



Northwest Territories
**PROTECTED AREAS
STRATEGY**

Dinàgà Wek'èhodì

Candidate National Wildlife Area



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Community Update

Dinàgà Wek'èhodì is an area of approximately 590 km², covering a portion of the North Arm of Great Slave Lake. The area includes the mainland shoreline, numerous islands and the water of the lake itself. Dinàgà Wek'èhodì is entirely within the Wek'èezhìi boundary.

The North Arm has cultural and natural importance. In 2010, the Tłıchǫ Government requested Environment Canada sponsor and advance the area as a candidate National Wildlife Area through the Northwest Territories Protected Areas Strategy (NWT PAS) process. Since then, the Tłıchǫ Government has continued to work towards protecting the North Arm through the NWT PAS with a group of stakeholders (called the Working Group).

The Working Group has been meeting to share information and discuss how best to protect the values of the area. These discussions are ongoing.

The initial study area is under an interim land withdrawal until September 2015. The interim protection does not affect any Aboriginal rights.

Vision

Dinàgà Wek'èhodì has powerful natural, historical, spiritual and cultural significance. It is a home; a place of legends, sharing, teaching and learning.

The area is important for migratory birds, and provides habitat for other birds, fish and wildlife, including species at risk. The rich flora and fauna are the foundation of this spectacular natural environment with many harvesting and recreational opportunities.

Cooperative management of a protected area will ensure all people have the opportunity to respect and enjoy this unique area for generations.



What is the Northwest Territories Protected Area Strategy?

The NWT Protected Areas Strategy (PAS) is a guide to make balanced decisions in identifying, establishing and protecting significant natural and cultural areas using the best available knowledge.

The goals of the PAS are to identify and protect:

1. Special natural and cultural areas in the NWT
2. Core representative areas within each of the 45 ecoregions of the NWT

Dinàgà Wek'èhodì is one of several proposed protected areas going through the NWT PAS process.

Aboriginal Rights

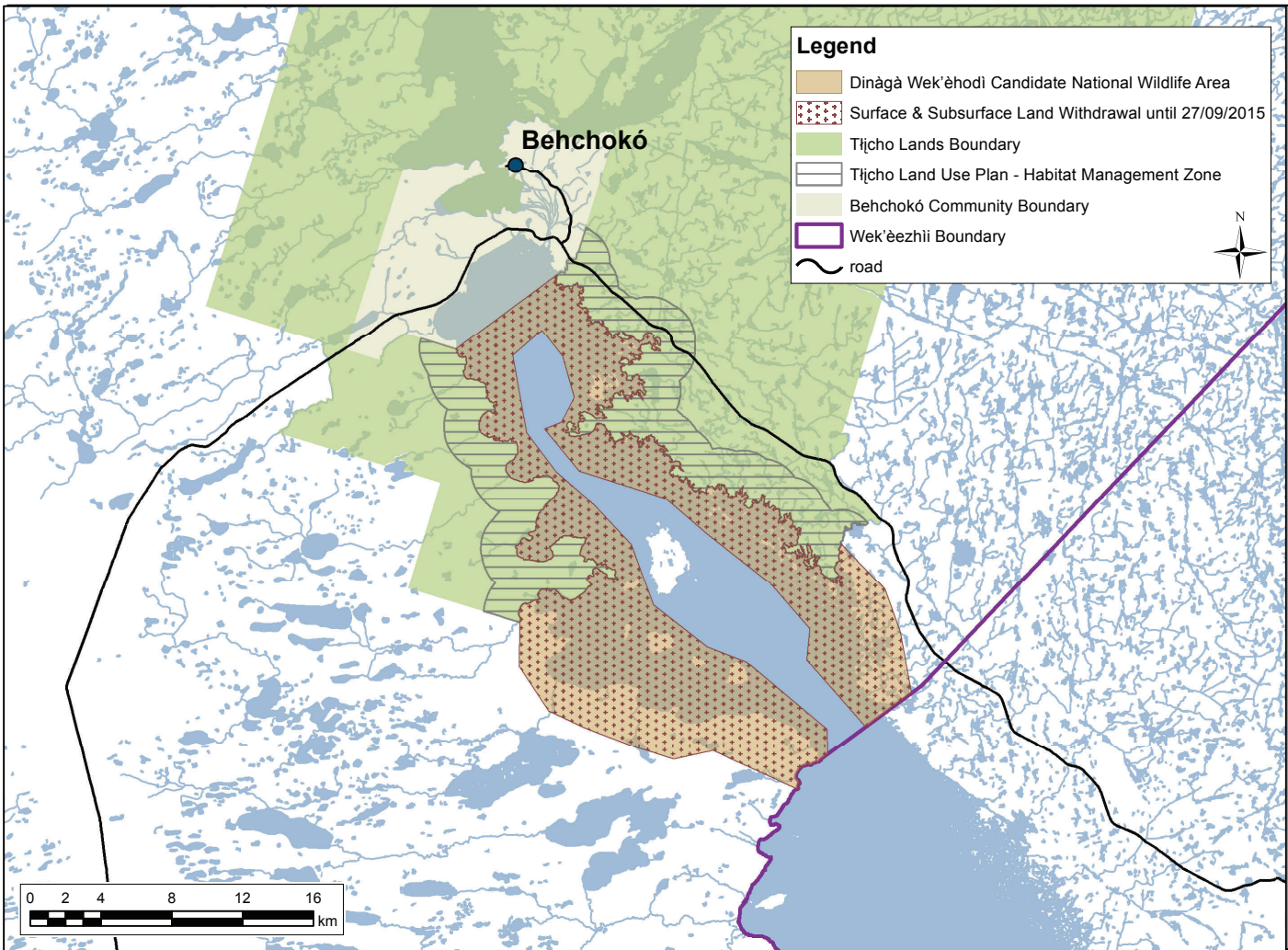
Aboriginal rights to hunt, fish and trap will be respected in the Dinàgà Wek'èhodì protected area.

Chapter 16 of the Tłıchǫ Agreement sets out specific requirements for the establishment of any protected area within Wek'èezhìi.

Who has been involved?

A working group is established for every area moving through the PAS process. The working group is made up of representatives from the community and others with interests in the area. The Dinàgà Wek'èhodì Working Group was established in 2010 and includes the following members:

- Tłıchǫ Government
- Wek'èezhìi Renewable Resource Board
- Community of Behchoko
- Yellowknives Dene First Nation
- Northwest Territory Métis Nation
- North Slave Métis Alliance
- Environment Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service
- Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
- Government of the Northwest Territories
- NARWAL Northern Adventures
- True North Safaris
- Rabesca's Resources
- Enodah Wilderness Tours



Status

Several studies on the values of the candidate area have been completed:

- Documentation of Cultural Values (both Tłıchǫ and North Slave Métis Alliance)
- Non-Renewable Resource Assessment
- Renewable Resource Assessment
- Ecological Assessment
- Socio-Economic Assessment

Copies of these reports can be found at www.nwtpas.ca

Next Steps

The Working Group is preparing an interim report summarizing the work completed to date.

After devolution on April 1, 2014, the GNWT will have an increased role in land and resource management. As a result, the GNWT is looking at other tools that may be appropriate for protecting the values of the North Arm.

After the GNWT presents its options for protected areas, the Working Group will evaluate all of the options and complete its report. The report will then be made available to the public for comment. All comments received will be considered by the Working Group before finalizing the report.

For more information, please contact:

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