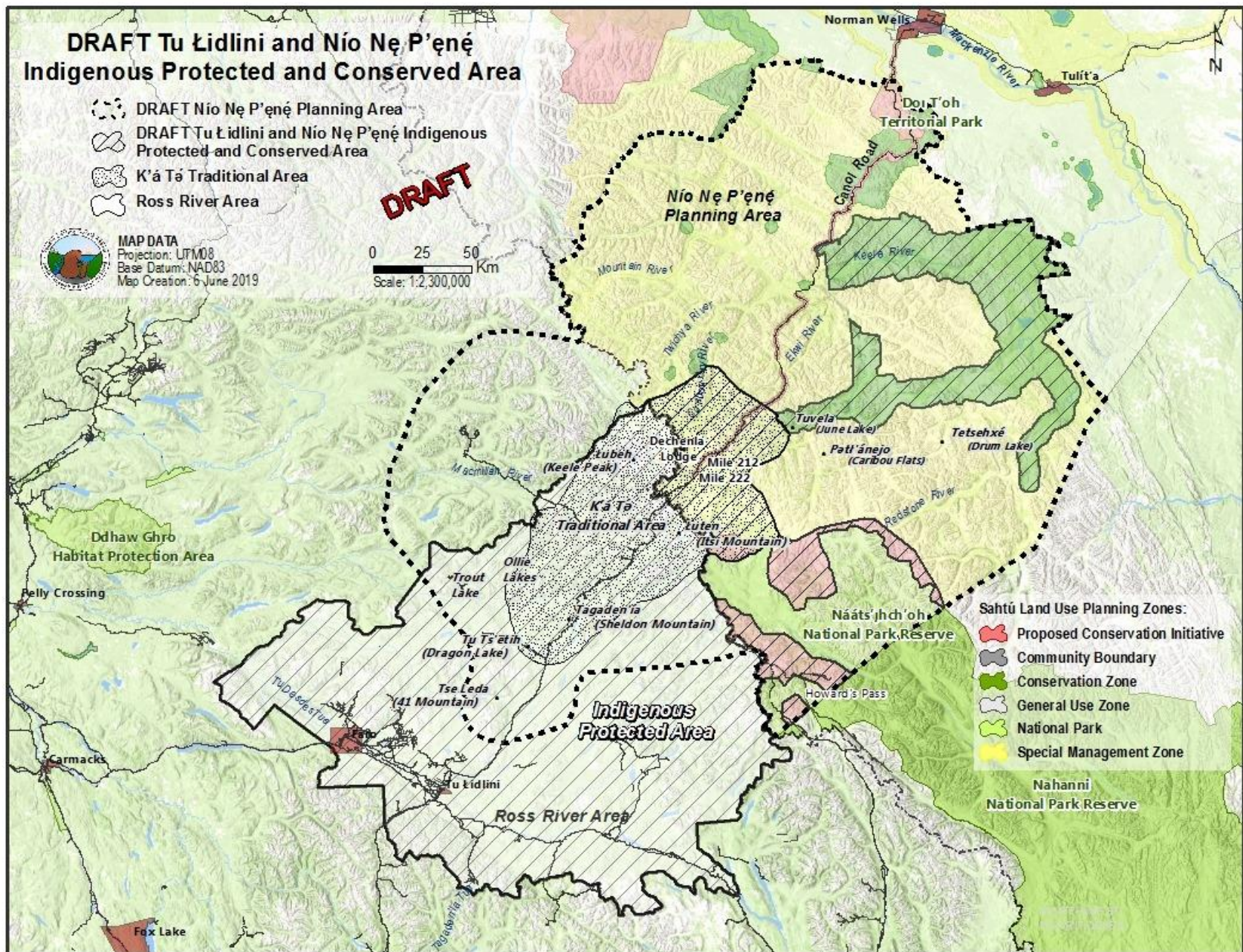
Over the years, numerous sites have been candidates for protection and/or special management due to their ecological and cultural importance, such as Łubeh (Keele Peak) and the headwaters of the Keele and Tsichu Rivers (Shúhtagot'įnę Nęné Conservation Zone 40, SLUPB; see **Appendix B**). Due to continued interest in protecting Shúhtagot'įnę Nęné, participants at a Nío Nę P'ęnę Working Group meeting in March 2019 decided to include it as part of our proposed **Tu Łidlini and Nío Nę P'ęnę IPCA**. Similarly, due to continued interest in protecting important caribou habitat – including calving grounds – that was excluded from Nááts'įhch'oh Park, this habitat is also included in our IPCA proposal (see Naats'įhch'oh Proposed Conservation Initiative 41, SLUPB, **Appendix C**). Values listed for SLUPB Special Management Zone 38 – The Mackenzie Mountains – have been included in **Appendix D** as they are relevant throughout our planning area. In addition, a partial history of conservation efforts in the planning area is included in **Appendix E**.

Working towards the creation of a large, shared IPCA is the best way to maintain our way of life and care for shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / gūdzjh and nę kárávé / kayeh. There is much more work to be done, but we agree that such a conservation area should be proposed, designated, and managed or co-managed by Indigenous Nations, primarily to protect wildlife, lands, and waters from harm. Further details – such as potentially identifying some areas for small scale industrial development within the IPCA – have yet to be discussed. We will be making these decisions and designing the IPCA to meet our needs while working within the broader framework for Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas and Indigenous Peoples' and Community Conservation Areas (ICCA) developing in Canada.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> International Union for the Conservation of Nature. Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCA): Pathway to achieving Asset 11 in Canada through reconciliation. <https://www.iucn.org/news/protected-areas/201802/indigenous-protected-and-conserved-areas-ipcas-pathway-achieving-asset-11-canada-through-reconciliation>. Accessed January 26, 2019.







## Working together

There has been a strong connection between Tu Łidlini Dena and Shúhtaot'ıne for a very long time, as Shúhta Dene from both sides of the Yukon/NWT border regularly travelled back and forth in the mountains to hunt and share. We also have non-Dene who make their home here – some have learned our traditions and know how to live in and behave respectfully in this place. We are passionate about maintaining our historic connections to places like K'á Tá, our shared Shúhta Dene culture, and shúhta goɁepé / bedzih / gūdzih. We have a keen interest in continuing our tradition of sharing into the future – to cooperate and collaboratively work toward common goals for shúhta goɁepé / bedzih / gūdzih and their ne káravé / kayeh. We are hopeful that if we act together and act now we will be able to ensure our children will also have these connections and experiences.

### Principles

Our planning process is rooted in Dene values, principles and knowledge. Three key principles of how we work together are:

- Bets'erıchá / ah' yeh gus'an (respect for the caribou),
- Ɂetets'erıchá / ah' yeh gus'an (respect for each other), and
- Ɂetexé Ɂeghálats'eda / guyeh kadzudedali / duyah kadzudedali (working together).



Three ways of expressing respect in Shúhtaot'ıne language; Amos Dick and Michael Neyelle working on Dene interpretations at Denchenla Lodge, photos: Janet Winbourne.

### *Dene stewardship across today's political boundaries*

Together, Tu Łidlini Dena, Shúhtaot'Jne and Métis can play an important role in shúhta goʔepé / bedzih / gūdzjh stewardship. We have a long shared history of cooperation in caribou hunting and use of this area, but because land protection frameworks, policies and legislation differ in the Yukon and NWT, we need different approaches to conservation and stewardship on each side of the border. While many of the problems we see are taking place within the Sahtú Region of the NWT, most access is through the Yukon, and users are coming from many different regions now. As mentioned, our planning work involves a coordinated and comprehensive approach to make sure that we continue to act as land stewards for all of Nío Nę P'ęné, whether there is an administrative boundary present or not.

In an Indigenous sense, we see a need to collaborate even more in our shared territories – those areas which are further from home – as our boundaries are more about relationships than defined lines on a map. As we move away from the center of our territories – the places where we have the most familiar bonds and relationships – our knowledge and relationship to the land weakens. This is where we encounter a type of relationship change or boundary, a zone of decreasing presence as we move out from our center. In this place we need to practice good relations with neighbouring nations; presence is required to maintain good relationships and communication is required to jointly care-take these regions.<sup>3</sup>

Above all, we agree that we will be guided by ɛɛa/Dene a' nīzīn (sacred laws or code of ethics), and our decisions and actions will be based in shared Dene values and made by consensus. Some differences in approach required between the Tu Łidlini / Yukon and Sahtú Settlement Area / NWT jurisdictions are detailed below.

### *Tu Łidlini / Yukon*

The Tu Łidlini Dena Council is part of the Kaska Nation, located at the confluence of the Ross and Pelly Rivers, near the Campbell Highway and the North CANOL Road in the southeast Yukon. Tu Łidlini Dena have always been in the area encompassing K'á Tá, and a keen interest in helping to maintain a healthy ecosystem there, but we do not have treaty rights or land claim benefits in the NWT. The Tu Łidlini Dena Council has a land use plan based on Indigenous knowledge that guides our planning.

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<sup>3</sup> See Simpson, Leanne Betasamosake. 2011. "Dancing on Our Turtle's Back: Stories of Nishnaabeg Re-Creation, Resurgence, and a New Emergence." Arbeiter Ring Publishing, Winnipeg, MB.

Tu Łidlini Dena have proposed areas for protection from mineral development, through the “*Gucho Ka-Ka Dee*” (Our Elders’ Instructions). This plan identified 29 polygons for protection, encompassing roughly 59% of the Ross River Area. Despite the Yukon Government having formally recognized Tu Łidlini Dena rights and title, they have rejected the Elders’ Instructions (Gucho Ka-Ka Dee). As such, many of the proposed conservation areas that have been proposed by Tu Łidlini Dena (although temporarily under Interim Protection through a moratorium on mineral staking) have had no formal designation for protection. Of particular concern is the block of mineral claims adjacent to K’á Tá and Łubeh (Keele Peak) that are currently at an advanced stage of exploration. Also worrisome is the fate of the tungsten deposit near Łubeh / Macmillan Pass, currently owned by the GNWT.

### *Sahtú Settlement Area / NWT*

In the Sahtú Region, the *Sahtú Dene and Metis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement* (1993), and associated Land Use Planning commitments, have already resulted in significant land protection and conservation zoning to guide development activities; this leaves relatively small areas in need of protection to satisfy our plan. This includes the NWT portion of K’á Tá, as well as several other areas that were previously identified by Shúhtaot’ıne, yet excluded from the boundaries of Nááts’ıhch’oh National Park Reserve. These areas are very important and still in need of protection, as they include critical ne káravé / kayeh such as caribou calving grounds.

The Land Claim outlines the ʔehdzo Got’ıne Gots’ę Nákedı (Sahtú Renewable Resources Board, SRRB) as a co-management board with a mandate in wildlife, habitat and harvesting in the Sahtú Settlement Area. The Land Claim also outlines the mandates of ʔehdzo Got’ıne (Renewable Resources Councils, RRCs) in each Sahtú community, to encourage and promote local involvement in conservation, harvesting studies, research and wildlife management, and to advise the board with respect to participants’ harvesting and/or concerns in the community. The board works with ʔehdzo Got’ıne in the five Sahtú communities to maintain Dene and Métis harvesting traditions and keep the land and animals healthy for future generations. Since 2013, land use within the Sahtú has been guided by the Sahtú Land Use Plan (SLUP). Guided by community visions, the SRRB has adopted an approach to exercising its mandate that is decolonizing, community-driven, youth centred, and Dene ts’ııı (drawing on Dene knowledge and ways of life).

Title to settlement lands outside of municipalities are vested to land corporations in three districts (Délıne, Tulita and K’ahsho Got’ıne). Responsibility for ownership and management of these lands rests with district land corporations on behalf of land claim participants. The two other organizations involved in land use and resource stewardship are the Tulita District Land Corporation (comprised of the Norman Wells Land Corporation, the Tulita Land Corporation and the Fort Norman Métis Land Corporation) and the Sahtú Secretariat Inc.



## Using the Plan

The beginning parts of this plan provided some information about who the Shúhtaot'Inę, Métis, and Tu Łidlini Dena are, where we live, some things we value about our culture and ways of life, and how we are working together in community conservation planning. The five main sections that make up the rest of the written plan provide information on what we want to take care of in Nío Nę P'ęnę and how we plan to do it. They include:

**Assets** are key things that make the area healthy and as we want it. We chose five factors to watch that will help us know how our assets are; for each, we rated how healthy we think it is today. Doing this over time helps to know if our plan is working.

**Threats** are detailed as problems that we face, and we have rated them so we know how bad the problem is right now. Again, doing this over time will help us to see if our plan is helping to reduce the Threats.

**Goals and Objectives** are what we want to achieve over a ten-year period. Our goal is to keep the assets healthy and fix the threats. We have 13 objectives – meeting these objectives will help to ensure that we stay focused on reducing the threats.

**Programs and Strategies** are the jobs we want to do to achieve our goals. We chose seven strategies or program areas to start with. The jobs are broken down into shorter time periods, so we know what we need to start doing, even in the next six months.

**Learning as we go** is the last section of the plan and it explains how we will monitor our actions and our success, as well as report on activities and adapt the plan as necessary.

## Indigenous knowledge in the Plan

Tu Łidlini Dena, Shúhtaot'Inę, and Métis have a wealth of knowledge about shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / gūdzih. This plan only includes information that has been publically shared. Quotations have been edited for clarity or brevity and speakers were given opportunities to review and edit how the input. To help non-Dene readers understand our viewpoints better we added several green text boxes – these include explanations of key Dene concepts, some stories, and other sources of biocultural information. They are intended to help convey the fuller meaning of Nío Nę P'ęnę to Shúhta Dene and explain some of the understandings that underlie how we make decisions. There are many other sources of knowledge that are not included here. People interested in learning more can contact the Tu Łidlini Dena Council (TDC) and the ʔehdzo Got'Inę Gots'ę Nákedı (Sahtú Renewable Resources Board, SRRB). Any cultural and Indigenous knowledge included in the plan is the property of the TDC and/or SRRB and should not be used without permission.

### *K̓ad̓a [Language in the Plan]*

The scope of the plan includes mountain people who mostly live in the communities of Tu Łidlini, Tulít'a, and Norman Wells, and who travel throughout the mountains to hunt, fish, and gather foods, medicines, and materials. Indigenous harvesters also travel here from other communities. The peoples that use this area speak languages within the Na-Dene language family. In this plan, we use the following terms:

- **Shúhta Dene** – a general term to refer to Mountain Dene
- **Shúhtaot'įnę** – the term for Mountain Dene in Tulít'a dialect
- **Kaska Dena** – Kaska Dena live in a large expanse of the SE YT, southern NT, and northwestern BC. The Nation has been divided into five traditional groups now referred to as First Nations; the Tu Łidlini Dena Council is one of two Kaska First Nations in the Yukon
- **Tu Łidlini Dena** – Dena living in Tu Łidlini (the community of Ross River, YT), including members of the Kaska and other First Nations. Most Tu Łidlini Dena speak Kaska, but some speak North Slavey
- **Sahtú Dene** – Dene people from the Sahtú (Great Bear Lake) Region. Most Dene of the Sahtú speak a language that they refer to as Dene, and is referred to by linguists and under the NWT Official Languages Act as North Slavey. There is much variation in this language, including three major dialects.
- **Métis** – the Sahtú Region and Land Claim include Sahtú Dene and Métis – people of Aboriginal and French Canadian ancestry.

While there are some similarities in language, Dene from different areas use different dialects and spellings. We hope to be able to include more Dene names, terms, and concepts in the plan in the future, with good representation of Kaska Dena and Shúhta Dene as well as Shúhtaot'įnę. We are always working to include Indigenous language in the plan as a reflection of the Dene concepts that are important to people in thinking about their relationship with shúhta goṓepé / bedzih / gūdzįh and Shúhtaot'įnę / Shúhta Dene néné / kayeh (Mountain Dene homeland).

Where we have included Dene translations or interpretations of English, the Dene interpretations are ordered as follows Shúhtaot'įnę / Shúhta Dene / Kaska Dena. Some common Dene terms and phrases we use are explained in a **Glossary** at the end of the plan; the glossary is also organized that way. We have also included some Dene place names on maps and in the text; these are described in **Appendix F**. While we are trying to emphasize First Languages as much as possible, we still have a lot more work to do!

## Our vision

The vision is a statement about what the future will look like if we are successful in making the plan work.



### Our vision

- Shúhtaot'ine, Métis, and Tu Łidlini Dena continue to peacefully co-exist with shúhta goṛepé / bedzih / gūdzih in an ecologically diverse and healthy mountain landscape as they have for thousands of years
- Shúhtaot'ine, Métis and Tu Łidlini Dena are travelling, harvesting, sharing and gathering throughout their territory, keeping Dene kədə / k'e (language), Dene ts'ıı / Dene k'e (ways of life), and Dene ɛɛa / a' nızin (law / respect) strong.

# Assets

Assets are things we value and will need in the future. They make the area healthy and as we want it. The main assets we're focussing on in our planning work are:

*Shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / gūdzih hé and Dene ts'ı́ı / Dene k'e hé*  
(Health of mountain caribou and health of Dene / Métis ways of life)



Grady Sterriah cutting meat, caribou cows and calves, photos: Norm Barichello; cultural on-the-land camp for Dene youth, photo: Josh Barichello



## *Shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / gūdzj̄h hé (health of mountain caribou)*

Tu Łidlini Dena, Kaska Dena and Shúhtagot'j̄nē have many similarities in language and culture, but we use different dialects in our communities. As a result, we have different names for mountain caribou – for Tu Łidlini Dena they are gūdzj̄h, in the Kaska language they are bedzih, and for Shúhtagot'j̄nē they are shúhta goᑭepé. Generally, we consider the caribou to be to be all of one type, even though differences are noted in body size and coloration, antler size, and in behaviour and movement patterns.

Our relationships with caribou are place-based; communities are traditionally responsible for stewardship in their established harvest areas. However, we don't believe that we **manage** animals; instead we have a **responsibility** for shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / gūdzj̄h hé (health of mountain caribou) and for nē káravé / kayeh hé (health of the land or habitat).

Many families have a long history of travelling in the mountains. It is through our travels that we have come to know the land, the caribou, and their behaviours so well. Generation after generation a wealth of knowledge has been built about caribou. Over the last ten to twenty years people knowledgeable about the area have started to witness alarming changes. The large herds of caribou that used to colour the landscape have dwindled. Moose are also getting fewer and fewer. The land itself is showing signs of change, mountain ice patches are getting smaller each year, permafrost is melting, and fires are increasing in size and intensity.

Amidst these changes, pressures from human activities are increasing. Each year, more and more hunters come from other areas to harvest caribou and moose. Helicopters fly them into remote areas and four-wheel vehicles tear-up the landscape. Mineral exploration and development expand at a rapid pace, and roads and other infrastructure are developing to keep up. Perhaps at no other time has the environment changed so much, so quickly.

Shúhta Dene are not separate from shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / gūdzj̄h or nē káravé / kayeh hé, so threats to caribou are also threats to us and our traditional lifeways. In our worldview we look at the whole picture – we consider not just what is happening with one species in one place, but what is happening to the land, the water, and our Dene ts'j̄l̄ / Dene k'e (ways of life) overall. We know that everything contained within Shúhta Dene nēné or nē káravé / kayeh is important. Every animal and plant, the minerals, the water, even the weather has a role to play in maintaining ecosystem hé (health).

We chose shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / gūdzj̄h to be the focus of our planning work at Nío Nē P'ēné because they are critical to the health of the land and to our Dene culture. It was concern about these animals that first brought us together in 2014. We believe that if we can help sustain shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / gūdzj̄h hé, this will also help keep all the other parts of Shúhta Dene nēné / kayeh healthy.

## General Dene ɁeɁa/Dene A' Niẕin Around Harvesting Fish and Wildlife

**Talking about Animals and Fish:** It is important to always speak to or about animals and fish in a respectful way. You should not swear about them or brag about how many fish you will catch or animals you will hunt. By speaking disrespectfully about an animal, you will insult the spirit of the animal and they will not offer themselves to you. If you wish to hunt or fish on our land then we ask that people respect this law. It is important to us. Respecting this teaching honours the land, the animals, and our Dena way.

**After a Successful Harvest:** After harvesting an animal it is important to give thanks. Our elders teach that it is good to put down tobacco as an offering to the Creator, the land, and the spirit of the animal harvested. With big animals like moose, caribou, and sheep, we cut off the head and move it away from the body before beginning to skin the body, as a sign of respect to the animal. Some people will hang the throat of the animal in the trees or willows, facing north, so that the spirit of the animal will always have breath. It is good to say a prayer of thanks to the animal when doing this. Others also hang out the animals' reproductive organs and the tip of the heart as a token of respect and thanks. To some of our people, it is also a common practice to slit the eyes of a big game animal after having killed it. Having cleaned a fish or animal it is good to return the unused parts (i.e., bones, fish skin, guts, etc.) to the land and water. The elders say that doing this is also good for the spirit of the animal. Do not leave unused parts lying around camp and avoid throwing them in the garbage or the dump. Take time to go out and respectfully return these parts.



Wolf Creek, photo: Janet Winbourne

## *Dene ts'ı́l / Dene k'e hé [health of our ways of life]*

Over countless generations, Shúhta Dene were mobile hunter-gatherers in the Mackenzie Mountains – regularly travelling to places like K'á Tá to hunt caribou and gather goose feathers, among other activities. Shúhta Dene from Tu ı́dlini, Tulít'a, and Norman Wells alike carry stories of seasonal trips into the mountains. Traditionally, we followed nomadic ways of life according to the cycles of the seasons and animals, and travelling many miles over the course of a year. Our stories and our language are linked to the rivers, peaks, hunting sites, camps, and trails of Nío Nę P'ęné. While some of our technologies and patterns have changed, it is essential that we can continue to use the places that are important to us in Shúhta Dene néné / kayeh, and harvest our foods there to continue our chosen ways of life. It's also vitally important that we maintain our language and the teachings of our elders. We think that sustaining our Dene ts'ı́l / Dene k'e hé is the best way to carry out our responsibility to shúhta goǰepé / bedzih / gǔdzih.

### Dene ts'ı́l / Dene k'e

Dene ts'ı́l or Dene k'e can be best interpreted as “being Dene” or “Dene ways of life”. For Shúhtaot'ı́nę, there are three interrelated concepts or values that are key to Dene well-being – *dirinéné*, *ǰeǰa*, and *néwhehtsı́nę*. Each is difficult to translate into English!

*Dirinéné* is usually translated by Shúhtaot'ı́nę as “this land” but includes all relationships among living and non-living beings that make up Dene ecological, cultural, social, and spiritual space. A full conception of *dirinéné* makes mapping or ecological research very complex, since it interweaves the four dimensions of Shúhtaot'ı́nę knowledge. *Dirinéné* as an aspect of “being Dene” is very important.

*ǰeǰa* is usually translated as “law” but is distinct from the system of abstract laws recognized and enforced by the state. *ǰeǰa* is understood as the ordering principles and practices that sustain relationships, the core of which is respect. *ǰeǰa* is deeply historical, stretching back to the time “when the world was new” and giants and spiritual beings forged the land. In its purest form *ǰeǰa* is a type of intimate knowledge manifested as a form of spiritual power in relation to specific things or animals. *ǰeǰa* is learned through stories whose meaning is revealed through experience as a way of surviving in the extended family, in the community, on the land.

*Néwhehtsı́nę* is often translated as “spirituality” but has little to do with institutionalized religion. It is the spiritual aspect of Shúhtaot'ı́nę relationships that draws its power through communication (often referred to as “prayer”) with the ancestors and the natural world. Travelling on the land is infused with *néwhehtsı́nę* including gifts to the land and water, honour given to ancestors at burial sites, and many practices that pay respect to animals and medicines. Drum songs, traditional games, and arts and crafts are performances of *néwhehtsı́nę*, binding people to the ancestors and forging a sacred solidarity amongst families, community, and nation.

(Simmons, D., W. Bayha, I. Fink, S. Gordon, K. Rice, and D. Taneton. 2015. *Gúlu Agot'ı́ T'á Ka Gotsúhǰa Gha* (Learning about Changes): Rethinking Indigenous Social Economy in Déłı́nę, Northwest Territories. In: *Northern Communities Working Together: The Social Economy of Canada's North*. C. Southcott (Ed.). University of Toronto Press.)



## How do we know shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / gūdzih are healthy?

For shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / gūdzih to be healthy, we need to make sure there is good né káravé / kayeh (habitat) for them to meet their needs – this will help ensure that individuals and population numbers stay strong. We also need to make sure people treat them with respect – that means following Dene ᑭᑭᑭ / Dene ᑭᑭ ᑭᑭᑭ (laws / respect or code of ethics) for hunting.

We chose four main measures to help determine if shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / gūdzih are healthy:

- A. Né káravé / kayeh (Habitat)
- B. Hunting
- C. Individuals
- D. Population.

Each of these measures is explained below, including the ranking or rating that people at the Dechenla planning workshop felt best described its current state. Our understandings of the health of each of these key parts is based on Dene knowledge, as well as the knowledge of our project partners and scientists that work with us.



*Shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / kudzih, photo: Norm Barichello*

### A. Nę káravé / kayeh (Habitat)

Over the course of a year, shúhta goᓇpé / bedzih / gūdzih require several different types of nę káravé / kayeh. In the spring, they need areas that have good feed and are safe from predators for calving and immediately after calving. In the summer months, they are often found in open alpine and sub-alpine areas where they seek out snow patches for relief from insects and heat. In August the caribou are shifting their diet more to willows and mushrooms, so that is when we see the biggest numbers at K'á Tá. While there is some variety in winter range choices, mountain caribou move into more forested areas – generally choosing areas where the snow cover is relatively shallow and there are plentiful lichens. They also need mineral licks, clean water, and the ability to move safely between these different types of nę káravé / kayeh.

How are we doing? Nę káravé / kayeh indicators

Shúhta goᓇpé / bedzih / gūdzih hé	Status
A. Shúhta goᓇpé / bedzih / gūdzih nę káravé / kayeh	Good
○ Calving and post-calving areas are undisturbed	Good
○ Diet	Good
○ Landscape - Connected / Open space / Area	Good
○ Landscape - Peaceful and quiet / less disturbance	Not specified
○ Landscape - Undisturbed landscapes (no vandalism)	Not specified
○ Lichen cover in summer range	Good
○ Lichen cover in winter range	Not specified
○ Mineral licks	Not specified
○ Other wildlife	Not specified
○ Predators	Not specified
○ Range / location	Not specified
○ Snow / ice patch extent (relief from bugs etc.)	Fair
○ Dene knowledge of land and nę káravé / kayeh	Good
○ Water quality	Good



We are at Mile 212 – it's ten miles from the Tischi River airstrip and as you go from the Yukon side, you climb up to that high elevation plateau. It's right there at the plateau and the Dechenla Lodge sits on top of it. It's really important for caribou in the fall; in August, they start moving in. There's a lot of willows up there and, as you know, the caribou are really shifting to willows and mushrooms, and so they come up in that area in big, big numbers in August. That's where we really notice them, but any time of year we used



*Mountain caribou herd, photo: Norm Barichello*

to notice them, and not so anymore. Even in the fall now, we just don't notice those numbers. Big bulls used to come late in August or early September, with the big white manes, they'd start coming up out of the Caribou Cry River. Again, we just don't see that anymore. I think that's a real good point about just how important the area is generally, aside from caribou. It's a tundra area, so what we see up there and the reason the lodge was built up there it's got a lot of tundra birds, you don't find them anywhere else unless you go to the North Slope – longspurs and long-tailed jaegers and all these tundra birds are living up there in the summer as well, to make it very special as well. Norm Barichello



## B. Hunting

Shúhta Dene have a long history of coming to K'á Tá to harvest shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / gūdzjh and gather other foods and materials. Hunting is guided by Dene ᑭᑭᑭ or Dene ᑭ' nīzīn – sacred laws or a code of conduct for how we are to treat the land and interact with the environment and each other. Respect for caribou is a principle or foundation that runs throughout all activities, including harvesting. There are rules for correct practices, such as let the leaders pass, take only what you need, and share your harvest. People from other places sometimes do not respect our Dene laws, but we often don't know where they are harvesting or how many animals they are taking. We need to have a better estimate of how many caribou are being harvested in total.

### How are we doing? Hunting indicators

Shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / gūdzjh hé	Status
B. Shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / gūdzjh hunting	Good
○ Balance between hunting bull and cow	Not specified
○ Harvest numbers (check stations)	Fair
○ Leave the cow alone when it has calf	Good
○ Only shoot what you need	Good
○ Respectful kill - use all parts of the caribou	Not specified

A lot of our members will probably take one caribou, that's about it. Some of the other Yukon native hunters, they come up there and they see a lot of caribou and shoot two or three of them. They don't realize when they take that much out it's not very healthy for the herd. I have been up there since the late '70s. I was a very young man back then, but I have seen animals all over. I have seen moose in almost every little pasture and I've seen caribou all over the place. We have seen caribou by the hundreds just passing through. Right now, we see caribou but not very much. Maybe we seen one bull caribou and maybe 30 or 40 caribou and only one little bull caribou. You don't hardly see any more big caribou. *Gordon Peter*



*Drying freshly harvested meat, photo: Janet Winbourne*

### C. Individuals

When we harvest healthy shúhta goṛepé / bedzih / gūdzih, they have a good layer of fat, their coats look good, and the meat tastes good. Less healthy animals have more parasites, have a harder time out-running predators, and their antlers may not grow as large. By being on the land observing and hunting shúhta goṛepé / bedzih / gūdzih, we will be able to know when their health changes.

How are we doing? Individuals indicators

Shúhta goṛepé / bedzih / gūdzih hé	Status
C. Shúhta goṛepé / bedzih / gūdzih individuals	Good
○ Caribou can outrun predators	Not specified
○ Caribou are fat and meat quality. No damage. Big rolled butt	Good
○ Horn size	Fair
○ June-July coat condition	Good
○ Warble flies in spring (reproductive success)	Good



Skinner caribou, photo: Jean Polfus

### D. Population / Numbers

Even though Shúhta Dene from different areas have different names for these caribou, and variations are noted in things such as body size, coloration, antler size, and behaviour and movement patterns, we consider them to be all of one type. We know from our stories and observations that five different groups of caribou come to K'á Tá:

- One group of caribou seems to come along the Keele River and go into the Yukon Territory; they come back on the flanks of the Keele Mountain, but over in the Turáji Də (Twichya) drainage and west of the M̄hcho Tsíé Dá (Caribou Cry River) – they use that Turáji Də area in particular and those caribou seem to be doing better than some of the others.
- There's another group (likely the "Redstone" herd) that probably comes across a little further south. They come up the Keele in the highland country and the border of the Northwest Territories and Yukon, kind of the flanks of Mac Pass. That group of caribou seems like it's gone or moved off or in decline. We think that it's been about a ten- or fifteen-year gradual decline.
- There is also the Finlayson caribou herd that we see here, but there is some concern that they continue on and don't go back to the Finlayson area to winter.

- There are caribou that the elders speak of that have a different antler morphology – the antlers are more tightly together and they come in from the Bonnetplume country.
- Then there are caribou that seem to be a little more sedentary that are moving more up and down mountains rather than across large landscapes.

Scientists think that northern mountain caribou from the Redstone complex, Finlayson herd, Nahanni complex, and potentially the Tay River herd all have range in the K'á Tá area. The caribou occupy different winter ranges at lower elevations – for example, the Redstone complex consists of caribou that seem to have distinct winter ranges around three major rivers flowing into the Mackenzie River (the Carcajou, the Keele, and the Redstone).

The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) assessed northern mountain caribou in Canada as Special Concern in 2002; this status was re-examined and confirmed in 2014. Northern mountain caribou were listed as Special Concern under the federal *Species at Risk Act* in 2005, and a national management plan was released in 2012. They have not yet been ranked in the Northwest Territories, but were designated by the Yukon as Vulnerable, and by BC as Vulnerable/Apparently secure.

While there may be gaps in all of our understandings about what is happening to shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / gūdzih, those of us that spend time in this place feel that the land and caribou have already changed in way that are worrisome. We know that the numbers of caribou at K'á Tá have been declining gradually for at least ten or fifteen years. Before that, we would see hundreds in front of the lodge. We are interested in taking stewardship actions immediately to keep shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / gūdzih population numbers strong. We want to ensure they are around for the next generations.

Another way of knowing about population health is to pay attention to the balance of bulls and cows – it is not just about total numbers, because caribou have different roles within the group. For example, we know that large bulls play an important role as the key breeders or the leaders of the breeding. We call these m̓cho (Shúhtaot'̓n̓) / mbedzi cho (Shúhta Dene) / gūdzih cho (Kaska Dena), or the “mega bulls”. The older cows are important too – they are the leaders of the migration.

The first year I went up there in 1975, we used to see hundreds of caribou, right from the border on to Caribou Pass. We always see caribou every time we go up there, but in the last maybe five years, we haven't seen anything. I know that the caribou really is depleting, and it's depleting rapidly. That's from talking to people from Ross River and Watson Lake and the Northwest Territories. *Dorothy Dick*



## How are we doing? Population indicators

<i>Shúhta goᑕepé / bedzih / gūdzih hé</i>	Status
D. Shúhta goᑕepé / bedzih / gūdzih population	Fair
○ Caribou are respected	Not specified
○ Composition (cows / bulls / calves)	Not specified
○ Group size	Fair
○ Leaders / big bulls	Fair
○ Population numbers	Fair

## How do we know Dene ts'ı́l / Dene k'e is healthy?

If we keep our ways of life strong, our people will be physically and mentally healthier. There are many ways of measuring well-being – we want to see many Shúhta Dene and Métis on the land, participating in respectful hunting, practicing Dene ᑕᑕᑕᑕ/Dene ᑕᑕ ᑕᑕᑕᑕ, and sharing our ways of life with others. In addition, people need to have a sense of control over their lives, to find meaningful employment, and to develop a balanced or mixed economy.

We chose six measures that can help us know if Dene ts'ı́l / Dene k'e are healthy:

- Access to country food
- Not being displaced by other hunters
- Distribution of resident hunters
- Harvest rate success
- Distance to harvest
- Non-Dene are aware of and respect our harvesting and culture.

At the 2017 planning workshop at Dechenla, we rated how well we think each of these measures is doing currently. Our understandings of the health of each of these key parts is based on Dene knowledge, as well as the knowledge of our project partners and scientists that work with us. At the moment, we feel that only one measure – Dene access to country foods – can be rated as 'Good'. The rest were only rated as 'Fair'. This gives us an overall rating of 'Fair' for Dene ts'ı́l / Dene k'e hé today.



Dechenla workshop participants, photo:  
Janet Winbourne

How are we doing? Dene ts'ı́l / Dene k'e indicators

<i>Dene ts'ı́l / Dene k'e hé (health of our ways of life)</i>	Status
Dene ts'ı́l / Dene k'e hé (health of our ways of life)	Fair
o Dene access to country food	Good
o Dene aren't displaced by resident hunters	Fair
o Distribution of resident hunters	Fair
o Harvest rate success	Fair
o How far do people go to hunt successfully	Fair
o People are aware of and respect Dene harvesting and culture	Fair

## Summary – the current health of our assets

This summary table shows the results of our assessment of the current status of our two assets – shúhta goṛepé / bedzih / gūdzih hé (health of mountain caribou) and Dene ts'ı́l / Dene k'e hé (health of our ways of life). It tells us that right now shúhta goṛepé / bedzih / gūdzih nę káravé / kayeh, hunting, and individuals are 'Good', but that shúhta goṛepé / bedzih / gūdzih populations and Dene ts'ı́l / Dene k'e are only 'Fair'. This indicates where we need to work – we need to make our Dene ts'ı́l / Dene k'e stronger, and do more to keep shúhta goṛepé / bedzih / gūdzih populations healthy.

Measure	Status
<i>Shúhta goṛepé / bedzih / gūdzih nę káravé / kayeh</i>	Good
<i>Shúhta goṛepé / bedzih / gūdzih hunting</i>	Good
<i>Shúhta goṛepé / bedzih / gūdzih individuals</i>	Good
<i>Shúhta goṛepé / bedzih / gūdzih population</i>	Fair
<i>Dene ts'ı́l / Dene k'e</i>	Fair



Making caribou sinew, photo: Josh Barichello



## Our role is to pass on our knowledge

We are slowly losing all our elders. They are the ones that passed on the knowledge. I was given that knowledge by elders. That's what our role is now today – to pass on what our elders have taught to our children. We have to do that because it's for our protection and for our cultures and traditions to continue. We need to pass that onto our children. *Edward Oudzi*

*Edward Oudzi at 2014 Joint Mountain Caribou Meeting in Tu Łidlini, photo: Candace DeCoste*



# Threats

Threats are the problems stopping us from having healthy shúhta goᑕepé / bedzih / kudzih and Dene ts'ı́ı / Dene k'e, and their causes. Problems we face include:

1. Changing environment from climate change
2. Poor hunting practices
3. Awareness and respect for Dene/Métis laws
4. Increased motorized access, noise and disturbance
5. Lack of use and transmission of Indigenous knowledge
6. Mining and exploration
7. Poor policy coordination and implementation
8. Lack of capacity
9. Contaminants



Debris left behind on the Canol Road, identifying sources of noise and disturbance at Dechenla planning workshop, photos: Janet Winbourne

Over the last five to ten years we have been witnessing big changes with the land, the animals, and how the area around K'á Tá is being used. We see disturbing changes in the environment and how harvesting is taking place. There is an increasing number of hunters coming from elsewhere that do not know our traditions or our concerns. We worry about development, such as mining and roads, encroaching on our hunting areas. We feel we have had too little control over many of these factors.

We've had a tendency, or at least science has, to define a herd. Then you get into the problem that if the herd is 120,000 animals, you are going to have to shoot an awful lot of them before science will register, so it's too late by the time we react to it. What we are trying to do is to respond to a local problem, what's going on from Mac Pass all the way to Caribou Pass. . It's helicopter overflights, it's vehicles, noise disturbance, hunting and disrespect, the lack of guardianship up on the road, all of which I hear are the problems. So I see us needing some sort of a local response but also something broader, a long-term approach that speaks to the linkage between two peoples, the comprehensive heritage issue. *Deborah Simmons*

We have identified nine main types of problems that challenge or threaten our assets today:

1. Changing environment from climate change
2. Poor hunting practices
3. Awareness and respect for Dene/Métis laws
4. Increased motorized access, noise and disturbance
5. Lack of use and transmission of Indigenous knowledge
6. Mining and exploration
7. Poor policy coordination and implementation
8. Lack of capacity
9. Contaminants.

At the Dechenla planning workshop, we prioritized or ranked each threat based on what we know today. Some of the threats we don't really know how big their impact is, but we worked in three separate groups as a way to estimate how big we think the problems are, and then compared and combined our estimates. The results of this work are provided in tables for each of the nine threats below (the three numbered columns show which groups thought which factors were problems); the tables help indicate what we think some of the main contributing factors are and some places where we may want to focus our actions.

## Threat 1: Changing environment from climate change

The places that are important to shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / gūdzih are changing. We see more wildfires lately, ice patches, permafrost and glaciers are melting because the weather is changing, water levels are rising, the vegetation is changing, and there are changes in the numbers and types of animals we see.

Climate change is starting to change the landscape. It changes water quality, the plants, a lot of things that are happening now. There are more impacts happening. We talk about fires and what it's doing. We have raised this with the forest management branch, ENR. We say we have to do something about these fires that are burning out key winter habitats. We know it's one of the problems that is preventing caribou from coming back to these areas. Science says it takes about 60 years for lichen to grow back. These large areas is where these lichen have burnt out and 60 years is a long time. We have to find ways to fight those fires. Right now key infrastructure like hydro lines, they protect those and small communities, but when it comes to sacred areas, gravesites, they don't care really. Norman Sterriah

1. What environmental changes are impacting Nío Nę P'ęné?	Groups:		
	1	2	3
Fires in winter range	✓	✓	✓
Weather change	✓	✓	✓
Nę káravé / kayeh / vegetation change	✓	✓	✓
Increased disease and parasites		✓	
Introduction of new species			✓



Caribou on ice patch, Teslin Plateau, Northern BC, photo: Jean Polfus



## Threat 2: Poor hunting practices

Over at least ten or fifteen years we have been witnessing big changes with the land and the animals because of poor hunting practices. These problems seem to be getting worse each year as more and more hunters come to K'á Tá from elsewhere.

We worry that too many caribou are being taken, and that the big bulls are being taken the most. We see many disrespectful practices taking place, like wasting caribou meat and wounding animals. Peoples' camps and cabins are being vandalised. We have safety concerns about some shooting and butchering practices, such as not dealing with gut piles adequately. As these activities increase, we are excluded from our traditional camping and hunting areas – places we have used for generations.

2. What poor hunting practices do we see?	Groups:		
	1	2	3
General poor hunting practices	✓	✓	✓
Other First Nations not aware or respectful	✓	✓	
Harvest of mega-bulls	✓		
Taking too many cows	✓	✓	
Overharvest of caribou		✓	
Overharvest of other wildlife		✓	



Big game trophies, photo: Josh Barichello

With the closure to caribou hunting for resident hunters in the majority of the NWT, it's coincided with a lot more hunters coming up to the Mackenzie Mountains. We know there's been a lot of use of that area by Shúhta Dene from Tulít'a and Ross River for a long, long time, but these NWT resident hunters coming around from Yellowknife are a new thing. My concern is not only the number of caribou that are being taken, but also I've spent time here and I've spent a lot of time going out with elders on the land, with people from here that teach the Dena way and they teach about respect and call it 'Dene ɔa nizin'. I learned a lot about how to properly respect things. A lot of these people that are coming around, they have no connection with the land at all, they've never been there; they might be from Newfoundland or from further away. They live in the NWT for two years, they get their residency, and then they drive around through three or four different provinces or territories, thousands of kilometers back to the NWT. Josh Barichello

### Threat 3: Lack of awareness and respect for Dene / Métis laws

We feel that hunters coming from other places don't know about Dene laws and traditions for how to behave respectfully on the land – our ɛɛa / Dene ɛa nizin. We have a very long history in this place; every family can tell you where their ancestors travelled, where they usually camp, stories of harvesting at certain places.

3. Are there problems with awareness and respect for Dene / Métis laws at Nío Nę P'ęné?	Groups:		
	1	2	3
Awareness and respect for Dene / Métis laws	✓	✓	✓
Lack of awareness and respect for Dene culture	✓	✓	✓
Other First Nations not aware or respectful	✓	✓	

When we come for our usual fall hunt and find that our campsites and usual places have been vandalized or other people are using them, we tend to go to other places or not come back. We also believe that if ɛɛa / Dene ɛa nizin is not followed, the caribou won't come back. Already their numbers seem to be dwindling, and we worry that they may not be able to support our children in the future. But hunting and being on the land with our children is part of our culture – it's how we teach about the land, how we share our knowledge. We want to be able to protect the wildlife as well as Shúhta Dene ways of being on the land.

There are some areas that are very special to us, where everybody uses these areas, where we subsisted for centuries – some of these areas are sacred to us. But people are coming from all over now and they're ignoring that. They come here and hunt, go back and speak to their friends. They think they've hit paradise here, but I'd really call it slaughter. It's a lot of disrespect because a lot of the meat isn't even taken out. They shouldn't leave anything behind. This place, you could see 400-500 caribou out there when they're starting to move, but not today. You see the trails – the impacts are really something we need to deal with – the hunters, climate change. We as a people really honour the animals, live with them. *Chief Jack Caesar*



Ross River Dena Chief Jack Caesar, photo: Janet Winbourne

## Threat 4: Increased motorized access, noise and disturbance

Over the years there has been a disturbing shift from more traditional hunting methods to the use of disruptive technology like all-terrain vehicles (quads or four-wheelers), helicopters, and planes. There is a lot of noise, a lot of disturbance, and the land isn't quiet any more.

4. What signs of increased motorized access, noise and disturbance do we see at Nío Nę P'ęné?	Groups:		
	1	2	3
ATVs – inappropriate use	✓	✓	✓
Noise from helicopters		✓	✓
Increased recreation use	✓		

There is also concern that roads built for industry will increase access to sensitive nę kárávé / kayeh. One example is the Howard's Pass Access Road; access is expected to increase on this route in the future, thereby potentially increasing impacts on shúhta goǰepé / bedzih / gūdzih through increased harvest and nę kárávé / kayeh destruction. Currently, while there are some harvest restrictions inside parks (e.g., traditional Indigenous harvesting can occur in Nahanni and Nááts'łhch'oh National Park Reserves but non-Indigenous people are not allowed to harvest or hunt there, and there are restrictions in regards to carrying firearms through national parks) these restrictions do not extend beyond the park boundaries, and Parks Canada only conducts law enforcement patrols and monitoring along the portion of Howard's Pass Access Road that passes through the two parks.

We never used to see quad use up there and now we are very concerned about the amount of trails that are on that high elevation plateau. That's a piece of tundra and it's underlain by permafrost, so when you get quads running around there, they compact the soil and melt the permafrost, and then you get mud holes. And of course they're used more and more and there are side trails to by-pass the mud holes. It's just really a lot of damage on that tundra area. You only have to fly over it to see how much damage is on that tundra area, and the alpine area is the same way. When you get quads in fragile areas they can really vandalize the land, and we've seen a lot in the accessible areas.

Norm Barichello



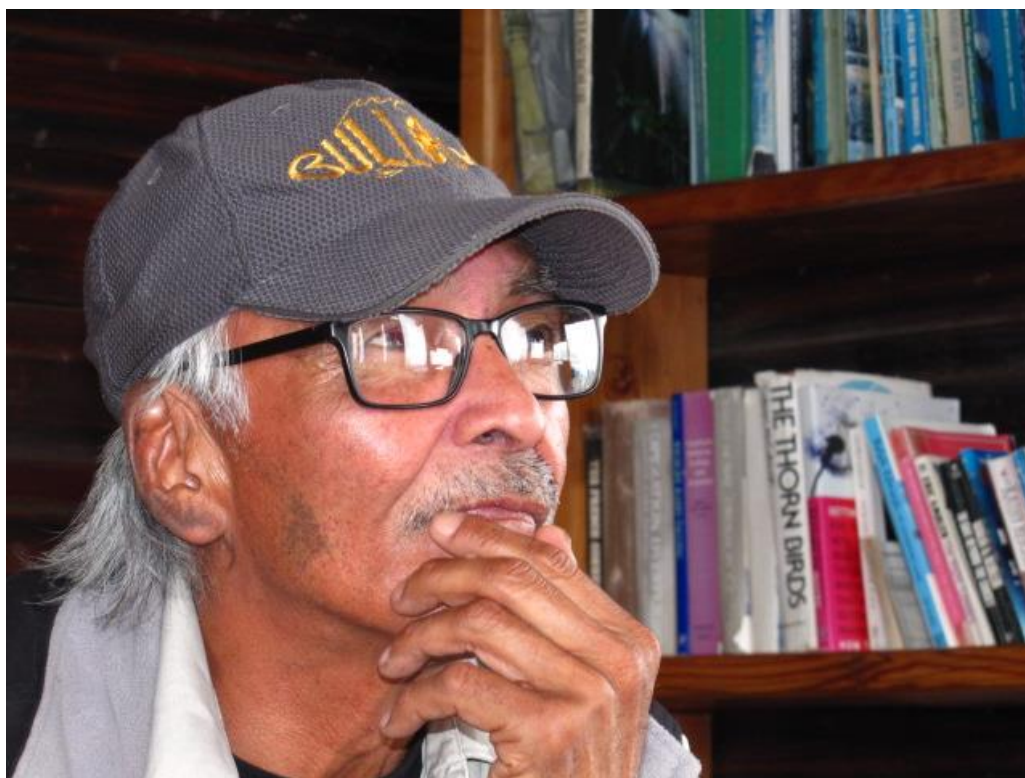
Non-Dene hunting camp near K'á Tǎ, photo: Josh Barichello



## Threat 5: Lack of use and transmission of Indigenous knowledge

Their knowledge is what has made Dene people successful on the land for generations. With new technologies and ways of life, Indigenous knowledge is sometimes not being used or passed on to the next generations. This is part of the reason that we are seeing the disrespectful practices that we are seeing. We need to find ways to engage the youth so that they will be knowledgeable stewards and guardians on the land. There is a need to teach younger generations about respectful practices so that they carry on Dene hunting traditions.

5. Is a lack of use or transmission of traditional knowledge a problem?	Groups:		
	1	2	3
TK not being used	✓	✓	
Lack of transmission of TK	✓	✓	✓



Michael Neyelle at Dechenla planning workshop, photo: Janet Winbourne

Elders told us when the caribou are coming, let the leaders go by, don't shoot them, they need to go to their traditional feeding grounds. If you shoot the leader they will turn back. Respect the animals, make sure you kill an animal – don't just wound them. If you wound them you have to follow them, and don't club them with wood. Maybe there are no caribou around because the leaders are shot. *Michael Neyelle*

## Threat 6: Mining and exploration

We are seeing a steady increase in industrial activities that can have negative consequences for shúhta goʔepé / bedzih / gūdzj̄h and their nę káravé / kayeh. There are many types of impacts occurring at the same time, and while it is important to consider the individual impacts, there are also over-all or cumulative impacts on caribou and other animals that can be harder to understand.

6. Are mining and/or exploration a problem?	Groups:		
	1	2	3
Mining	✓	✓	✓
Mining exploration	✓		✓

Mining is one of the greatest individual threats we face. Currently, several mining companies have interests in the Nío Nę P'ęné area. We are worried about the potential impacts of the mines, and feel it is important for the companies to work with the First Nations that could be affected.

A lot of road and power development is also associated with mining – with additional negative impacts on caribou. In September 2017 the federal and Yukon territorial governments announced \$350 million to be spent on upgrading mining infrastructure, including roads into the Nahanni area.<sup>4</sup> The proposal to upgrade the north Canol Road to a year-round haul road is also of concern, as are the broader, indirect impacts that could result from the developments. Yet we are still dealing with impacts of former mines and access roads that are no longer active, such as the Canol.

There are all kinds of developments happening, all kinds of mining claims. With development comes challenges. They are going to upgrade this road to a haul road; it's going to be year-round. We have North American Tungsten up here, Colorado down here, Hud Bay right in here. There are others we haven't really talked about – Eagle Plains, Overland Resources, Silver Range – I don't know how many. Down here we have Three Aces, Lead/Zinc in here, Selwyn Mine, Precious Metals, Tungsten in here. There's a lot of interest. Howard's Pass is a huge concern to us also. It's a mega project – hydro, haul roads, pipelines, service roads, railroads – everything that will serve a mine over a period of maybe 50-plus years. We are talking about airports that will handle 737s, narrow [gauge] railroads. What kind of impact is that going to bring to us, not only caribou population wise but also social and economic problems? *Norman Sterriah*

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.mining.com/canadian-government-spend-247m-roads-support-yukon-mines/> Accessed Sept., 13, 2017.

## Threat 7: Poor policy coordination and implementation

Nío Nę P'ęné is remote, difficult to access, and a challenging place to maintain enforcement. Laws, policies, and regulations are not necessarily well-coordinated across the border and communications are also challenging. Currently, there is a check point at Mile 222

on the Canol Road where ENR (GNWT) has an officer during the peak hunting season. We need to increase our presence at Mile 222 and possibly other areas. This will require more than one officer at a time. We would like to see Sahtú people used out there in a supporting role. People from Tulít'a and Norman Wells could coordinate with ENR to record who is coming in and out of the area and to document harvests, contacting GNWT when enforcement is necessary. Monitoring is very important and will be part of the Guardian Program as it develops. Signs about the mandatory check station are currently being developed.

7. Is poor policy coordination and implementation a problem at Nío Nę P'ęné?	Groups:		
	1	2	3
Regulatory failure	✓	✓	
No coordination between YT and NWT	✓		
Lack of working together		✓	



Mile 222 Check Station, photo: Alex Lynch

I think that interim measures, proper signage, and the Tulít'a District need to be part of this – they are the ones who can give permission to access the lands. As it's happening now, there are hunters coming in from Yellowknife and other places, and they are not sure where the boundaries of the private lands are. There is an urgency there. Some of those ATV trails are so prominent, and from those it just spires off all over the place. Maybe we can get the ball rolling with ENR and start to send at least one of our monitors or one of our people out there to record what's going on out there too, to help work with ENR. I know ENR has an issue with finding the manpower out there. Even if you send one officer out, it's a vast area. It's hard to be on top of it. Rhea McDonald



## Threat 8: Lack of capacity

Many of us have been trying to generate interest and awareness about the situation at K'á Tá for many years now. We struggle to access resources to fund our work – Nío Nę P'ęné is a very large and remote area, so it can be costly to travel there and difficult to be aware of everything that is happening on the land. We know we need to have a greater presence on the land.

8. Is there a problem with a lack of capacity?	Groups:		
	1	2	3
Lack capacity for implementation	✓	✓	
Lack of people on land	✓	✓	

We also continue to struggle in our communities with the negative impacts of the last two hundred years of colonial history in Canada. Without full recognition and continuity of our governance rights and title we have not been the regulatory authority here for many generations. We need to have more trained and knowledgeable people working on these issues. We would like training for our own youth so that they can be the ones employed to keep watch over what is happening at Nío Nę P'ęné.



*Cultural on-the-land camp for Dene youth, photo: Norm Barichello*

## Threat 9: Contaminants

The Canol Project was a World War II pipeline built along a traditional, well-traveled trail between the Mackenzie Valley and the Yukon. The road was completed in 1943 with the joining of the Yukon and NWT highways at Macmillan Pass. The pipeline only operated for about a year then was abandoned, but there are still contaminants and remains from past mining and military operations along the route.

To date, hundreds of kilometers of telephone wire, hundreds of barrels of fuel and other contaminants have been removed. Federal programs continue to assist the clean-up of these materials.

9. What contaminants or debris are impacting Níó Nę P'ęné?	Groups:		
	1	2	3
Contaminants	✓		✓
Garbage			✓



Abandoned drums on Canol Road, photo: Janet Winbourne

Second World War junk is laying around here all the way up to Whitehorse and Norman Wells. The most dangerous part for caribou or moose is the telephone strands. There's piles and piles of old drums; some are half-full with some kind of chemical, and all these camps over to NWT are all polluted with oil since 1942. I want to talk about the part where the caribou calving grounds are. The caribou calving grounds start from Game Branch [Mile 222] all the way up over towards the next river. There's maybe 100,000 cans and drums and stuff all through that part. All these things go into the water and go into the river that goes down to Fort Norman, down the Mackenzie. All this polluted stuff is going to that area there. There is one little area where you see dead marten, dead wolverine. We have to deal with these things first. We have to look at the land itself.

Robertson Dick

## Summary – the current impact of threats<sup>5</sup>

Threat	1	2	3	Threat	1	2	3
<b>1. Changing environment from climate change (11)</b>				<b>6. Mining and exploration (5)</b>			
Fires in winter range	✓	✓	✓	Mining	✓	✓	✓
Weather change	✓	✓	✓	Mining exploration	✓		✓
Nę kárávé / kayeh /vegetation change	✓	✓	✓				
Increased disease and parasites		✓					
Introduction of new species			✓				
<b>2. Poor hunting practices (10)</b>				<b>7. Poor policy coordination and implementation (4)</b>			
Poor hunting practices	✓	✓	✓	Regulatory failure	✓	✓	
Other First Nations not aware or respectful	✓	✓		No coordination between YT and NWT	✓		
Harvest of mega-bulls	✓			Lack of working together		✓	
Taking too many cows	✓	✓					
Overharvest of caribou		✓					
Overharvest of other wildlife		✓					
<b>3. Awareness and respect for Dene/Métis laws (8)</b>				<b>8. Lack of capacity (4)</b>			
Awareness and respect for Dene/Métis laws	✓	✓	✓	Lack capacity for implementation	✓	✓	
Lack of awareness and respect for Dene culture	✓	✓	✓	Lack of people on land	✓	✓	
Other First Nations not aware or respectful	✓	✓					
<b>4. Increased motorized access, noise and disturbance (6)</b>				<b>9. Contaminants (3)</b>			
ATVs – inappropriate use	✓	✓	✓	Contaminants	✓		✓
Noise from helicopters		✓	✓	Garbage			✓
Increased recreation use	✓						
<b>5. Lack of use and transmission of traditional knowledge (5)</b>							
TK not being used	✓	✓					
Lack of transmission of TK	✓	✓	✓				

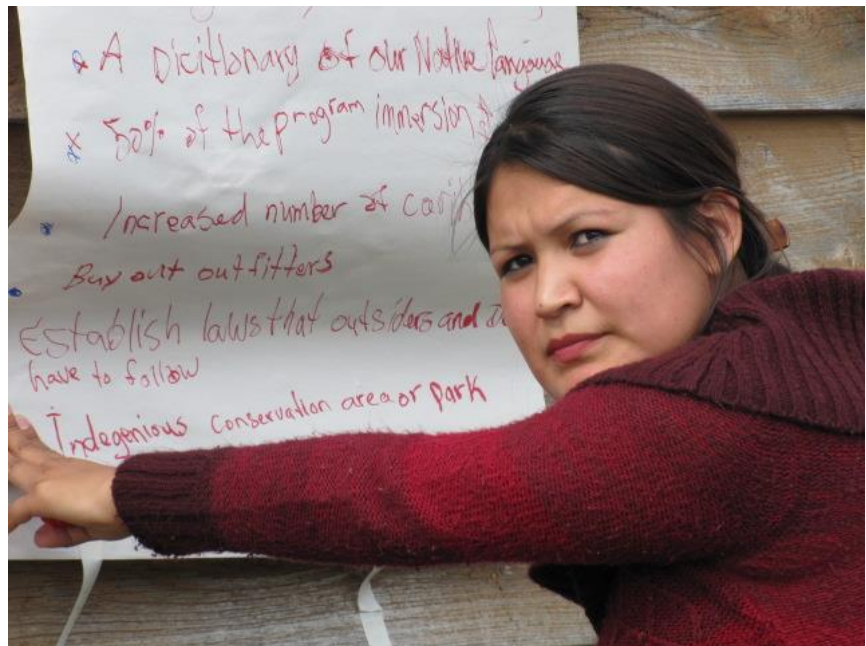
<sup>5</sup> Check marks indicate how many of the groups at the Dechenla workshop felt a particular threat was likely impacting Nío Nę P'ęné; numbers in brackets are total counts.



# Goals and Objectives

In ten years' time we have two main goals we want to achieve:

1. Communities are healthy, including economies
2. Caribou are still healthy (increased numbers).



Mjcho / Mbedzi cho / kudzi cho ("mega-bull") near K'á Tá, photo: Norm Barichello; working on objectives at Dechenla planning workshop, photo: Janet Winbourne

## Getting from goals and objectives to strategies and actions

A goal is how we want our assets to be. Because our assets are shúhta goṛepé / bedzih / gūdzih hé (healthy mountain caribou) and Dene ts'ı́ı / Dene k'e hé (healthy ways of life), we have two main goals that we want to reach by 2027 (in ten years' time):

1. Communities are healthy, including our economies
2. Caribou are still healthy (we see increased numbers).

To reach our vision we need to keep the assets healthy and fix or reduce the threats. To help us draw a road map for reaching our goals, we created objectives for what we want to achieve over the next six months, one year, three years, five years, and ten years. Objectives lay out what we plan to do about the threats as part of reaching our goals. We have thirteen objectives. They mainly focus on the high-ranked threats that we feel we can influence. Achieving the objectives should see the threats reduce; we can measure this by revisiting the threats table. We can measure progress toward our goals by measuring the health of the assets and revisiting the health table.

A program is made up of the strategies and actions we will do to help us reach our objectives and goals.



There are many strategies and actions that we will put in place to help achieve our goals and objectives. Each will strengthen our assets, weaken the threats, and move us towards our vision. A summary table on the following page lays out what our ten year objectives are, what threats they will reduce, and the programs under which we will implement the actions. More details on our programs are included in the next section.

*Summary table of ten year objectives, threats reduced, and programs*

Ten Year Objectives	Threats Reduced	Program
Twenty Indigenous Guardians trained in Dene language, wellness and traditional skills and employed at three different locations	Lack of capacity Poor hunting practices Awareness and respect for Dene/Metis laws Lack of use and transmission of TK	1. Development and implementation of a Land-based Indigenous Guardian and Wellness Program
Healthy network of traditional trails	Lack of use and transmission of TK Lack of capacity	
Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area with established laws that outsiders and Dene have to follow	Poor hunting practices Increased motorized access, noise and disturbance Awareness and respect for Dene/Metis laws	
Fluent young speakers; a dictionary of native languages	Lack of use and transmission of TK	
Quietness	Increased motorized access, noise and disturbance Mining and exploration	2. Reduce disturbance of shúhta goʔepé / bedzih / gūdʒih
No mining in K'á Tá	Mining and exploration Increased motorized access, noise and disturbance	3. Land protection through protected areas
Share our Dene ʔeʔa / Dene a' nīzīn to educate industry, hunters, and our own youth; have all hunters following Dene/Métis laws when they are on our lands	Awareness and respect for Dene/Metis laws Poor hunting practices	4. Education and communication of Dene/Métis laws
Natural resources are developed in compliance with Dene ʔeʔa / Dene a' nīzīn; our laws are used as guidelines for how companies should behave in Nío Nę P'ęné. Mine and exploration impacts are minimized	Mining and exploration Increased motorized access, noise and disturbance	5. Indigenous resource laws and agreements
Full collaboration between all governments / full implementation of the plan	Poor policy coordination and implementation Poor hunting practices	6. Keep moving forward



**We need to make sure there are animals  
for the next generation – Charlie Dick**

I want to make sure there are animals for the next generation – that is how we eat. My job is to teach the younger generation about the importance of the Dena lifestyle, living off of the land, taking care of the land, about the environment and the responsibility of passing on traditional knowledge to younger people. The passing of knowledge about our land and responsibility as land stewards is very important. Land is important to us – caribou, moose, sheep other natural food sources are really important to us. We continue to use them and we need to make sure that it's there for us, not only for me, but for the next generation also.

I still continue to live the Dena way, like my parents and elders. They told me how to take care of the land. I still do that. The visitors, the white people and other foreigners, they come and take a lot of game from our land, the outfitters and other hunters, with total disregard for our way of life. Game is important to us for subsistence and clothing. I am responsible to maintain a healthy population, environment and make sure the population is stable.

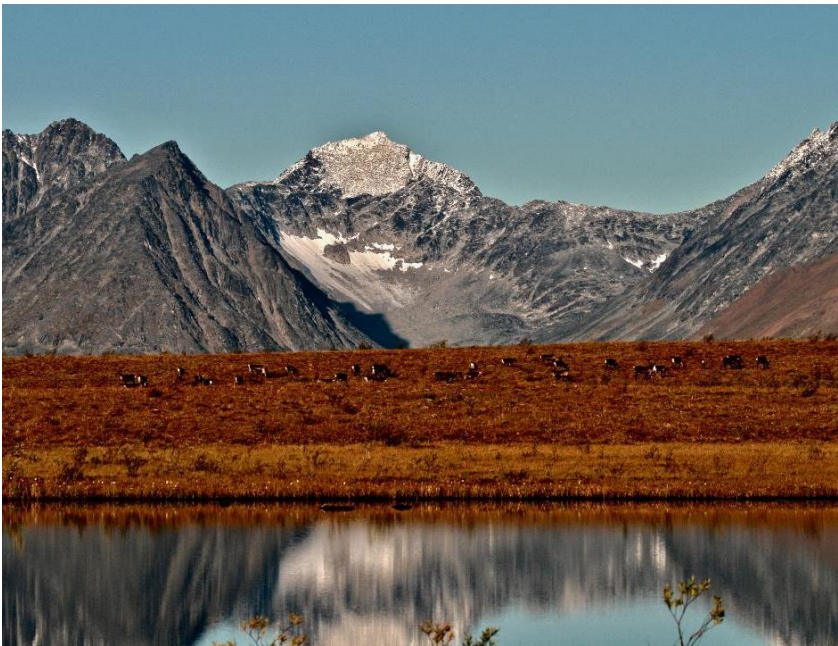
*Charlie Dick, photo: Norm Barichello*



# Programs and Strategies

The programs or jobs we need to do to keep the asset healthy and fix the threats include:

1. Development of a land-based Indigenous Guardian and Wellness Program
2. Reducing disturbance of shúhta goᑦepé / bedzih / kudzih
3. Protecting land through protected and conserved areas
4. Education and communication of Dene / Métis laws
5. Indigenous resource laws and agreements
6. Keep moving forward (evaluation and learning).



*Shúhta goᑦepé / bedzih / kudzih near Dechenla Lodge, photo: Norm Barichello; youth at the 2017 planning workshop, photo: Janet Winbourne*



## Our Programs

While there are many ways we can help shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / gūdzih and keep our Dene ts'ı́ı / Dene k'e strong and healthy, we have limitations in the number of people to do the work and constraints in funding. We have prioritized the work we need to do into six integrated programs or types of jobs that are needed to start to fix the most serious threats we face at Nío Nę P'ęné. They are:



*Creating a road map for our work, photo: Janet Winbourne*

1. Development of a land-based Indigenous Guardian and Wellness Program
2. Reducing disturbance of shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / gūdzih
3. Protecting land through protected and conserved areas
4. Education and communication of Dene / Métis laws
5. Indigenous resource laws and agreements
6. Keep moving forward (evaluation and learning).

These are the programs that we think will give us the most chance of making a real difference to shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / gūdzih hé and Dene ts'ı́ı / Dene k'e hé. There are other threats, such as climate change, which we know present problems for shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / gūdzih hé, but are more difficult for us to affect, so they are not work priorities at this time.

The programs we will start on first are described in this section. Ten year objectives and stepping stones that we will need to reach those objectives along the way are laid out in blue tables for each project; the actions or jobs that we need to get going on are provided in green tables. A summary table at the end of the section shows all of that information about our programs, ten year objectives and threats we hope to reduce together for easy reference.

It's important to recognize that this is a starting point. From here, we will develop a work program and a work plan. It's very likely that each of the programs will get more detail, and their associated actions and jobs will be changed or added to once we start the work. Our objectives may also get refined as we learn and make progress.

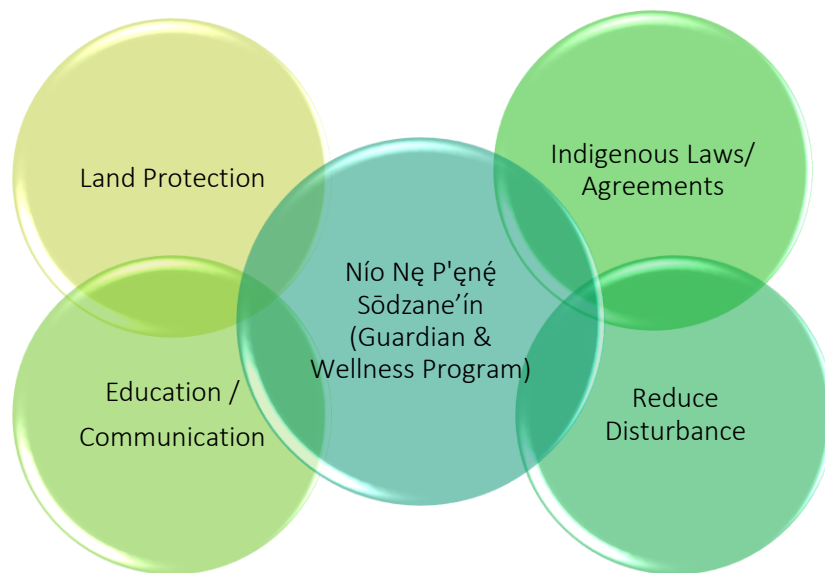


## 1. Development of a Land-based Indigenous Guardian and Wellness Program

Stepping stones				
Six months	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years	Ten Year Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guardian Program funding secured</li> <li>Dene ɬeɬa / Dene a' nīzīn document funded and done</li> <li>Guardian Program advisory committee</li> <li>Funding for wellness program secured</li> <li>Pilot check station established</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guardian Program certainty</li> <li>Finalized curriculum</li> <li>Elders better recognized and looked at as wellness workers</li> <li>Locations and advisory committees identified</li> <li>Permitting system implemented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Five Guardians employed and program recognized</li> <li>Indigenous (especially Tu ɬidlini Dena and Shúhtaot'īnē) instructors</li> <li>Trained Tu ɬidlini Dena and Shúhtaot'īnē counsellors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ten Guardians employed</li> <li>Strong culture of youth spending time with elders</li> <li>High proportion of traditional foods consumed</li> <li>Improved social wellness indicators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Twenty Indigenous Guardians at-hand</li> <li>Indigenous Guardians at three different locations</li> <li>Guardians patrol network of traditional trails and Indigenous conservation area or park</li> <li>Guardians oversee laws that outsiders and Dene have to follow</li> <li>A private Dene school</li> <li>Fluent young speakers</li> <li>Dictionary of native languages</li> <li>50% of the program graduates</li> </ul>

The Tu ɬidlini Dena Council has been working on developing an Indigenous or land guardian program for several years. We now want to develop a network of on-the-land-guardians and seek funding to support their active role in the land-based stewardship of Nío Nē P'ēñé. The intent is to train young Dene to be on the land as a means of increasing our presence in the Dechenla area, as well as monitoring and caring for the land. We would like to build on this program to ensure our youth are knowledgeable stewards and guardians. Our ten year objective is to have 20 guardians ready for work at three locations, with a healthy network of trails for them to use. In the blue table above, we have outlined the stepping stones we need to reach along the way so we meet our objectives.

Youth were a very important part of contributing to the work that was done at Dechenla in 2017. Their insights helped us realize that there is a need for continual efforts to support the health and wellness of Dene as part of our work at Nío Nē P'ēñé. Today's generations are still coping with a legacy of economic exclusion, cultural destruction, and geopolitical isolation. We see this in high rates of addiction, violence, and suicide in our communities, and we need to support the emotional, mental, and physical health of Dene to try and decrease these incidences. Our objectives also support knowledge of our First Languages, as language is key to restoring and maintaining Dene ts'ı́ı / Dene k'e hé (health of our ways of life).



It's important to note that we see the programs as all linked in some way, but mostly through an Indigenous guardian program – that is the heart of the work we would like to do at Níó Nę P'ęńę. In Canada today there are exciting developments in linkages between these programs and Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas. Through these programs, youth are learning how to be contemporary stewards of their lands.

Guardians can work in check stations, collect information, such as through wildlife field observations and surveys, harvest reports, land use activities, Indigenous knowledge, and forest fire mapping. Indigenous guardians could also help to share information about Dene ways of being on the land and respecting caribou, as part of educating hunters about Dene ɁɁa / Dene Ɂa nızın.

While wellness was identified as critical to the success of our planning and conservation work, there was not enough time during the planning workshop to fully explore what actions will help us achieve our objectives. One example of work already being done is the Sahtú regional Nę K'édíkə - Keepers of the Land pilot program sponsored by the Sahtú Dene Council. This program has explored ways of building wellness into Guardian training. We would like to see better recognition of our elders and more intergenerational activities; elders and other trained Tu Łidlini Dena and Shúhtaot'įnę counsellors will be able to assist us in our work. We also want to see increasing amounts of traditional foods being harvested, prepared and consumed. We may need the support of local advisory committees to help us choose further actions and do more work-planning on this important project area. Some of the actions we know we need to do are outlined in the green table.

Actions: Indigenous Guardian & Wellness Program			
Six months	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate funding proposals</li> <li>• Guardian Program Advisory Group</li> <li>• Pilot Guardian Program, including Dene ɁɁa / Dene a' nızın document</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training resources and manuals underway</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bush uniform / swag for Guardians</li> <li>• Regular (annual) wellness camps</li> </ul>	(to be determined)

## 2. Reducing disturbance of shúhta goʔepé / bedzih / gūdzih

Six months	Stepping stones			
	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years	Ten Year Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decision made regarding a joint Tu ʔidlini and Sahtú permitting system for visitor harvesting</li> <li>Sensitive areas and periods identified</li> <li>Review treaty harvesting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sensitive areas and periods are identified within areas of interest</li> <li>Accommodation of Tu ʔidlini Dena and Shúhtaot'Iné interests and concerns in NWT resident hunting regulations</li> <li>Implementation of resolution re: Doi T'oh Management Plan and ATVs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GNWT/YG regulations for ATV use in place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum disturbance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quietness</li> </ul>

We know that having quiet places is important to shúhta goʔepé / bedzih / gūdzih, especially when they have their young with them. Right now, they are being disturbed over many parts of their range, and we worry this is going to get worse. During hunting season, quads or ATVs go all over the landscape. While there are not many roads at K'á Tá now, more mines and roads associated with mines may be coming to the planning area. There are also helicopters and planes associated with outfitted hunting and mining activity that we have concerns about. Our ten year objective is to ensure quietness for shúhta goʔepé / bedzih / gūdzih.

We may need to talk about controlling access to parts of Nío Nę P'ęné. One problem is hunters may not be aware of overlapping Sahtú / Tu ʔidlini jurisdictions; interim measures, proper signage, and Land Corporations of the Tulít'a District can all help control private lands access. Interim protection measures for Doi T'oh Territorial Park / CANOL Heritage Trail can protect lands within the park and trail corridor. Outside of parks and private lands we have less control, but recent actions by the Ross River Dena Council to issue permits to visiting harvesters is one approach that has had some success.

Actions: Reducing disturbance			
Six months	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Letter writing</li> <li>Develop messages and get funding for signs</li> <li>Share information across borders</li> <li>Compile data/TK and summarize gaps</li> <li>Consultation</li> <li>Review NWT resident hunting regulations, propose policy and regulation amendments that reflect current knowledge, submit to minister</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ATV signs up</li> <li>Draft information pamphlet</li> <li>Final pamphlet distributed</li> <li>Quad trails management</li> <li>Formal submission to SLUPB</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Link to Guardian Program</li> <li>Manage helicopter use</li> </ul>	(to be determined)





### We need to make the land peaceful again – Frederick Andrew

I know from my elders, especially from my dad, Fred Andrew, that they finally settled in Tulít'a maybe in the early 1930s or '40s. Back then people were so peaceful with animals. The Creator put everything here for us to rely on and live life in a peaceful way.

Pretty soon we had 'móla' come around – when I say 'móla' I mean white people – into our territory, especially in mining, then oil and gas exploration. Our territory was full of riches with minerals such as diamonds, gold, gas and oil. Because of that, slowly our animals are declining, caribou especially.

People rely on caribou; caribou have their own migration route over into NWT, Yukon, and back and forth for us to live on it generation after generation. But the animals are really peaceful animals and they can't stand the noise or the smell of diesel, oil, and gas. Choppers are number one with impacts, especially in the month of May when all the animals are calving in that month. When you hear a chopper flying, you can hear it for at least 20 or 25 miles and you can feel the ground tremble under you, that's the impact. That's a big impact of the mining.

Now that we have more mining going on in our territory, it's closing in on both sides and we don't do anything about it. There is going to be more impacts and less and less caribou. They are going to go away where there is less noise. We will have a concern in the other territory too because there is a lot of drilling going on from Norman Wells to Tulít'a and to Shúhta. It's getting worse and worse. Money is so powerful. We need to control the money because that's where all the negative stuff comes in, railroads and mining companies. If we really want to do something about our land, we have to talk about how we are going to handle this and how we are going to deal with it.

*Frederick Andrew hiking on the Canol Road, photo: Janet Winbourne*

### 3. Protecting land through protected and conserved areas

Stepping stones				
Six months	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years	Ten Year Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amendments to SLUP for Sahtú portion of K'á Tá traditional area and conservation zoning of important nę káravé / kayeh left out of Nááts'įhch'oh are on SLUPB agenda</li> <li>Area defined for the Tu ǀdlini and Nío Nę P'ęnę Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area (TNNP IPCA) and proposal submitted to federal and territorial governments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New resident harvest regulations as a precautionary measure</li> <li>Establish partnership with GNWT to include proposed TNNP IPCA in scope of renewed strategy for conservation network planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>'State of Knowledge' Compilation for TK and Science</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TNNP IPCA is established with no industrial development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No mining in K'á Tá traditional area</li> <li>World Heritage Designation for the planning area</li> </ul>

To have shúhta goǵepę / bedzih / gǔdzih in our future, we need to ensure there is enough good nę káravé / kayeh available. We can do this by taking advantage of regional planning opportunities, through cooperation with Parks Canada and the Nááts'įhch'oh Management Committee, and through national and international recognition. Our ten year objectives are to create a protected area with no industrial development, and possibly get a World Heritage Designation for the planning area.

During 2018 community engagements, Tu ǀdlini Dena agreed on a resolution to move forward with the entire Ross River Group Trapline as well as some additional areas as an IPCA. The five year review of the Sahtú Land Use Plan is another opportunity to attain land protection for important caribou habitat – including calving grounds – that was excluded from Nááts'įhch'oh Park. We will also make recommendations to the Minister for regulating resident harvesting in certain areas.

Actions: Protecting land through protected and conserved areas			
Six months	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Request SLUP amendments</li> <li>SRRB: hire community conservation planner</li> <li>Meet with SLUPB and decision-makers for feedback</li> <li>Funding proposed to develop IPCA submissions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribute to delineating IPCA principles for Nío Nę P'ęnę</li> <li>Submit proposed amendments to SLUP for Sahtú portion of K'á Tá and important nę káravé / kayeh left out of Nááts'įhch'oh</li> <li>Build/present/communicate the case for TNNP IPCA</li> <li>Complete mapping to define area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify special areas and ways of protecting them</li> <li>TK Study to bring together key areas of knowledge</li> </ul>	(to be determined)

#### 4. Education and communication of Dene / Métis laws

Stepping stones				
Six months	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years	Ten Year Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public awareness of Indigenous permitting / harvest initiative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signs are up and pamphlet drafted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GNWT hunter education program is fully functional, training resident hunters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communities are running their own on-the-land programs and cross-cultural programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Everyone following Dene / Métis laws</li> <li>Celebration!</li> </ul>

We think it's important to start to spread information about Dene laws and traditions for respectful behaviour on the land as soon as possible. We need to share our Dene ɛ́ɛ́ / Dene ɛ́a nızın to educate industry, hunters, and our own youth, as we know it is our responsibility to look after the land, the water and the animals as best we can. Our ten year objective is to have all hunters following Dene/Métis laws when they are on our lands. Once that happens we can have a celebration!

In Dene tradition, it is inappropriate to waste meat, to harass animals or speak poorly of them. We let the leaders of the migration pass, we try to harvest a good balance of bulls and cows and not only go for the big bulls as trophies. We have many different ways of respecting shúhta goḡepé / bedzih / gūdzih, and sharing our practices with others doesn't have to be complicated – we can start with signs, pamphlets, and talking to people that want to come to the area. We believe that it is when Dene ᓃᓃᓃ / Dene ᓃᓃᓃᓃᓃᓃ is not practiced that shúhta goḡepé / bedzih / gūdzih choose to leave an area.

Our goal with education and communication programming is that we would like to see non-Dene follow our traditions when they hunt in Nío Nę P'ęng; we believe that once people understand our laws and traditions their behaviour will change for the better. We may be able to coordinate with territorial governments to help shape hunter education programs and make sure we reach as many hunters as possible. We are also looking towards a media campaign to get the word out. We could also liaise with governments to use education and communication to improve harvest reporting in the area.

Actions: Education and communication of Dene/Métis laws			
Six months	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community discussions re: signage and pamphlets</li> <li>Advertisement regarding Tu łidlini permitting / harvest initiative</li> <li>Explore funding for signage</li> <li>Acquire information about YG hunter education course</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore funding options for on the land programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure funding for on the land programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Media campaign</li> </ul>

Actions: Education and communication of Dene/Métis laws			
Six months	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community discussions re: signage and pamphlets</li> <li>Advertisement regarding Tu Łidlini permitting / harvest initiative</li> <li>Explore funding for signage</li> <li>Acquire information about YG hunter education course in Tu Łidlini</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore funding options for on the land programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure funding for on the land programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Media campaign</li> </ul>



## 5. Indigenous laws and agreements

Stepping stones				
Six months	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years	Ten Year Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding acquired for support position</li> <li>Suitable assistant identified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Templates for agreements re: share of benefits and environmental protection and Dene/Métis interests are adopted</li> <li>Indigenous notification for all exploration activities is required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultation on proposed Indigenous laws</li> <li>Agreements being developed to reflect the Dene interests template</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Laws are developed and enacted to regulate mineral exploration and development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mine and exploration impacts are minimized</li> </ul>

In Shúhta Dene tradition, relationships with the land are founded on spiritual beliefs which were the basis of sacred laws or Dene ɁəɁ / Dene Ɂə nɁɁɁ – these laws form our code of conduct and tell us how we are to treat the land and interact with the environment and with each other. It is essential that natural resources be developed in compliance with these sacred laws. The Kaska Nation has been developing Indigenous Resource Laws that could be applied to mining companies, serving as guidelines for how companies should behave in the Nío Nę P'ęné area. In ten years' time we would like to see mining and exploration activities follow our laws so that impacts on shúhta goɁepé / bedzih / gūdzih are minimized. This will be a big undertaking, so one of our first actions will be to find funding and hire someone to help with this program area.

Actions: Indigenous laws and agreements			
Six months	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hire someone to help</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop draft proposed Indigenous laws</li> <li>Develop conformity requirements for SLUP</li> <li>Build a website to build awareness of biocultural consideration in area</li> <li>Require Indigenous notification for exploration activities</li> <li>Establish Indigenous Knowledge Committee</li> <li>Annual review of NWT resident hunting regulations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100 Years of treaty celebration (2021)</li> <li>Learning exchange for big picture and to see how other communities are reaching their goals</li> <li>Consultation on proposed Indigenous laws</li> </ul>	(to be determined)

## 6. Keep moving forward.

Stepping stones				
Six months	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years	Ten Year Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All key players in planning identified and collaborative relationships with partners built</li> <li>• Working group meetings held on specific questions and topics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Status meeting to review progress is held</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful implementation of at least half the plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful implementation of at least 75% of the plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full collaboration between all governments / full implementation of the plan</li> </ul>

The planning work that we did at Dechenla in 2017 was a big achievement, but it is important that we keep moving forward if we hope to achieve our vision. Our ten year vision is bold – we want to see full collaboration between all levels of government and full implementation of the plan by 2027. To get there, we need to make sure we reach each of the stepping stones along the way.

Throughout all stages of our planning work we need to continually engage partners and foster discussions amongst the affected communities in the Yukon and Northwest Territories to build recognition of our work and find support. It is important that we maintain good relationships between our planning/working groups and the Shúhta Dene who rely on and care about the area. We also need to document our effort and accomplishments and identify any potential road blocks to our work. This may involve looking into places where legislation and/or mandates do not align well, and spending some time trouble-shooting these issues. While we still need to refine the necessary jobs later a little further down the road, throughout all stages of work we plan on ongoing community consultation as an important part of our process. This is a new process for us and we will continue to learn as we go. A more detailed plan for implementation and improvement is included in the next section.

If you don't look after the land it will slowly go away. I'm very emotional about this; we've got to find a way to move forward. Our people always did that – every time they struggled to find a way, they'd get together like this.  
Leon Andrew

Actions: Keep moving forward			
Six months	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community to community discussions</li> <li>• Identify road blocks and solutions</li> <li>• Document successes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community consultation (ongoing and throughout)</li> <li>• Conduct evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and update evaluation system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five year review and plan update</li> </ul>

# Learning as We Go

*Learning as we go is about monitoring our work, reporting, and improving our process along the way. We see several main parts to this:*

- *Implementing the plan*
- *Adapting the plan and reporting*
- *Our monitoring program*
- *Adapting the plan and reporting*
- *Research*



*Fall colours at K'á Tá, photo: Josh Barichello; 2017 planning workshop at Dechenla Lodge, photo: Janet Winbourne*



“Learning as we go” involves monitoring, reporting, adapting, and improving our work to give us the greatest chance of success. What we really need to know is: *Are our strategies working?* To answer this question, we will periodically collect information on a number measures or indicators that can help us know three things:

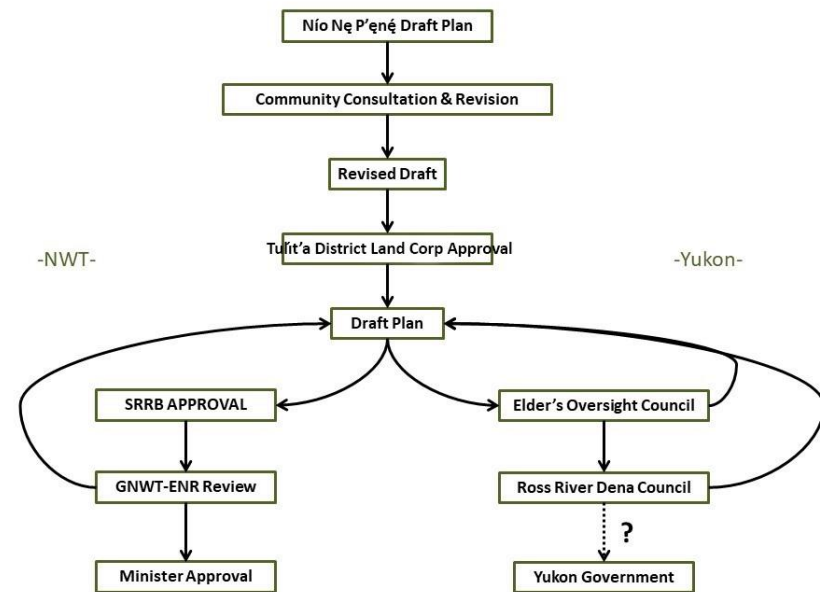
1. How well are we using or implementing the plan?
2. Are our strategies reducing threats?
3. Is the health of shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / gūdzih and Dene ts'ı́ı / Dene k'e improving?

## Implementing the plan

Parts of the plan will require formal approvals by the territorial governments. It will likely require a series of steps to get that approval and further implement the plan.

We have already accomplished a lot by preparing this draft plan. At a Joint Leadership Meeting in Tu ı́dlini (June 2019) Sahtú delegates and members of the Tu ı́dlini Dena Council and Elder's Council made a consensus resolution that the plan was ready to be put forward for decision by community leaders. A second resolution supported immediate actions to address acute conservation concerns about the impacts of visiting harvesters and all-terrain vehicles on shúhta goᑭepé / bedzih / gūdzih and Dene ts'ı́ı / Dene k'e in the K'á Tă area.

Many other actions are also underway; the “*Shúhta Goᑭepé/Bedzih/Gūdzih (Mountain Caribou) Resolution*” included in **Appendix G** outlines some we will focus on in the near future. Still, we will need continuity and perseverance to achieve our vision. The role of our Working Group – made up of Tu ı́dlini Dena, Métis and Shúhtaot'ı́ne representatives – is to oversee plan implementation and ensure we keep moving forward. A technical working group supports the process; they



Flow diagram showing expected steps in plan approval and implementation

receive direction from the Working Group to carry out specific tasks. We need to get together regularly, review and adapt our work and make sure that our communities and leaders are kept aware of what we are doing.

## Capacity

At all times we will want to ensure we have the capacity to meet our objectives and ensure the plan's success. There are strengths we already have and some areas where we need to do work:

- **Individual leadership** – we have strong leaders in each community, but will need to have good coordination between communities. We will have assistance of the SRRB Community Conservation Planner to do this work.
- **Multi-disciplinary team** – we have many people with a lot of different, complementary skill sets
- **Organizational support** – while we have some support, we will need to do additional work with Sahtú land corporations and other collaborators and partners
- **Funding** – there is some existing funding for certain activities in place or that we have reasonable hope of getting:
  - The SRRB has funding for staffing, wildlife studies/projects, some ENR-allocated funding, and some funding will be coming to the Renewable Resources Councils
  - Nature United (formerly The Nature Conservancy – Canada) may be able to provide some support for particular projects (e.g., the guardian program)
  - Lead in to a position for multi-year support
  - Canadian government funding for Indigenous guardian programs and proposed Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas
- **Community support** – we have some early community support, but will need to continually work on keeping communities informed to achieve our vision throughout the process of approval and implementation
- **Legal framework** – while we do have legal frameworks, because our work covers two territories laws are not coordinated well and there are some gaps we need to work on.

As our work progresses, we intend to continue to build capacity.

## Our monitoring program

It's important to learn from our work as we move forward. We will start by monitoring our actions to make sure that we are doing our jobs. We will then need to monitor our objectives to make sure we are accomplishing the stepping stones along the way. We spent some time at the Dechenla workshop talking about the types of things we should keep an eye on to monitor progress – these will be the markers or indicators we will start with. As we continue to implement the plan it is likely these will be adjusted.

### Monitoring indicators

Monitoring indicators should help us measure if shúhta goṛepé / bedzih / gūdzih and Dene ts'ı́ı / Dene k'e are getting healthier. Our initial ideas for some monitoring indicators are included in the following table, but we will need to test our methods to find out which work.

Indicator (shúhta goṛepé / bedzih / gūdzih hé)	Methods	Comments
Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic records (1986 study / TK)</li> <li>• Baseline - TK Study to get baseline, set up what has happened, what was there</li> <li>• Numbers</li> </ul>	Get info from outfitters and exploration activities Use non-invasive techniques
Nę káravé / kayeh / Climate / Caribou	Annual meeting (September) of what people have seen	Invite outfitters to meetings / communities
Presence of other species to understand whole system	Count moose, wolves, bears	Guardians
Individuals	Monitoring kits – back & kidney fat, contaminants, blood/faecal (parasites), hide (ticks)	
Herd composition	Cow:calf, bull:cow ratios	
Quality of nę káravé / kayeh	Determine disturbance footprint (remote sensing)	Includes fire monitoring and ground-truthing
People who went through Guardian program	Success – follow-up “after care” maintaining relationships	
Participation – Dene on the land	Count participation in plan activities	
Employed guardians	Count employment	



Indicator (Dene ts'ı́ı́ / Dene k'e hé)	Methods	Comments
Wellbeing	Kinds of program offerings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # applicants</li> <li>• # repeats</li> <li>• Program evaluation</li> </ul>	Program participants – #addictions, violence, suicide, mental health
Language	Level of teaching / # fluent speakers / # readers / writers	
Respectful hunting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # observations of poor practices</li> <li>• # caribou harvested</li> </ul>	Led by Guardians
Food sovereignty / sharing	Annual meeting to discuss harvest	
Sharing our way of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # and types of cross-cultural programs</li> <li>• # guided experiences</li> <li>• # clients</li> </ul>	
Balanced / mixed economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # hunters</li> <li>• \$ earned through on the land activities</li> <li>• # different enterprises</li> <li>• Unemployment stats</li> </ul>	
Sense of control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rapid appraisal and meeting to discuss</li> </ul>	

## *Adapting the plan and reporting*

Part of 'Learning as we go' involves adapting the plan as necessary. With regular Working Group meetings (e.g., once per year in person and every few months by teleconference), plus meetings of the technical and advisory committees, we will be able to keep a close watch on our actions and strategies and adjust them as we learn more about what works and doesn't work. We expect there will be a regular review of results from research and monitoring, and that information will help us know what we need to do next. We will also regularly review the plan to see if everything in it is still the right way to go about reaching our vision.

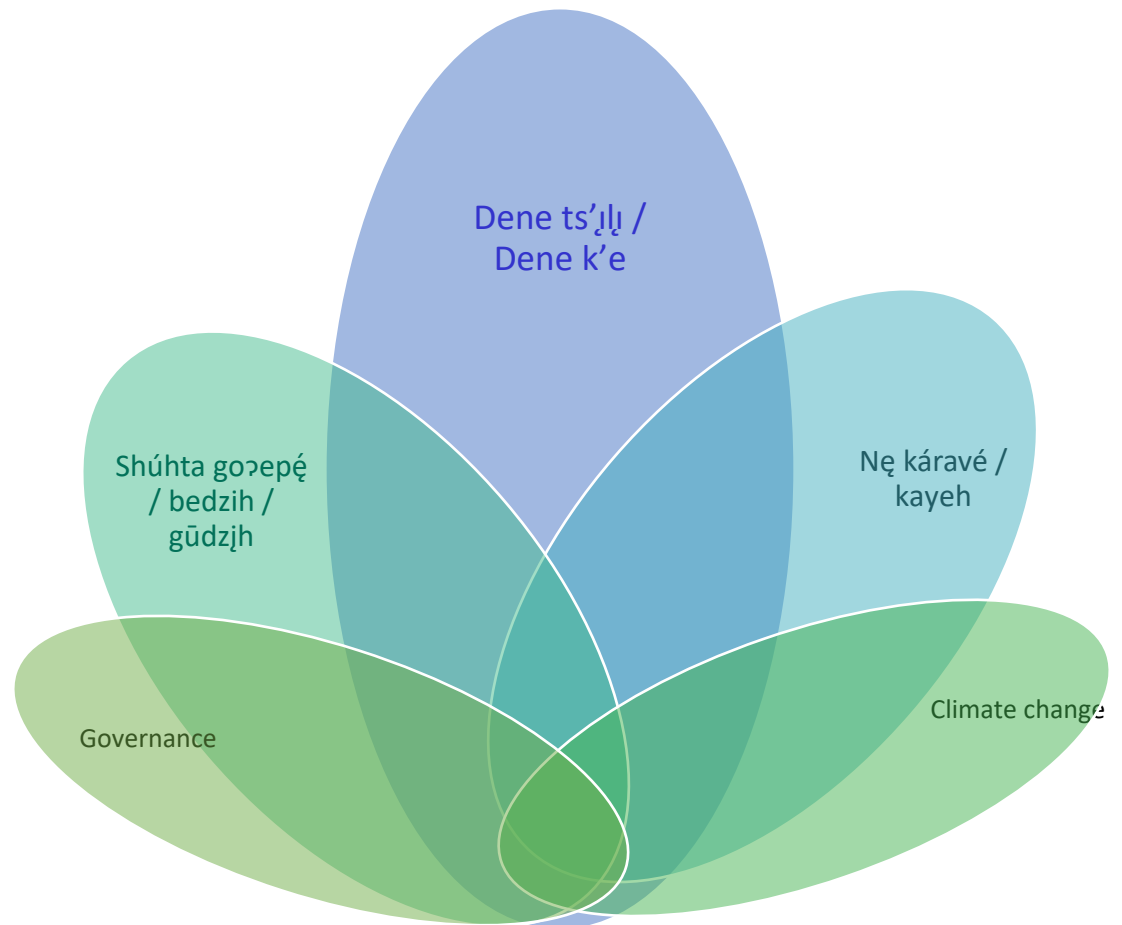
It will also be important to report on our results – we will want to communicate information about research, monitoring, and actions to funders, communities, and our leadership. We will periodically provide reports on our activities and results, including any recommendations.

## Research

There are many potential research topics and areas of interest where we would like to have more information or more of our knowledge documented about Níó Nę P'ęné. Because our research agenda is driven by community interests and needs, we have chosen the following three main interrelated elements as our research priorities:

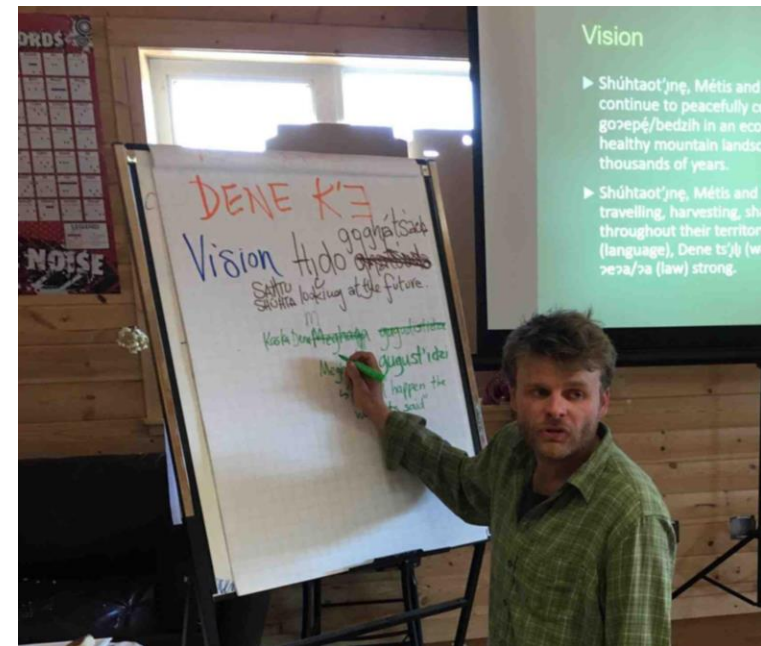
- Dene ts'ı́ı / Dene k'e (Dene ways of life)
- Shúhta goǰepé / bedzih / gūdzih (Mountain caribou)
- Nę káravé / kayeh (Habitat)

Each of these three research areas encompasses many other specific sub-areas or topics, such as climate change and governance, as indicated in the diagram. Research outcomes will provide further information and support for the types of change we want to see effected in policy, and ultimately make a difference in the lives of Shúhtaot'įnę, Métis, Tu Łidlini Dena, shúhta goǰepé / bedzih / gūdzih and on the land.



# Glossary

People who speak Shúhtaot'įnę, Shúhta Dene and Kaska Dena have all been involved in the Níó Nę P'ęnę planning work. We know we still have a lot more work to do, but hope to be able to include more Dene names, terms, and concepts in the plan in the future, with good representation of each dialect. Indigenous language is important in the plan because it is a reflection of the Dene concepts that are essential to people in thinking about their relationships with shúhta goṛepé / bedzih / kudzih and Shúhta Dene nęné / kayeh (Mountain Dene homeland).



Elders and language experts are key to interpreting important aspects of the plan in Shúhta Dene and Kaska Dena and Shúhtaot'įnę, Tu ǎdlini engagement, photo: Robby Dick.



Shúhtaot'Iné	Shúhta Dene <sup>6</sup>	Kaska Dena	English
ʔeʔa		A' nīzīn	Sacred laws or code of ethics, also means respect in Kaska Dena
ʔehdzo Got'Iné Gotsé Nákedı			Helpers of the ʔehdzo got'Iné - hunters, harvesters, trappers (Sahtú Renewable Resources Board)
ʔehtsq Pıdakale			White Haired Grandmother
ʔeʔets'erıchá		A' yeh gus'an	Respect (for each other)
ʔeʔexé ʔeghálats'eda		Auyah / Guyeh kadzudedali	Working together
ʔqhdakə kakerəđı hıdó Dene gha shúhta epé k'óodı gha			The elders have predicted that in the future the caribou will remain in the mountains for Dene
Begháré			
Bets'erıchá		A' yeh gus'an	Respect (for the caribou)
		Debē Dena	Sheep Person
Dechılq	Dechılq	Dechenla	The land at the end of or at the edge of the sticks, spruce trees or treeline
Dene gha bet'aréʔa		Met'ądzı gıdzadehı	Asset/value interpretations: we're going to need it in the future (S); we're walking together with the values passed on (KD)
Dene ts'ılı		Dene k'e	Dene past, present and future language and ways of life, including Métis
Dırınéné			This land – includes all relationships among living and non-living beings
Hé			Health
Hıdó gogháts'aeda	Hıdó gogháts'aeda	Guyeh gugúdist'ı	Our eyes and our minds are open to what will come; looking at the future / vision

<sup>6</sup> Shúhtaot'Iné is the language used by Mountain Dene people in Tulı́t'a; Shúhta Dene and Kaska Dena are spoken by people from Tu ı́dlini (the community of Ross River, YT).

Shúhtaot'İne	Shúhta Dene <sup>6</sup>	Kaska Dena	English
Kədə		K'e	Language / life
		Gucho Ka-Ka Dee	Our Elders' Instructions (Tu Łidlini land use plan)
		Łuten	Our trail
Máhsı		Souga Sėnlá	Thank you
		Mesgā Dena	Raven Person
Mıcho	Mbedzi cho	Gūdźih cho	Mega bulls or very large male caribou
Móla			Caucasian people
Nałani			
Narehłá		Gutena	Our trail
Na-Dene			
Nę káravé		Kayeh	Habitat / country / land (including water)
Nėné		Kayeh	Land, homeland, territory
Nėwhehtsİne			Spirituality and spiritual practices
		Guk'eh	Past, present and future
Nío Nę P'ėné			Backbone
		Nōgha Dena	Wolverine Person
Shúhta	Shúhta		Mountain
Shúhta Gołepé	Bedzih	Gūdźih	Mountain caribou
Shúhtaot'İne			Mountain Dene (in Tulít'a dialect)
Yamółzha		Súgiya	Yamárahyah (Dehcho)
		Tl'ule setl'uni	A dividing line; high points of land or mountains, where water divides or goes two different ways. Also used to describe area around Dechenla

# Appendix A: Workshop and meeting participants

Attempts have been made to keep track of and acknowledge everyone that has participated in the Níó Nę P'ęné planning work since 2014, however it is possible that additional people were present and their presence not documented. This appendix lists the individuals and organizations that were recorded as being in attendance at each major planning meeting, with the most recent meetings presented first.

## 2019 Níó Nę P'ęné Joint Leadership Meeting: review of Plan Version 2 and recent actions

*Meeting of Tulít'a and Tłegóhł (Norman Wells) Shúhtaot'įnę, Métis and Tu Łidlini Dena Leadership, Tu Łidlini, NWT – June 13-14, 2019*

**Organizations represented:** ʔehdzo Got'įnę Gots'ę Nákedí (Sahtú Renewable Resources Board), Department of Environment – Yukon Government, Indigenous Leadership Initiative, Níó Nę P'ęné Working Group, Norman Wells Renewable Resources Council, Norman Wells Land Corporation, Tu Łidlini (Ross River) Dena Council, Tulít'a ʔehdzo Got'įnę (Renewable Resources Council), Tulít'a Dene Band, Tulít'a Land Corporation, Sahtú Nę K'édí Ke – Keepers of the Land Initiative

**People:** Alexandra Francis, Amos Dick, Annie Jepp, Annie Ladue, Brenda Menacho, Clifford Mcleod, Danny Yakeleya, David Etchinelle Jr., David Etchinelle Sr., Deborah Simmons, Dillon Loblaw, Dorothy Dick, Dorothy John, Dorris Bob, Edna Deerunner, Eileen Johnny, Ethel Blondin-Andrew, Frank Johnny, Frederick Andrew, Gordon Peter, Grady Sterriah, Ida Johnny, Jack Caesar, James McLay, Jaryd Dueling, Jaryd McDonald, Jerry Ladue, Joe Glada, John Acklack, John Atkinson, Johnny McDonald, Jonas Peter, Jonathan Ayali, Josh Barichello, Kathlene Suza, Kyanna Lennie Dolphus, Leon Andrew, Louie Tommy, Mary Dick, Mary Sidney, Michael Neyelle, Norm Sterriah, Norman Barichello, Pat Atkinson, Pat Smith, Peter Etzel, Robertson Dick, Roderick Clement, Terry Ladue, Theresa Robinson, Verna Nukon

## 2019 Working Group Meeting: review of Version 2 and implementation work-planning

*Níó Nę P'ęné Working Group Meeting, Tulít'a, NWT – March 26-28, 2019*

**Organizations represented:** ʔehdzo Got'įnę Gots'ę Nákedí (Sahtú Renewable Resources Board), GNWT Environment and Natural Resources, Norman Wells ʔehdzo Got'įnę, Tu Łidlini Dena Council, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Parks Canada Agency,

Tulít'a ʔehdzo Got'Inę, Nío Nę P'ęnę Working Group, Sahtú Nę K'ádí Ke – Keepers of the Land Initiative, ALCES (A Landscape Cumulative Effects System/Headwater Group)

**People:** Blair Kennedy, Blake Andrew, Deborah Simmons, Dorothy Dick, Dorothy John, Doug Yalle, Faye d'Eon-Eggerton, Frank Andrew, Fredrick Andrew, Gordon Yakeleya, Helen McCauley, Ivan Antoine, Jaryd Macdonald, Joe Bernarde, John Macdonald, Jonathan Ayah, Josh Barichello, Kirsten Jensen, Kyanna Lennie Dolphus, Laani Uunila, Leon Andrew, Micheline Manseau, Norman Andrew, Ricky Andrew, Robby Dick, Stephanie Behrens, Tess Espy, Thom Stubbs, Trevor Niditchie, Tyrell Owiy

## *2018 Community Engagement to review the draft Nío Nę P'ęnę plan:*

### *Norman Wells Community Meeting – March 12, 2018*

**Organizations represented:** ʔehdzo Got'Inę Gots'ę Nákedí (Sahtú Renewable Resources Board), GNWT Environment and Natural Resources, Norman Wells ʔehdzo Got'Inę

**People:** Cathy Pope, Deborah Simmons, Harold McDonald, Jaryd McDonald, Johnny McDonald, Kathleen McDonald, Kristen Yakeleya, Laurel McDonald, Leon Andrew, Lisa McDonald, Margaret McDonald, Rhea McDonald (by phone), Ruby McDonald, Stephanie Behrens, Violet Doolittle

### *Tulít'a Community Meeting – March 26-27, 2018*

**Organizations represented:** Tulít'a District Land Corporation, Tulít'a Dene Band, Tulít'a ʔehdzo Got'Inę, Nááts'ihch'oh National Park Reserve (NNPR), ʔehdzo Got'Inę Gots'ę Nákedí (Sahtú Renewable Resources Board)

**People:** Andy Horassi, Clarence Campbell, Danny Yakeleya, David Etchinelle, David Menacho, Deborah Simmons, Doug Yallee, Faye D'Eon, Freddie Clement, Gordon Yakeleya, Jack Horassi, Joe Bernarde, Jonas Peter, Laani Uunila, Marjorie (Cecile) Hetchinelle Ayha, Norman Andrew, Richard McCauley, Ricky Andrew, Robert Horassi, Roderick Clement, Roderick Yallee, Theresa Etchinelle, Trevor Niditchie, William Horassi

### *Norman Wells / Tulít'a Mountain Stewardship Joint Meeting – March 28-29, 2018*

**Organizations represented:** Tulít'a District Land Corporation, Tulít'a Dene Band, Tulít'a ʔehdzo Got'Inę, Nááts'ihch'oh National Park Reserve (NNPR), ʔehdzo Got'Inę Gots'ę Nákedí (Sahtú Renewable Resources Board), Norman Wells ʔehdzo Got'Inę, Norman Wells Land Corporation



**People:** Amanda Mulyk, Andy Horassi, Bruce LeBlue, Clarence Campbell, Danny Yakeleya, David Etchinelle, David Menacho, Deborah Simmons, Delanie McDonald, Doug Yallee, Faye D'Eon, Freddie Clement, Gordon Yakeleya, Jack Horassi, Joe Bernarde, Jonas Peter, Laani Uunila, Lisa McDonald, Marjorie (Cecile) Hetchinelle Ayha, Norman Andrew, Richard McCauley, Ricky Andrew, Robert Horassi, Roderick Clement, Roderick Yallee, Ruby McDonald, Theresa Etchinelle, Trevor Niditchie, William Horassi

*Tu Łidlini Community Meeting – May 9-11, 2018*

**Organizations represented:** Tu Łidlini Dena Council and Elders Council, ʔehdzo Got'Inę Gots'ę Nákedı (Sahtú Renewable Resources Board), Department of Environment – Yukon Government

**People:** Alexandra Francis, Alfred Charlie, Amber Etzel, Amos Dick, Deborah Simmons, Derrick Redies, Edna Deerunner, Eileen Johnny, Frank Shorty, Gordon Peter, Kathlene Suza, Grace Tom, Grady Sterriah, Harry Atkinson, Harold Smith, Ida Johnny, Jack Caesar, James Mclay, John Acklack Sr., Josh Barichello, Juliane Dick, Keifer Sterriah, Leon Andrew, Mary Sidney, Norman Barichello, Norman Sterriah, Pam Bob, Percy Risby, Phillip Atkinson, Robby Dick, Robertson Dick, Sally Purdy, Sarah Jonnie, Terry Ladue, Testloa Smith, Theresa Robinson, Vera Sterriah, William Atkinson

*2017 Joint Mountain Caribou Workshop, Dechenla Lodge, NT, July 26-August 2:*

**Organizations represented:** Parks Canada Agency, Tu Łidlini Dena Council and Elders Council, ʔehdzo Got'Inę Gots'ę Nákedı (Sahtú Renewable Resources Board), Yukon Environment, GNWT Environment and Natural Resources, Tulít'a ʔehdzo Got'Inę, Norman Wells ʔehdzo Got'Inę, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Conservation Coaches Network, Tides Canada, TNC Canada, Environment and Climate Change Canada

**People:** Alexandra Francis, Amber Etzel, Amos Dick, Audrey Steedman, Cheyanne Kochon, Deborah Simmons, Dennis Menacho, Dorothy Dick, Dorothy John, Frederick Andrew, Gordon Peter, Heather Sayine-Crawford, Jack Caesar, Joanne Krutko, Josh Barichello, Karen Clyde, Leon Andrew, Maylene Andrew, Micheline Manseau, Michael Neyelle, Norm Barichello, Rhea McDonald, Robbie Dick, Robert Kochon, Robyn McLeod, Stephen Ellis, Stuart Cowell Tee Lim, Theresa Blanco, Tracey Williams, Tyrell Kochon

**Also in attendance:** Barbara Gale, Hawke Williams Ellis, Janet Winbourne, Janice Sturko, Kestrel Williams Ellis, Kite Williams Ellis, Cowboy (Tyrell) Olie

## *2016 Joint Mountain Caribou Meeting, Tulít'a, NT, August 31 – September 2:*

**Organizations represented:** Parks Canada Agency, ʔehdzo Got'ıne Gots'ę Nákedı (Sahtú Renewable Resources Board), GNWT Environment and Natural Resources, Tulít'a ʔehdzo Got'ıne, Norman Wells ʔehdzo Got'ıne, Tulít'a Dene Band, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Tu Łidlini Dena Council (Day 3 only, by Skype)

**People:** Deborah Simmons, David Etchinelle, Faye d'Eon, Frank Andrew, Frederick Andrew, Gabe Horassi, Heather Sayine-Crawford, Jan Adamczewski, Joe Bernarde, Josh Barichello, Kris Brekke, Laani Uunila, Leon Andrew, Norman Sterriah, Rhea McDonald, Rocky Norwegian, Ruby McDonald, Tee Lim

**Also in attendance:** Angela Bernarde, Janet Winbourne, Jaryd McDonald, Jean Polfus, Joe Hanlon, Rocky Norwegian Jr., Royden MacCauley

## *2014 Joint Mountain Caribou Meeting, Tu Łidlini (Ross River), YT, July 23 – 24:*

**Organizations represented:** Tu Łidlini Dena Council and Elders Council, Norman Wells ʔehdzo Got'ıne, Tulít'a ʔehdzo Got'ıne, ʔehdzo Got'ıne Gots'ę Nákedı (Sahtú Renewable Resources Board), Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, GNWT Environment and Natural Resources

**People:** Brian Ladue, Camilla Rabisca, Candace DeCoste, Deborah Simmons, Edward Oudzi, Frederick Andrew, Gordon Peter, Heather Sayine-Crawford, Josh Barichello, Leon Andrew, Marie Skidmore, Mary Maje, Michael Neyelle, Norman Barichello, Norman Sterriah, William Atkinson, William Horassi

**Also in attendance:** Amos Dick, Annie Jepp, Barbara Gale, Bruce Williams, Cecil Jackson, Charlie Dick, Cynthia Dick, Darrin Dawson, Dennis Menacho, Dennis Shorty, Doreen Etzel, Dorothy Dick, Eileen Johnny, Elvis Presley, Florence Etzel, George Smith, Gerald Dickson, Grace Johnny, Grady Sterriah, Jack Caesar, James Dick, Jenny Caesar, Jerry Dickson, Jessie Peter, Joe Glada, John Acklack, Juliane Glada, Lash Ladue, Linda Johnny, Lloyd Caesar, Louie Tommy, Maclary Acklack, May Bolton, Phillip Atkinson, Robert Mason Dick, Robertson Dick, Rose Charlie, Sheila Johnny, Tootsie Charlie, Verna Nukon

## *Appendix B: Sahtú Land Use Planning Board Conservation Zone 40 – Shúhtagot'ine Néné (Mountain Dene Land)*

40. Shúhtagot'ine Néné (Mountain Dene Land)		
Designation	Conservation Zone	
CRs & Prohibitions	CRs# 1-14 Prohibition: Bulk water removal; Mining E&D; Oil and Gas E&D; Power Development; Forestry; Quarrying	
Map #	10	
Area	8,982 km <sup>2</sup>	
Land Ownership	Sahtú Subsurface Ownership	Sahtú Surface Ownership
	-	14.7%
Location & Boundaries	Shúhtagot'ine Néné lies within the Mackenzie Mountains. It has two sections. One includes the northern portion of the Canol Trail and Dodo Canyon. The other encompasses parts of the Keele River (Begáádeé), Redstone and Ravens Throat Rivers (Tátsók'áádeé), Drum Lake, June Lake and Caribou Flats.	

### Reason for Establishment

Shúhtagot'ine Néné, or Mountain Dene Land is ecologically and culturally important to the Dene and Metis from Norman Wells and Tulita. The Mountain Dene used traditional trails travelling mostly up the Keele River in the summer to hunt moose, make moose skin boats and to return from the mountains in the fall.<sup>7</sup> Important wildlife habitats support a number of species as well as hunting, trapping and fishing in the rivers valleys and mountains.

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<sup>7</sup> PAS website: <http://www.nwtpas.ca/area-shuhtagotine.asp>

**Values to be Protected:** Archaeological and burial sites, cultural and heritage sites.

**Values to be Respected:** Shúhtagot'ine Néné supports several COSEWIC and SARA “at risk” listed species<sup>8</sup> which either inhabit the area all-year round or as migrants. Some of those species are: boreal woodland caribou, northern mountain caribou, wolverine, peregrine falcon and rusty blackbird. The harlequin duck, bull trout and inconnu fish are ranked by ENR as may-be-at-risk under the general status program.<sup>9</sup>

The zone has amongst some of the highest density of grizzly bears in the NWT.<sup>10</sup> General habitat and Important Wildlife Areas for grizzly bears are found along the Redstone River.

Mountain woodland caribou habitat is found throughout the mountains including Redstone herd migration route, calving grounds, rutting/wintering grounds and Bonnet Plume general range. The Keele River provides important mountain woodland caribou wintering grounds. Important Wildlife Area for mountain woodland caribou has been identified. Boreal woodland and barren-ground caribou also inhabit the zone.

There is general moose habitat, Important Wildlife Areas<sup>11</sup> for moose and riparian areas along the Mackenzie River and its tributaries have high moose densities during the winter. The O’Grady Lake area provides high quality “willow flat” habitat.

Habitat exists for furbearers, waterfowl and migratory birds, mountain goat and Dall’s sheep – including critical lambing, winter habitat and an Important Wildlife Area. Important breeding duck habitat<sup>12</sup> is located around Drum Lake and at the mouth of the Keele River as it enters the Mackenzie Valley. Critical wildlife habitat includes: large areas of grizzly bear denning habitat, significant

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<sup>8</sup> PAS website: <http://www.nwtpas.ca/area-shuhtagotine.asp>

<sup>9</sup> PAS website: <http://www.nwtpas.ca/area-shuhtagotine.asp>

<sup>10</sup> EBA Consulting, March 2009, Executive Summary, Shuhtagot’ine Nene, Ecological Assessment II, <http://www.nwtpas.ca/areas/document-2009-shuhtagotine-eaphase2-summary.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> Haas, C.A., & Wilson, J.M., Important Wildlife Areas in the Western Northwest Territories, 2012, Manuscript Report No. 221, Environment and Natural Resources, Government of the Northwest Territories, Yellowknife, NT

<sup>12</sup> Ducks Unlimited Canada. Comments on Draft 2 SLUP, July 31/09. <http://www.sahtulanduseplan.org/website/webcontent/index.html>



mountain woodland caribou winter habitat, moose habitat in the river valleys. Important fish bearing rivers and lakes include: Keele River, Drum Lake, Raven's Throat, O'Grady Lake, Redstone River and Stone Knife.

Ecologically significant areas<sup>13</sup> and features include: glacial refugial, mineral licks, hot and warm springs, karst features and may-be at risk plants Keele River corridor: *Claytonia megarhiza*, *Draba porsildii*, *Penstemon gormanii*).

International Biological Programme<sup>14</sup> sites include:

- Raven's Throat, Site 29,
- Caribou Flats, Site 76 with may-be at risk plant: *Blismopsis rufus*
- Moosehorn Headwaters, Site 57 with may-be at risk plant: *Oxytropis scammaniana*
- Cirque Lake Area, Site 55 with may-be at risk plant: *Leptarrhena pyrolifolia*
- Mackenzie Mountain Barren, Site 58 with may-be at risk plant: *Draba albertina*

Harvested species include: mountain woodland caribou, moose, bears, waterfowl, birds, fish and furbearers. Berries and plants are also harvested. Subsistence hunting is concentrated along the Keele River for Tulita and the Mackenzie Barrens for hunters from Ross River. Sport hunters accompanied by outfitters will hunt throughout the zone.

**Values to Take into account:** Traditional trails, tent frames, camping sites. Cabins and outpost camps in high concentration can be found around Drum Lake in the Raven's Throat and Redstone River corridor. Drum Lake is a popular use area which includes values such as plant and berry harvest sites, cultural sites, cabins and burial and archaeological sites.

**Economic Importance:** Oil and gas potential: 16% low-moderate; 83% low. Oil and gas rights: exploration licence. Known mineralization: Red bed slash kupferschiefer type Cu. Potential hydroelectric development site on the Keele River. In an outfitting region with three active outfitters.

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<sup>13</sup> Northwest Territories Protected Areas Strategy Science Team. (August 6, 2009). Ecological Representation Analysis of Conservation Zones/Protected Areas Initiatives in the April 30, 2009 Draft Sahtu Land Use Plan.

[http://www.sahtulanduseplan.org/ftpfiles/public\\_comments/Draft%20%20Ecological%20Representation%20Analysis.pdf](http://www.sahtulanduseplan.org/ftpfiles/public_comments/Draft%20%20Ecological%20Representation%20Analysis.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> International Biological Program (IBP) Ecological Sites in Subarctic Canada, Areas recommended as Ecological Sites In Region 10, Yukon and Northwest Territories Boreal Forest to the Treeline, 1975, Edited by Dorothy K.B. Beckel, Coordinator Region 10 (Subarctic) Panel, Lethbridge, Alberta, The University of Lethbridge.

**Additional Information:** In August 2009 the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) agreed to sponsor Shúhtagot'ine Néné as a candidate National Wildlife Area (NWA) under the NWT PAS process. Due to difficulties in obtaining a land withdrawal and a reduction in boundaries to allow for greater economic development opportunities the area is now identified as a Conservation Zone under the Plan. The community of Tulita has expressed continued interest in pursuing NWA designation for the zone.

**Further Documentation:** Phase 1 & 2 Ecological Assessments, Cultural Documentation, Renewable and Non-Renewable Resource Assessment, Naming Report, and Hydrocarbon Assessments have all been completed as a part of the PAS process. The reports are available online.<sup>15</sup>

Cultural and subsistence use documentation was coordinated by the Tulita District Land Corporation in collaboration with the Shuhtagot'ine Nene and Naatsi'hch'oh Working Groups. See: Spirit of the Mountains: Shuhtagot'ine Nene and Naatsi'hch'oh Traditional Knowledge Study, December 2009.

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<sup>15</sup> <http://www.nwtpas.ca/area-shuhtagotine.asp>

## *Appendix C: Sahtú Land Use Planning Board Proposed Conservation Initiative 41 – Náats'ihch'oh*

<b>41. Naats'ihch'oh</b>		
<b>Designation<sup>16</sup></b>	<b>Proposed Conservation Initiative</b>	
<b>CRs &amp; Prohibitions</b>	CRs# 2-13; CR# 14 Prohibition: Bulk water removal; Mining E&D; Oil and Gas E&D; Power Development; Forestry; Quarrying	
<b>Map #</b>	10	
<b>Area</b>	7,604 km <sup>2</sup>	
<b>Land Ownership</b>	All land is Crown land.	
	<b>Sahtú Subsurface Ownership</b>	<b>Sahtú Surface Ownership</b>
<b>Location &amp; Boundaries</b>	Naats'ihch'oh lies in the far south-western corner of the SSA in the Mackenzie Mountains. The Naats'ihch'oh PCI includes the headwaters of the South Nahanni River. The entire Naats'ihch'oh PCI zone is currently under an Interim land withdrawal.	

Readers are referred to Parks Canada for further details and Park establishment studies.<sup>17</sup>

### **Reasons for Establishment**

Naats'ihch'oh National Park Reserve, when gazetted, will be within the headwaters of the South Nahanni River. Its protection will offer extended protection to the South Nahanni River which is currently protected by the Nahanni National Park Reserve in the Dehcho. Together, the Nahanni and Náats'ihch'oh national park reserves will protect much of the entire South Nahanni watershed.

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<sup>16</sup> This zoning is currently under review by the SLUPB (2019).

<sup>17</sup> Parks Canada website: <http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/pn-np/nt/naatsihchoh/index.aspx>

Within the park reserves, habitat for mountain woodland caribou, grizzly bears, Dall's sheep, mountain goats and Trumpeter swans will be preserved.”<sup>18</sup> “This area has been travelled and valued for hunting and its spiritual importance by the Shutagot’ine (Mountain Dene) of the Tulita District. The mountain, Naats’ihch’oh (Mount Wilson), from which the park takes its name is credited with great spiritual powers.”<sup>19</sup>

**Values to be Protected:** Archaeological, burial and special cultural sites exist in the zone. Naats’ihch’oh PCI includes the upper portion of the South Nahanni River. The upper part of the watershed that lies within the SSA accounts for about 1/6 of the Greater Nahanni Ecosystem.<sup>20</sup> The area includes an alpine plateau with ridges and summer snow packs that are important habitat for grizzly bears and mountain woodland caribou.<sup>21</sup> Both species are considered to be of “special concern” by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC).<sup>22</sup>

The large bodied wildlife species considered to be of greatest concern in the region are mountain goat, Dall’s sheep, mountain woodland caribou, grizzly bear, and moose. The entire PCI is mountain woodland caribou habitat constitutes a significant part of and along their migration routes. Two Important Wildlife Areas<sup>23</sup> for mountain woodland caribou have been identified. From late spring through late fall, the South Nahanni herd of mountain woodland caribou calve, over-summer and rut primarily in the Little Nahanni River and Lened Creek areas to and across the Yukon border. The Redstone heard of mountain woodland caribou utilize the full north and eastern portion of the South Nahanni watershed.

The area has the greatest concentration of mountain goats in the Sahtu (likely over 75%) and some of the highest grizzly bear densities.<sup>24</sup> The GNWT has identified the PCI as an Important Wildlife Area<sup>25</sup> for bears and sheep.<sup>26</sup> The area around the Little

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<sup>18</sup> Parks Canada website: <http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/pn-np/nt/naatsihchoh/index.aspx>

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Haas, C.A., & Wilson, J.M., Important Wildlife Areas in the Western Northwest Territories, 2012, Manuscript Report No. 221, Environment and Natural Resources, Government of the Northwest Territories, Yellowknife, NT.

<sup>24</sup> Draft 3 SLUP Comments – ENR Sahtu Regions, September 8, 2010, [www.sahtulanduseplan.org](http://www.sahtulanduseplan.org)

<sup>25</sup> Haas, C.A., & Wilson, J.M., Important Wildlife Areas in the Western Northwest Territories, 2012, Manuscript Report No. 221, Environment and Natural Resources, Government of the Northwest Territories, Yellowknife, NT.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.



Nahanni River also includes a resident population of Dall's sheep thought to be the unique genetic stock that populated the Yukon and Northwest Territories after the last ice age.<sup>27</sup>

The zone is a long established subsistence use area that is undergoing archaeological investigations through the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre. The Shuhtagot'ine, Mountain Dene of the Tulita District believe that Naats'ihch'oh produced medicine people with great spiritual powers.

**Values to be Respected/Take into account:** Recreation and community gathering places. Contact Parks Canada for details.

**Economic Importance:** Oil and gas potential: 95% low. Known mineralization: Carbonate hosted Zn Pb, Intrusion Related, SEDEX. Mineral rights: leases and claims. In an outfitting region with four active outfitters. A detailed Mineral and Energy Assessment (MERA) has been conducted to identify the potential of resources in the area. The results are currently being used to assess boundary options for the park. Readers are referred to Parks Canada for details.<sup>28</sup> Existing infrastructure includes a mining access road.

**Additional Information:** Parks Canada has assembled considerable information into an Area of Interest Atlas.<sup>29</sup> Readers are referred to the atlas for greater detail on the ecological values.

**Conservation Initiative Status:** On August 22, 2012 an announcement was made to establish the Naats'ihch'oh National Park Reserve. The Naats'ihch'oh National Park Reserve will connect with the Nahanni National Park Reserve in the Dehcho Territory which expanded in 2009 to include the majority of the Greater Nahanni Watershed. For details on the establishment see the Parks Canada website.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Parks Canada written submission to SLUPB on Draft 3, October 1, 2010

<sup>28</sup> Mineral and energy resource assessment of the Greater Nahanni Ecosystem under consideration for the expansion of the Nahanni National Park Reserve, Northwest Territories; Wright, D F; Lemkow, D; Harris, J R. Geological Survey of Canada, Open File 5344, 2007; 557 pages, Available at: [http://geopub.nrcan.gc.ca/moreinfo\\_e.php?id=224425](http://geopub.nrcan.gc.ca/moreinfo_e.php?id=224425)

<sup>29</sup> Naats'ihch'oh National Park Reserve, Parks Canada, February 2013, Available at <http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/pnnp/nt/naatsihchoh/index.aspx>

<sup>30</sup> Naats'ihch'oh National Park Reserve, Parks Canada, February 2013, Available at <http://www.pc.gc.ca/eng/pnnp/nt/naatsihchoh/index.aspx>

**Additional Wildlife Information<sup>31</sup>:**

Mountain goat, Dall's sheep, mountain woodland caribou, grizzly bear, and moose are of particular concern because they: typically range across large areas, are at low densities and are sensitive to human activities.

**Mountain goat** range in the Sahtu is restricted to an area along and just north of the Settlement Area's southern boundary in the western side of the Mackenzie Mountains. It is likely that there are not more than 200 mountain goats in the Sahtu and these represent the northernmost mountain goats in Canada; certainly the most northern in the NWT.

**Dall's sheep** occur across much of the Mackenzie Mountain range in the NWT (appx. 140,000 km<sup>2</sup>). The current Naats'ihch'oh PCI is not noted for having particularly high density sheep populations in comparison with other areas of the Mackenzie Mountain portion of the Sahtu. However, current and potential sheep habitat occurs across the PCI. Dall's sheep do not usually migrate over any great distances, and once removed from an area because of disturbance or other factors, will generally either be slow to recolonize or may permanently abandon the area.

**Mountain woodland caribou** are listed as a species of Special Concern under the federal Species at Risk Act. The main threats to these caribou are land use activities and hunting. The entire northern section of the Naats'ihch'oh PCI boundary area is used by Redstone caribou and the area south of the South Nahanni River is used by the South Nahanni herd. The snow patches in the high alpine areas between the Selwyn and Lened claims, are used by caribou and their young calves in July to escape insect harassment. The same area, concentrated along the Little Nahanni River and Lened Creeks, covers much late summer range, which is a critical time for caribou to gain sufficient fat reserves to make it through the fall rut and then through the winter.

**Grizzly bears** have been recommended for listing as "Special Concern" under the federal Species at Risk Act. The main threats are land use activities causing disturbance and human/bear conflicts. The area has the highest density estimate for northern mountain grizzly bear populations in the Yukon and NWT and shows the relatively high productivity of some sections of the upper South Nahanni Watershed within Naats'ihch'oh. The largest very high density grizzly bear area lies almost totally between the Selwyn and Lened claim areas, particularly along the Little Nahanni watershed.

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<sup>31</sup> Courtesy personal communication with ENR Wildlife Biologists, 2012

## *Appendix D: Sahtú Land Use Planning Board Special Management Zone 38 – Mackenzie Mountains*

<b>38. Mackenzie Mountains</b>		
<b>Designation</b>	<b>Special Management Zone</b>	
<b>CRs &amp; Prohibitions</b>	CRs# 1-14 Prohibition: Bulk water removal	
<b>Map #</b>	10	
<b>Area</b>	40,029 km <sup>2</sup>	
<b>Land Ownership</b>	<b>Sahtú Subsurface Ownership</b>	<b>Sahtú Surface Ownership</b>
	-	1.8%
<b>Location &amp; Boundaries</b>	Located in the south-west of the SSA predominantly in the Tulita District and a small portion in the K'asho Got'ine District.	

### **Reason for Establishment**

The people of the Sahtu have been using the Mackenzie Mountains for centuries. Stories, traditional trails, cultural/heritage sites and subsistence use areas are located throughout as the Mountain Dene travelled between the valley and the mountains.

The mountains offer unique habitat that includes calving/lambing, overwintering and general range for a number of wildlife species that inhabit the area such as Dall's sheep, mountain goat and mountain woodland caribou.

A number of mineral deposits have been identified in the Mackenzie Mountains. The SMZ will allow for the exploration and development of these and other mineral deposits.

**Values to be Protected:** Archaeological, burial, cultural and heritage sites.

**Values to be Respected:** Mountain goats are the predominant wildlife found in the mountainous areas.<sup>32</sup> Dall's sheep habitat includes lambing sites and sheep winter habitat including an Important Wildlife Area. Important Wildlife Areas<sup>33</sup> for mountain woodland caribou, Bonnet Plume herd migration route, calving grounds and range, Redstone herd migration route, calving grounds, rutting/wintering area are all found in the zone and South Nahanni herd calving grounds.

The valleys provide winter habitat for moose and mountain woodland caribou. Moose surveys in the Sahtu have found that riparian areas along the Mackenzie River and its tributaries have high densities in the winter. Many of the tributaries run down from the mountains and are associated with moose habitat. *Alces alces gigas*, the Alaska-Yukon subspecies of moose living in the Mackenzie Mountains are the largest moose subspecies. Wolves may also be found.<sup>34</sup>

Important Wildlife Areas for moose and bears occur. There is furbearer habitat along the forested river valleys, grizzly bear habitat, fish habitat, waterfowl and migratory bird habitat, important breeding duck habitat and wetlands. Ecologically significant features include karst formations, concentrations of mineral licks, hot/warm springs, glacial refugia, eskers and may-be-at-risk plants: *Minuartia macrocarpa*, *Papaver mcconnellii*, *Draba ogilviensis*, *Claytonia megarhiza*, and *Cyprogramma stelleri*.

International Biological Programme<sup>35</sup> sites include: Coral Peaks - Site 59, Florence Lake Study Area – Site 31, Carcajou Lake Study Area - Site 72, Plains of Abraham - Site 26, Lymnaea Springs Study Site - Site 60 and Sculpin Springs - Site 70.

The Mackenzie River and its tributaries are important moose hunting areas<sup>36</sup>. The Mountain People would travel into the mountains in the fall to hunt moose, caribou and sheep and travel back into the valley in moose skin boats in the spring. Moose harvest in the mountains was important for survival.

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<sup>32</sup> Larter, C. Nicholas, Mountain Goat Survey, Flat River Area, Western Mackenzie Mountains, September 2004, Manuscript Report No. 157, GNWT, Department of Resources, Wildlife, and Economic Development

<sup>33</sup> Haas, C.A., & Wilson, J.M., Important Wildlife Areas in the Western Northwest Territories, 2012, Manuscript Report No. 221, Environment and Natural Resources, Government of the Northwest Territories, Yellowknife, NT.

<sup>34</sup> Larter, C. Nicholas, Mountain Goat Survey, Flat River Area, Western Mackenzie Mountains, September 2004, Manuscript Report No. 157, GNWT, Department of Resources, Wildlife, and Economic Development.

<sup>35</sup> International Biological Program (IBP) Ecological Sites in Subarctic Canada, Areas recommended as Ecological Sites In Region 10, Yukon and Northwest Territories Boreal Forest to the Treeline, 1975, Edited by Dorothy K.B. Beckel, Coordinator Region 10 (Subarctic) Panel, Lethbridge, Alberta, The University of Lethbridge Production Services, CCIBP/CT.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.



**Values to Take into account:** Camps, cabins, tent sites, traditional trails especially up the Keele River and some leading into the Yukon Territory. Two trails are of special significance, Trail to the Mountains and the Mountain Dene Trail to the Mountains. See Additional Information. Within the Fort Good Hope/Colville Lake Group Trapping Area.

**Economic Importance:** Oil and gas potential: 16% low-moderate; 83% low. Oil and gas rights: exploration licence. Known mineralization: Carbonate hosted Zn Pb, coal, red bed slash kupferschiefer type Cu. Mineral rights: leases. In an outfitting region with companies in operation. Existing infrastructure includes: an airstrip, Canol Road extending 14 Km from the Yukon boarder, and mining access road.

**Additional Information:** The Mackenzie Mountains are irregular and primarily made up of limestone, dolomite and shale.<sup>37</sup> Erosion has resulted in unstable rubble slopes, cliffs and steep canyons. The mountain tops average an elevation of 2100 m and subalpine areas are usually found below 1800 m.<sup>38</sup>

Trail to the Mountains, Shit'a Got'ine Eht'ene, is a "traditional trail that leads from Fort Good Hope to the headwaters of the Arctic Red River in the Mackenzie Mountains. It was used for centuries and was travelled on foot and by dog team. The Mountain River was used as the return route using moose skin boats in the spring. The trail was used to access winter hunting grounds for the Shit'a Got'ine (Mountain People) where they would spend the winter taking moose, caribou and sheep. The trail was last walked in the 1950s."<sup>39</sup>

The Mountain Dene Trail to the Mountains, Shuht'a Got'ine Eht'ene, starts on the Mackenzie River at Tulita, crosses the Mackenzie Lowlands to Stewart and Tate Lakes, crossing the Keele drainage and on to Drum Lake in the Mackenzie Mountains. From there it joins a network of trails reaching throughout the mountains and into the Yukon. It was used extensively as a walking trail in the fall and by dog team in the winter. In the fall families would move from the valley into the mountains where they would hunt moose, caribou and sheep, to return to the valleys in the springtime by moose skin boats. Many sites along the trail are important in Mountain Dene culture and history. Archaeological research shows that the trail area has been used for centuries.

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<sup>37</sup> Larter, C. Nicholas, Mountain Goat Survey, Flat River Area, Western Mackenzie Mountains, September 2004, Manuscript Report No. 157, GNWT, Department of Resources, Wildlife, and Economic Development.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Prepared by The Sahtu Heritage Places and Sites Joint Working Group. January 2000 (2nd Edition). "Rakekée Gok'é Godi: Places We Take Care Of. Written by Tom Andrews.P. 62.

The Rakekée Gok'è Godi: Places We Take Care Of<sup>40</sup> report suggested:

- Territorial Historic Park;
- Undertake oral history and archaeological research to document and protect heritage resources;
- Surface of documented sites be protected with commemoration of specific areas;
- Trail experience be recreated through cultural revival projects (eg. walking the trail with youth and elders).
- National Historic Site with surface protection;
- Revive the old National Historic Site proposal;
- Undertake oral history and archaeological research to document and protect heritage resources and burials;
- Surface of documented sites be protected;
- Identify trail for special consideration in the land use planning process.

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<sup>40</sup> Prepared by The Sahtu Heritage Places and Sites Joint Working Group. January 2000 (2nd Edition). Rakekée Gok'è Godi: Places We Take Care Of. Written by Tom Andrews.

## *Appendix E: Níó Nę P'ęné conservation history*

Some key conservation actions and areas identified as important to protect are listed here, along with the year and source of information where possible. It should be noted that this not a comprehensive list of all land protection efforts in the area, but an indication of widespread significance of both ecological and cultural values.

- Keele Peak identified by 3 governments as a candidate for protection, highest peak in Canada outside of the St. Elias range
- 1974: International Biosphere Program selection committee of scientists identified Cirque Lake and the Mackenzie Mountain Barrens
- 1975: Highest density of pulses anywhere in the world (Kershaw)
- 1984: Archaeological study in the MacPass area identified very important camp used in the summer and fall, north of Keele Peak, likely at headwaters of Caribou Cry (Sheila Greer)
- 1986: Consideration as a national park by Parks Canada for a national park (John Toberas)
- 1992: CANOL Trail advanced as part of the Canada Trail system
- 1996: Proposed as candidate protected area by Yukon Government with Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society
- 1997: Proposed as part of Y2Y (Yellowstone to Yukon) initiative
- 1997: Identified by RRDC as part of a regional planning process as Area of Concern
- 1998: Kaska protected area strategy identified as one of eight in Ross River area
- 2000: Proposed as part of Łut'en (Keele Peak) special management area during treaty negotiations
- 2003: Key wildlife habitat areas identified (encompassing Mac Pass and Keele-Itsi Mountains) by the Habitat and Endangered Species Management branch of Yukon Government
- 2009: Shúhtagot'ine Néné proposed protected area, from NWT Protected Areas Strategy.

## *Appendix F: Some Shúhtaot'ıne and Tu Łidlini Dena place names in Nío Nę P'ęne*

Dena Name	Rough Translation	English Name	Description
Tu Łidlini	Where the Waters Meet	Old Ross River (village)	Historic gathering place at the confluence of the Tu Desdes Tue and Tagaden'ía Tue
Tse Leda	Burnt Rock	41 Mountain	Named for the many campfires lit over thousands of years
Tuts'et'ih	Long and Narrow Lake	Dragon Lake	Named for the Shape of the Lake
Tagaden'ía	Standing Up Alone	Sheldon Mountain	During the Great Flood thousands of years ago people landed rafts on top of this mountain
Tagaden'ía Tue	Standing Up Alone River	Ross River (river)	Named after the mountain close to the headwaters
Tu Desdes Tue	Swift Water River	Pelly River	From the headwaters to the confluence with Tagaden'ía Tue at Tu Łidlini
Dzoa Luge	Bird Slough	None	Old Village site along Tagaden'ía Tue (Ross River)
Elas Tue	Mineral Lick Creek	Tay Creek	Named for abundance of mineral licks along creek
Łuten	Always Ice	Itsi Mountain	Named for the Glaciers on the Mountain



<b>Shúhtaot'ine Name</b>	<b>Rough Translation</b>	<b>English Name</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>ʔekoch'a Dá</b>	(meaning unknown)	Ekwi River	
<b>Begáá Dá</b>	Sparkly gravel river	Keele River	Name refers to granite
<b>Dəho</b>	Big river	Mackenzie River	
<b>K'á Tə</b>	Willow flats		
<b>K'achot'í Dá</b>	Willow handle river	Mountain River	
<b>Łubeh</b>	Ancient ice	Keele Peak	Name refers to glaciers
<b>Młhcho Tsié Dá</b>		Caribou Cry River	Big caribou bulls gather at that river in fall and rub willows to scrape the velvet off their horns, leaving behind a bloody ochre coloration on the willows
<b>Pədenłíé</b>	Creek with red stones	Redstone River	
<b>Pət'ánejo</b>	Chase sheep into trap against sheer rock cliff	(unknown)	Mountain near Caribou Flats
<b>Sahtú</b>		Great Bear Lake	
<b>Tets'ehxé</b>	Clubbing the water with a splash and dipping in the water	Drum Lake	Name refers to the early June fish run when elders and kids would hit fish with clubs near the outlets of streams
<b>Turəjí Dá</b>	Scented water river	Twichya River	Name refers to hot springs along the river

# Appendix G: Shúhta Goᑭepé/Bedzih/Gūdzih (Mountain Caribou) Resolution

June 13, 2019

## Whereas

- The K'á Tǎ (Willow Flats) area is a gathering place for five shúhta goᑭepé/bedzih/gūdzih populations in spring and fall, and those populations are very sensitive to human disturbance.
- The K'á Tǎ area is an important gathering place that is key to cultural survival and food security for Tulít'a and Tǣgǫhǫ (Norman Wells) Shúhtaot'ǫnǣ, Métis and Tu Łidlini Dena.
- K'á Tǎ has been increasingly accessible to visiting harvesters due to advances in All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) technologies and rapid expansion of trails, causing acute conservation concerns for shúhta goᑭepé/bedzih/gūdzih and Shúhtaot'ǫnǣ/Métis/Dena ts'ǫǫ/k'e (ways of life).
- The Doi T'oh Territorial Park and Canol Heritage Trail Management Plan includes a provision for regulation of motorized vehicles (Section 6.2.2). The Park will not be created until the land held in reserve by Canada for the Park is transferred to the Government of the NWT, and the Management Plan provisions will not be implemented until that time.
- Visiting harvesters are usually not aware of Shúhtaot'ǫnǣ/Dena ᑭᑭa/a' nǣzǫn (laws) and conservation concerns regarding shúhta goᑭepé/bedzih/gūdzih populations, and these laws have not been acknowledged and respected.
- The Sahtú Dene and Métis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement creates a system including ᑭᑭdzo Got'ǫnǣ (Renewable Resources Council) authority in respect of shúhta goᑭepé/bedzih/gūdzih harvesting and conservation.
- The Tu Łidlini Dena Council exercises its authority in bedzih/gūdzih harvesting and conservation in their homeland, which extends into the Sahtú Region.
- A partnership has been established between Tulít'a and Tǣgǫhǫ ᑭᑭdzo Got'ǫnǣ and Tu Łidlini (Ross River) Dena Council to address shúhta goᑭepé/bedzih/gūdzih conservation concerns and protect Indigenous cultural and spiritual integrity and food security through development of the *Nǫ Nǣ P'ǣnǣ Beghǣré Shúhta Goᑭepé Narehǣ – Trails of the Mountain Caribou* plan.
- The *Nǫ Nǣ P'ǣnǣ* plan prioritizes implementation of Indigenous laws and agreements, establishment of a Nǣ K'ǣdí Ke/Sǫdzane'ǫn (Guardian and wellness) initiative, and protection of shúhta goᑭepé/bedzih/gūdzih habitat.

- Given current conservation concerns, interim measures are needed to ensure that shúhta goᑭepé/bedzih/gūdzih habitat and Shúhtaot'įnę/Métis/Dena ts'įł/k'e are not threatened.
- Tu Łidlini has established a permitting system for visiting harvesters that requires them to respect Dena a' nīzīn , and includes an approach for educating harvesters.

### *Therefore, be it resolved that*

- Tulít'a, Tłegóhł and Tu Łidlini Sōdzane'ín/Nę K'ádí Ke (Guardians) and elders will work together to develop hunter education materials during summer 2019, continuing the work that has already begun.
- Sōdzane'ín/Nę K'ádí Ke including select Tu Łidlini and Sahtú participants in the Summer 2019 Dechinta program will participate in a check station at Mile 222 on the Canol Road during August and September to support the Tu Łidlini harvest permitting system, monitor harvest, and assist with research and monitoring of shúhta goᑭepé/bedzih/gūdzih and habitat.
- The two years of experience with the Tu Łidlini permitting system in 2018 and 2019 will be the basis for Tulít'a and Tłegóhł ʔehdzo Got'įnę (Renewable Resources Councils) to consider full partnership with Tu Łidlini in implementing a permitting system in the K'á Tá area.
- In 2020, the ʔehdzo Got'įnę Gots'ę Nákedı (Sahtú Renewable Resources Board) will exercise its mandate to review a Tulít'a and Tłegóhł proposal for harvest regulation in the K'á Tá area through a Public Listening (Hearing) on the theme Dene Ts'įł (Way of Life) and Harvesting.
- Participants in the Sōdzane'ín/Nę K'ádí Ke Summer 2019 program will be asked to work on the development of signs such as landmark information signs about our special places and laws in the K'á Tá area, and the signs will be installed by summer 2020.

MOVED by Norman Sterriah, Ross River delegate

SECONDED by Jaryd McDonald, Norman Wells delegate