



Tłıchọ Government Annual Report 2021



Tłıchọ Government Annual Report 2021

Hè dọ gha gọta... In Tłıchọ Unity...



Message from the Grand Chief

I am pleased to provide this overview of highlights from the Tłıchq Government activities during the last year of the 4th Tłıchq Assembly.

I must acknowledge at the outset however that this past year has been a very difficult year for many people. The COVID-19 pandemic has been like nothing we have seen in our lifetimes. Fortunately, so far it has spared our communities from the worst hardships that many people have had to endure elsewhere in the country and the world. With the implementation of successful vaccination campaigns, we are now seeing a significant drop in the numbers of people who are getting infected with COVID-19. In the NWT by early June, over 30,000 people have had at least one vaccination. This is very good news for all of us, as the more people are vaccinated, the safer we are from infection, and the more we are helping to protect our families and Elders.



Tessa Madritsch

Grand Chief George Mackenzie

Recently we heard the tragic news from Kamloops, British Columbia and elsewhere around Canada that the remains of many children were found in unmarked graves beside former residential schools. This has stunned people everywhere and triggered horrible memories in residential school survivors. Many of us who attended these schools feel again the hurt, the anger and the anxieties from those times. It has reminded us that here, in our own communities, there were also children who never came home and it reminds us that we have to continue our healing.



Tłıchq Government



Despite these tragedies, the Tłıchǫ Government has continued to work for our citizens and there have been a series of notable accomplishments that we will discuss in this annual report. In the past year, we have approved significant new resources for a revitalized addictions-to-wellness strategy, and we have built the foundation for the Government to make a substantial contribution to healing and wellness over the next few years in partnership with the Tłıchǫ Community Services Agency. We have resolved many issues in Chapter 26 of the Tłıchǫ Agreement on Economic Measures in our work with the federal government. This work will be seen in the future as a milestone for our growth as a Nation. We have started many important projects, and now the next Assembly can take that work and “run with it” building, upon the good work that has been done during this Assembly.

The mandate of the 4th Tłıchǫ Assembly is coming to an end. At this time, I would like to thank all the Assembly members for their work on behalf of our communities and, I am grateful for their ideas and support over the past four years.

On behalf of the Chiefs of the Chiefs Executive Council (CEC), I welcome you to speak to us about the work of our government during the 17th Annual Gathering in Behchokǫ.

İ̀è dǫ gha gǫta: In Tłıchǫ Unity

Grand Chief George Mackenzie



Tłıchǫ Government



Highlights from the 4th Tłı̨chǫ Assembly

Assembly Sessions that took place this past year had to adapt to COVID-19 restrictions to protect our communities. Assembly sessions were held in person and also via teleconference and Zoom. The sessions were held in May, August (including a pandemic adjusted Annual Gathering), September and November 2020, and February and April 2021.

A number of Directives and Laws were approved by the Tłı̨chǫ Assembly between April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021 last year. This information is accessible on the Tłı̨chǫ Government website www.tlicho.com.

Assembly workshops were also held in May, August and October 2020 and February 2021.

The members of the 4th Tłı̨chǫ Assembly are: Chief Clifford Daniels, Cody Mantla and Nora Wedzin from Behchokǫ; Chief Alfonz Nitsiza, George Nitsiza and Leon Nitsiza from Whatı̨; Chief David Wedawın, Henry Gon and Frank Arrowmaker from Gamèti; and Chief Charlie Football, Joseph Dryneck and Gordon Judas from Wekweèti. George Mackenzie is our Grand Chief.

Despite the limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the 4th Assembly has been busy in 2020-2021. The following activities have been among the priorities focused on by the Assembly and the Chiefs Executive Council:



Tłı̨chǫ Government



Tłı̨chǫ Government



Pandemic Response and Activities

The Tłıchq Government has worked to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in our communities by providing aid to help Tłıchq Citizens, to protect our people's health and safety with relevant information about the pandemic and to ensure the safety of our staff by carefully following the guidelines of the Chief Public Health Officer of the NWT. Our Government has provided special COVID-19 support programs including On-the-Land Assistance Program, Hamper/Care Packages to families during the initial lockdown, extending hours at the Behchokò Homeless Centre and having staff calling Elders in the Tłıchq communities.



Tłıchq Government

During this unprecedented time of responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Tłıchq Government offices remain closed to the public, however our employees are working remotely or in offices in keeping with the recommendations of our NWT Chief Public Health Officer.

Housing and Homelessness

Homelessness and housing issues have reached a crisis point in the Tłıchq region and despite efforts by the NWT Housing Corporation, programs do not appear to be meeting the needs of Tłıchq citizens.

The Tłıchq Government and the GNWT formed a Housing Working Group to look at the issues surrounding housing and homelessness and explored how programs can be changed to provide better outcomes for Tłıchq citizens.

The Tłıchq Government approved significant funds to increase the number of homes in our region available to people that live and work in our region, and we were successful in a rapid housing initiative application to Canada. Over the last two years the Tłıchq Government has brought 34 new housing units into our communities, and will continue to access funding and coordinate new housing for Tłıchq citizens.



Tłıchq Government



Additions to Wellness Strategy

The Tłıchq Government recognizes the need for change in existing government addictions and wellness programs and services which are considered inadequate for providing the help and assistance asked for by our citizens. The Tłıchq Government is making a renewed effort to heal our communities from addictions. The Tłıchq Government will build this effort with a significant partnership with the TCSA, and work to renew the best community-based strategies that have come before, provide the best current practices in addictions and wellness treatment, and build this upon a foundation of the recognition of the healing capacity of Tłıchq language, culture and way of life. This effort will focus on developing a comprehensive range of interventions by programs and services that will be easily available to people in Behchokq, Gamèti, Wekweèti and Whatì. Many aspects of community life and corresponding government programs and services will need attention including Elders and youth, education and healthcare, policing, housing and more.

Infrastructure Planning

The Tłıchq Government created a Tłıchq Regional Infrastructure Working Group, consisting of representatives of the Tłıchq Government, Tłıchq Investment Corporation, community governments and the TCSA to develop an Infrastructure Plan for the region. The Plan includes existing infrastructure plans of the GNWT and community governments but also identifies infrastructure needed or desired to improve the lives of Tłıchq citizens within the region. The Plan will guide the Tłıchq Government when making decisions about infrastructure in the communities and region.



Tłıchq Government

In 2020 the Tłıchq Government successfully completed an Infrastructure Cooperation Agreement with the Government of the Northwest Territories. This agreement ensures infrastructure projects in Tłıchq communities and on Tłıchq Lands provide guarantees of employment, contracts and training for Tłıchq citizens, and opportunities for direct negotiation of contracts with Tłıchq companies.



Tłıchq Government



Tłıchq Government



Tłıchq Government

Tłıchq All-Season Road

The Tłıchq Highway is a cooperative project between the Community Government of Whatì, the Tłıchq Government, Kiewit Canada Development Corporation, the federal government, and the GNWT. Increasing access to Tłıchq communities with highways will help reduce the cost of living in the region while also attracting interest, from industry in the exploration and development of natural resources. The Tłıchq Government has taken a 20 per cent ownership stake in the \$412-million, 28-year highway construction and maintenance contract. 128 Tłıchq workers on the project, or 46 per cent, were Tłıchq or NWT residents.

Construction in the Tłıchq Region

Other upcoming infrastructure projects in the region include the Fibre Optic line to Whatì, planning for new office space in Wekweètì and planning for a new Legislative Building in Behchokq. Planning is also occurring on early childhood centres in communities. Construction has been happening throughout the last year on the new culture centre in Behchokq, the new hotel in Gamètì, and the conversion of unused space in the sportsplex into office space.

Highway #3 Forum

In response to recent and past tragedies on highway number 3, the Tłıchq Government hosted a forum with other governments, mining companies, transportation companies and others to find options to improve safety on the highway. Actions are being implemented and we hope to see less pain and suffering in the future from these tragedies.

CEC – Cabinet Meetings – Working Together

CEC meets with the GNWT Cabinet regularly to discuss issues of importance to Tłıchq Citizens and communities with commitments from the GNWT sought to address concerns. Issues for discussion are identified by both the GNWT and the Tłıchq Government. Over the last year discussions have included among other issues; Caribou, Housing, Dinàgà Wek'èhodì, the renewal of the Intergovernmental Services Agreement, GNWT legislative drafting and the need for an RCMP detachment in Gamètì.



Intergovernmental Council

A key feature of the Devolution Agreement is the creation of an Intergovernmental Council (IGC) that allows Indigenous Governments and the GNWT to cooperate and collaborate on matters related to lands and resource management. Annual meetings are held that includes leadership from the GNWT, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Northwest Territory Métis Nation, Sahtù Secretariat Incorporated, Gwich'in Tribal Council, the Tłı̨chǫ Government, Acho Dene Koe First Nation, Salt River First Nation, Denínu Kúé First Nation and the Kátł'odeeche First Nation.

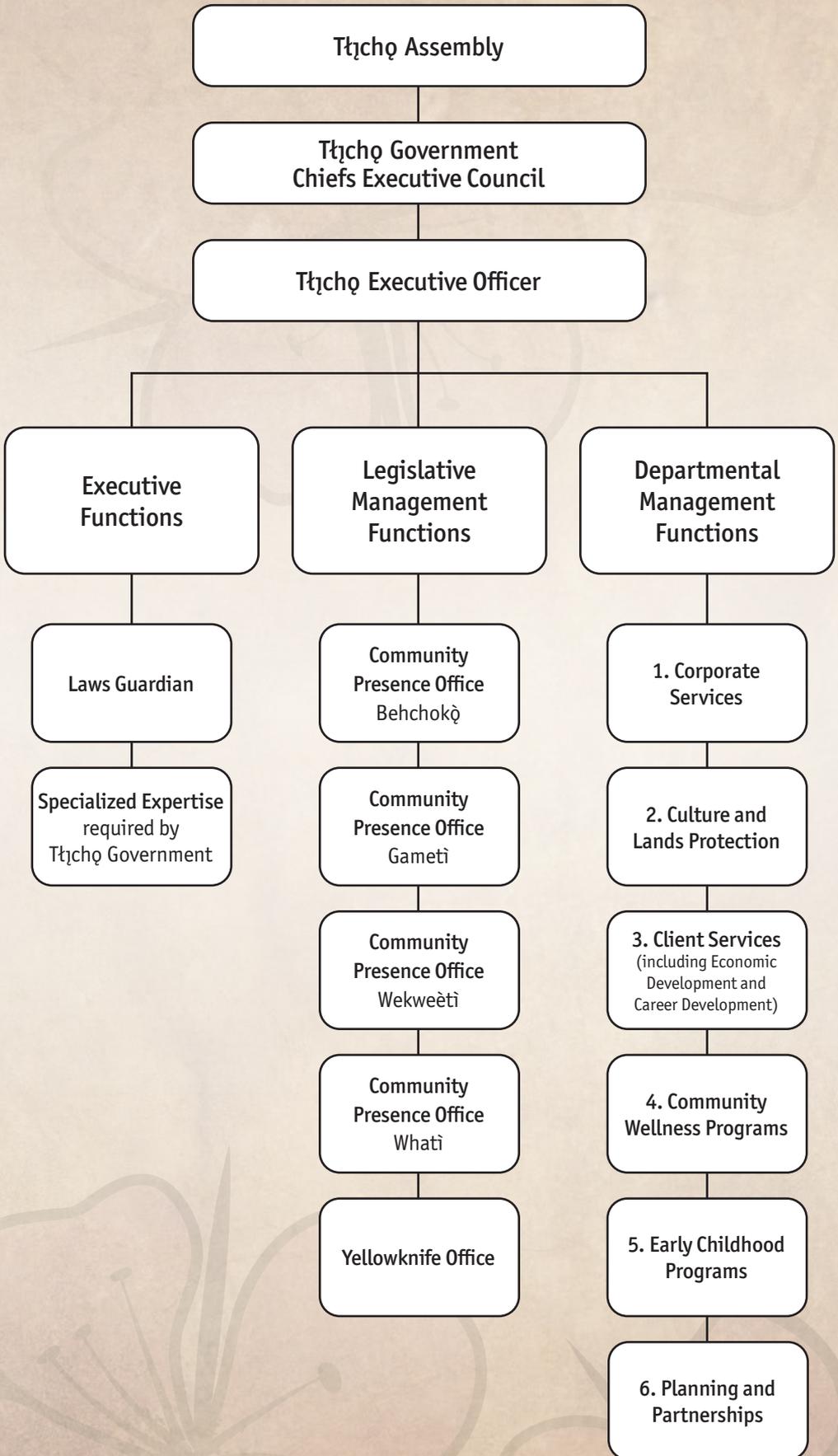
This last year, the Tłı̨chǫ Government was a leading government in developing a legislative protocol with the GNWT on how they draft new laws. This agreement means that the Tłı̨chǫ Government and other Indigenous Governments sit at the table with the GNWT and collaboratively develop new laws that the GNWT wants to develop relating to land and resource management.

This is a significant agreement, and unprecedented throughout Canada.

Tłı̨chǫ Agreement Chapter 26. Economic Development

The Tłı̨chǫ Government has been working with the federal government and the Government of the Northwest Territories on Chapter 26 of the Tłı̨chǫ Agreement which is about economic measures and economic development. The chapter says the traditional economy of the Tłı̨chǫ should be maintained and strengthened; and that the Tłı̨chǫ should be economically self-sufficient.

Chapter 26 requires government to consult with the Tłı̨chǫ Government any time it proposes economic development programs related to the objectives and must meet with the Tłı̨chǫ Government at least once every three years to review the effectiveness of programs relating to the objectives and measures.





Department of Culture and Lands Protection

100-year Treaty 11 Celebration

The Tłıchq Government is planning for projects and events commemorating the 100th Anniversary of Mqwhì signing Treaty 11. One of the main goals of these projects is to economically support Tłıchq artists and artisans and their role preserving Tłıchq culture and way of life.

Funding was secured to support four central outdoor gathering spaces for Tłıchq citizens being constructed in the communities of Behchokq, Gamètì, Wekweètì and Whatì to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the signing of Treaty 11 by respected leader, Mqwhì. Each brick and stone landscaped space will feature a fire circle for Feeding of the Fire ceremonies, drum dances and community gatherings.

Canadian Heritage funding has been secured to support Culture Festivals and capital projects celebrating Tłıchq arts and heritage. Capital projects designed to employ Tłıchq artists and performers include: Land themed murals, a commissioned portrait of Mqwhì, specially designed treaty jacket and pointed toe slippers.

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of Treaty 11 and to honour of the legacy of Mqwhì, a Tłıchq artist designed a bronze statue of the Tłıchq leader that will be erected in Behchokq.

The Department of Culture and Lands Protection (DCLP) Research team has been working on the collection and preservation of stories related to Mqwhì for print material.



Tłıchq Government



Partnerships

In partnership with the TCSA, the Tłıchq Government facilitated and funded the framing of artworks at the Jimmy Erasmus Seniors Home (JESH). The mosaic artworks of Tłıchq students, celebrating the sewing and dedication of the women in the Tłıchq region, was framed and installed in the windows at JESH for the benefit and enjoyment of the residents.

In partnership with the GNWT, a Tłıchq inspired Treaty 11 exhibit (June 2021 to June 2022) has been installed at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre (PWNHC). This exhibit celebrates the leadership of Mqwhì and the relationship of Treaty 11 to Tłıchq self-government and land claims. The Tłıchq Government/PWNHC collaboration has also developed versions of the exhibit for all four Tłıchq communities.

The Tłıchq Government participated as an active member of the Treaty 11 Centenary Steering Committee, collaborating and planning with committee members of the other signatory regions. For example, photos and documents were accessed from Library and Archives Canada and the GNWT Department of Education has been developing Treaty 11 curriculum materials in consultation with committee members.

Research and Language

The Ekwò Nàxoèhdee K'è (Boots on the Ground) 2020 program started late due to COVID-19. The program began on July 28 and wrapped up on September 28. Before going to camp, staff participated in wilderness first aid training, boat safety training and predator defense training. To get ready for camp, the Tłıchq Government also carried out photography training, research training, planning meetings and post-camp evaluation meetings.

Over the two-month period, over 40 Tłıchq participants were hired to fill various positions at two caribou monitoring camps: Kokèti (Contwoyto Lake) and Deèzàatì (Point Lake). Tłıchq citizens consisted of Elders, cooks, bear monitors, camp helpers, researchers, research assistants, boat drivers and youth. This year, five monitoring teams completed a 3-week rotation. This is an increase from last year which only had three teams. For the new camp at Deèzàatì, a new meeting cabin/kitchen was built and new boats brought in.

At the Kokèti camp, the cabin/kitchen structure was improved upon as well. Since two camps were running at the same time this year, (one camp in the Bathurst Range and the other in the Bluenose East Range) the coordinating staff were kept very busy. A photo exhibit and documentary of the program are also being developed.

The program was excited to host the Tłıchq Government leadership at the Kokèti camp in late August. Everyone worked safely over the two months and were able to return home without incident.

Tłıchq Highway Wildlife Monitoring Program

During the environmental assessment for the Tłıchq Highway, there was concern about potential impacts the road will have on wildlife, particularly tqdzı, hozı ekwq and dedı. People were concerned that there would be increased harvesting pressure along the road, that movement of wildlife may be impacted by the road, and that habitat quality and condition may be affected by noise and dust associated with the road.

In response to the concerns raised about impacts to tqdzı, hozı ekwq, and dedı, the Tłıchq Government is working closely with harvesters and Elders to develop a Tłıchq Highway Wildlife Monitoring Program. This program will have Tłıchq people be the eyes and the ears on the ground when the road opens, and to ensure everything is being done to protect tqdzı, hozı ekwq, and dedı.



The Tłıchq Government received funds from GNWT-ENR to create a wildlife and wildlife habitat monitoring program for the Tłıchq Highway. Elders/harvesters from Behchokò, Gamètì and Whatì sat on the Tłıchq Highway WMP committee, the first committee meeting was held in January 2021. The purpose of the committee is to provide a way for Elders/harvesters to provide input to the monitoring program.

The Tłıchq Government hired a wildlife monitoring coordinator for the Program and collected baseline data related to wildlife use and harvesting along the road. This was done by conducting interviews with Elders and land users and completing a winter track survey along the road. This information has led to a series of recommendations for carrying out the Tłıchq Highway Wildlife Monitoring Program.

The findings from this work was reported back to the Tłıchq Tłì Deè Committee in April 2021. They have provided guidance and direction to continue this monitoring work this summer, and into the year 2022. Work this summer will include hiring and training harvest monitoring staff so that they can help with reporting observations of wildlife along the road. A voluntary harvest monitoring program is also planned, which will include training and working closely with a team of monitors who are out on the land.

More updates and communications will be provided to the Tłıchq people as the workplan for the Wildlife Monitoring Program is implemented. This will include putting a call out to harvesters and Tłıchq people who are interested in participating in the monitoring program.

Research

The *We Will Not Be Banned From Our Land* project under Dedats'eetsaa: Tłıchq Research and Training Institute made progress this past year, in spite of COVID-19 restrictions limiting opportunities for community-based research activities. Under the Health Systems Stewardship inquiry, the successful workshop 'Indigenous Governance in Healthcare and Health Systems: *Applying Lessons Learned and Best Practices in the Tłıchq Region*' was held via Zoom early 2021.

The research looking at Tłıchq and the Mining Economy, Wellbeing, Employment and Labour Force has been completing strategic assessment and planning of the Tłıchq relationships with and dependence on mineral economies, and for the socio-economic impacts on Tłıchq communities of future diamond mine closure. This inquiry asks "What should we do after the diamond mines close?", including what forms of development communities want, and what structures are needed to achieve it. The Food Security inquiry continues to explore the community impacts of caribou population decline on Tłıchq food security and wellbeing.



Lastly, the Ekwò Nàxoèhdee K'è camp and monitoring program is part of another inquiry under the project which continues to be a success year after year.

Over the winter, researchers interviewed Elders and harvesters for signage on the Tłıchq Highway. The purpose was to come up with signs that should be on the Tłıchq Highway alignment. In addition, they were also tasked with creating large information signs that can be placed at the Highway 3 junction and the two rest areas.

The Tłıchq ethnobotany project collects traditional Tłıchq knowledge about plants, mushrooms, lichens, and fungi being used for medicine, food and tools. This information is being compiled into a database/repository. It is hoped that in the future the information gathered can be formatted into easy-to-use resources, such as a field guides with photographs, posters, and other resource materials for use by Tłıchq citizens.

A Tłıchq language course was held in partnership with University of Victoria. The course was held in Behchokq, February 22 to 26, 2021 and 16 students completed the course.

The Mentor-Apprentice Program (MAP) is a one-on-one method of learning a language where a fluent speaker of the language (mentor) teaches a language learner (apprentice) through language immersion. 15 apprentices were sponsored to learn Tłıchq with their mentor. MAP training was held in Yellowknife and in Behchokq in December 2020.

Canadian Indigenous Languages and Literacy Development Institute (CILLDI) – the Tłıchq Government sponsors students to attend CILLDI. In 2020, the Tłıchq Government sponsored 5 students to take the online courses on language revitalization.

Tłıchq Dqtaàts'eedı

This food security program supported experienced harvesters to work with youth to hunt, fish, snare, and gather traditional foods in all the communities. The food harvested through this program was given to Elders and people in need. In all, more than 4,000 pounds of food were harvested and distributed through this program. By passing on traditional harvesting skills, we are adapting to climate change and passing on our traditional skills in the face of the declining caribou population.

Tłıchq İmbè Program

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the Tłıchq İmbè Program ran for the 10th year. Necessary social distancing policies meant that some of the normal program activities needed to be run differently this year, but with strict health and safety measures in place, 37 program staff and participants were able to earn safety certificates, plan and carry out community service projects, and most importantly, spend time on the land learning from Elders.



Tłıchq Government



Gowhahdoo Gits'og Etog Niwhe'aa

The Tłıchq Government launched an ambitious new project to document and share traditional knowledge about our land and the trails between our communities. For this pilot project, we worked in the area around Whatı and the river trail between Whatı and Behchokq to document the land before the Tłıchq Highway is complete. Film makers worked with local guides and Elders to identify significant sites, gather stories and record high-definition footage of the river route. The film footage and Elders' interviews will be used to create a digital map that will allow people to see the Trails of our Ancestors and hear our Elders' stories when actual travel on the land is not possible.

Trails of our Ancestors

Social distancing requirements meant that the Trails of our Ancestors canoe trip needed to be cancelled in 2020. In its place, the Tłıchq Government supported trail clearing and maintenance projects in all four communities. The Tłıchq Government was also able to fund the 50/50 program that helped support families buy equipment to help them get out on the land.

Regulating Lands

The Lands Regulation section is responsible for reviewing and responding to water license and land applications on Tłıchq Lands and within Mqwhı Gogha Dè Nııłłèè. To provide timely responses, the Lands Regulation developed an application tracking system on behalf of the Tłıchq Government and secured additional resources to meet application requests.

The Lands Regulation team has been attending regular meetings with Crown Indigenous and Northern Affairs toward the remediation of the Rayrock Mine, including a joint workshop on traditional knowledge. The team also participated in the Rayrock Public Hearing and is developing a Colomac Monitoring and Job Shadowing program.

CIRNAC continued to provide training support to create employment for summer students, traditional knowledge boat excursion for water and wildlife sampling for the Rayrock Mine remediation project. The abandoned Sun Rose mine near the Rayrock Mine site, continues to be on the radar for future remediation.

The department supported participation of Elders in the Diavik Public Hearing on developing traditional knowledge water cultural criteria and participated in the Ekati Interim Closure and Reclamation Plan Traditional Knowledge Workshop for water license renewal application. The Lands Regulation team also prepared a small traditional knowledge spur road project for DeBeers Mine.

The Lands Regulation team developed access agreements for the use of Tłıchq lands, cabin lease applications, support quarry and archaeological permits and engagement activities to maintain relationships with small and medium size applications. We continue to develop an internal regulatory system on behalf of the Tłıchq Government to improve our responses to applications.



Tłıchq Wenek'e: Tłıchq Land Use Plan

The Tłıchq Land Use Plan was developed and ratified in 2013 and recommends a review of the plan every 5 years of implementation. In 2019, the Tłıchq Government received funding for the review of Land Protection Zones within the Tłıchq Land Use Plan – Gowhadq Yek'e t'ı k'e (Traditional Use Zone) and Tłıchq Nawoo Ké Dét'ahot'ı (Cultural Heritage Zone). This funding will contribute to, and improve on, the Tłıchq Government's capacity, to create new programs and strengthen existing programs. Currently, the Tłıchq Government is in the midst of its Land Use Plan review. Despite workplan disruptions caused by COVID-19, this process is moving ahead and is scheduled for completion in early 2022.

Dınàgà Wek'èhodì

Dınàgà Wek'èhodì is proposed as a protected area. The Tłıchq Government with the support of community members, continued their traditional role as stewards of the North Shore. The NWT Pilot Biodiversity Monitoring testing in Dınàgà Wek'èhodì (candidate protected area) and surrounding areas was completed in September 2020.

Tłıchq Aquatic Ecosystem Monitoring Program

The purpose of the Tłıchq Aquatic Ecosystem Monitoring Program (TAEMP) is to continue to build and maintain a successful community-based monitoring program. The location changes annually and after all four communities have been monitored, the process repeats itself. This is the 12th year of the program and third time that Snare Lake is the focus of our TAEMP.

At the on-the-land camp in September 2020, despite the reduced staff, biologists and community members collected fish tissue samples for analysis of a variety of metals, including mercury. Two youths were provided with some basic hands-on training in science-based sampling methods. Water and sediment samples were analysed for metals, as well as chemical and physical properties.

Marian Watershed Stewardship Program

The Marian Watershed Stewardship Program (MWSP) is a community-based aquatic effects monitoring program in the Marian Watershed. MWSP was initiated in 2013 and was designed to monitor cumulative effects of development, land disturbance, and climate change drawing on both western and indigenous science to obtain baseline conditions and potential changes over time. Like the TAEMP, the MWSP rotates yearly between upper and lower watershed sites. In 2019, the lower Marian River was sampled, so the 2020 site was upstream of the Shoti Lake area and in the proximity of the La Martre River/Marian River junction. This is the second time this site was sampled.

At the on-the-land camp in September 2020, biologists and community members collected fish tissue samples for analysis of a variety of metals, including mercury. Water and sediment samples were analyzed for metals, as well as chemical and physical properties. As in previous years, community members were provided with some basic hands-on training in science-based sampling methods. The group functioned well, and a large amount of data was collected.

As a follow-up to the field component of the program, a meeting was held in Yellowknife presenting results for fish, water and sediment to Elders, youth and community participants.



Ekwǫ Harvest Monitoring Program

The Tłıchǫ Government delivered a course in October 2020 in Behchokǫ for the Ekwǫ Harvest Monitoring Program. The course included planning logistics for the harvest monitoring program, environmental monitoring techniques, health and safety, reviewing ENR monitoring protocols, interview training and opportunities such as mapping and using the GPS.

The participants who successfully completed the course were hired as monitors for the Ekwǫ Harvest Monitoring Program during the duration of the opening of the Tibbitt to Contwoyto winter road; the first week of February till the first week of April. The objective of the Ekwǫ Harvest Monitoring Program is for the monitors to collect harvest information focusing on ekwǫ along the Tibbitt to Contwoyto winter road; collect samples from harvested ekwǫ; educate Tłıchǫ hunters on the no-hunting zone and spread messaging of respectful harvesting. One of the main goals for the monitors was to ensure that people were safe while out hunting for ekwǫ and so, when weather warnings were in effect, the monitors would let hunters know.

The Tłıchǫ Government is looking forward to continuing this work in hopes that hunting for ekwǫ is done in a safe, responsible and respectful manner and that the ekwǫ populations start to recover.



Dìga Harvest Program

Through the ongoing decline of the Kqk'èetì ekwò and Sahti ekwò herds, the Tłıchǫ Government and the Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Environment and Natural Resources have been collaborating with the Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board to implement co-management actions to support ekwò recovery.

A key recommended action from the 2019 Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board hearing was that the Tłıchǫ Government implement a community-based Dìga Harvest Program. There is a strong spiritual connection between the Tłıchǫ people and dìga. A vital process in implementing the dìga harvest program is meeting with Tłıchǫ Elders and harvesters to ensure Tłıchǫ protocols are followed when harvesting dìga. It is important that for the recovery of ekwò and for the Tłıchǫ people to continue to live their traditional way of life, the dìga population will need to be managed through increasing harvesting efforts.

Not many Tłıchǫ hunters currently have experience in harvesting dìga. The Tłıchǫ Government held a trapper course for participants of the harvesting program. The training was delivered in the early winter of 2020 with an instructor from Alberta, and the implementation of the harvesting program began shortly after. The Tłıchǫ Government provided safety training for the participants as much as the Department of Culture and Lands Protection understands the importance of harvesting dìga, it also has to focus on the safety of our participants.

In 2021, the implementation of the program began earlier in the year than the previous year; the location of our main camp changed from earlier years, based on the advice from the Elders of Wekweètì.



Our Elders and Youth

from past and present celebrations



Titcho Government



Tessa Macintosh



Tessa Macintosh



Titcho Government



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Tessa MacIntosh



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Department of Community Wellness

Healthy Babies, Families and Community Program

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, programs were closed from March to August, 2020. Programs resumed virtually in August. Participants (mothers and families) cooked and made crafts in their own home and when completed, the participants emailed in pictures and videos.

On a weekly basis, the Healthy Babies, Families and Community Programs in Whatì and Behchokò held prenatal/postnatal cooking classes focused on meal preparations for expecting and new parents and provided information on how to prepare healthy meals while learning how to budget.

The program also implemented craft classes; where participants were taught how to make a variety of sewing projects ranging from rosary kits to baby blankets.

Many community events were held, in partnership with other departments and community presence offices including:

Mother's Day Events

The Community Wellness Programs partnered with the Community Presence Offices to support and contribute towards the Mother's Day events.

Father's Day Events

The Community Wellness Programs partnered with the Community Presence Offices to support and contribute towards the Father's Day events.

Indigenous Peoples Day Events

The Community Wellness Programs department partnered with Presence Offices and contributed funds towards the Indigenous Peoples Day.

Tłıchq Day Celebration

The Community Wellness Programs department contributed funds towards the Tłıchq Day events in all communities on August 4, 2020.

Behchokò Fitness Program

The Community Wellness Programs department delivered fitness programming to participants in Behchokò four times a week with exercises and virtual and in-person classes in Behchokò throughout the year.

The goals and objectives of the program were to teach participant's self-regulation and resiliency tools that participants will be able to use in their life.

The participants learned about proper form when exercising, warm ups and cool downs, different exercise equipment, yoga poses to relax their body and breathing.

Whatì Annual "Trip Around the Lake"

The Community Wellness Programs and the Whatì Community Justice program hosted the Annual Whatì Trip Around the Lake. It was held on the land at two separate camps just outside of the community of Whatì. Youth learned the traditional ways of life on the land, cultural teachings of hide scraping, tanning, net fishing and dry fish/meat making. The youth also learned about the rites of passage to womanhood and manhood through teachings of the body, mind and spirit. As well, participants received traditional teachings from Elders on the roles and responsibilities of young woman and young men in the Tłıchq region. This year was different than other years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with guidelines and protocols practiced throughout the event.



Tiçho Government



Tiçho Government



Tiçho Government



Tiçho Government



Tiçho Government





Behchokò Healing Camp

The Community Wellness Programs department hosted healing camps at Russell Lake. The camp was delivered for 15 weeks – which started at the end of September 2020 until March 2021. Participants that attended the healing camps were from all four communities within the Tłı̨chò region. Topics included in the camps were: “Loss and Grief, Trauma, Residential School impact and Self-care.”

Approximately 100 people throughout the region participated in the healing camps.

Whatì Healthy Babies Halloween Festival

The Healthy Babies Healthy Families program in Whatì hosted a week-long festival for families with children under 6. Activities include pumpkin carving, tie-dye pillow cases, ginger bread making and baking. All these programs were delivered virtually and in their own homes with pictures submitted to the lead Coordinator on the events.

Merchandise Bingo/Craft Night/ Movie Night

The Community Wellness Programs department with Community Justice hosted programs weekly for youth in the community of Wekweètì.

Wekweètì Berry Harvesting

The Community Wellness Programs department/Justice partnered with the Wekweètì Recreation department and hosted a berry harvesting event on the land.

Children’s Winter Festival

The Community Wellness Programs department delivered winter themed packages for children 12 years and under in the month of December 2020. The festivals provided a means to celebrate children in the Tłı̨chò region and bring families together during the holiday season.

Behchokò Elder’s Appreciation Event

The Community Wellness Programs provided Elders Appreciation care packages and distributed to Elders in the month of December 2020 to celebrate all the Elders in Tłı̨chò communities and recognize their contributions to youth, to the community and to programs within Behchokò.

Behchokò Homelessness Program

The Community Wellness Programs department contributed care packages to the Behchokò Homeless Program and partnered with the local Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Behchokò Community Presence Office.



Tłı̨chò Government



Behchokò Youth Recognition Banquet

This year, with COVID-19 Restrictions, the Tłıchq Government was unable to host any events with more than 50 people indoors. Therefore, the Tłıchq Government distributed care packages which included winter hats, mitts and scarf and water bottles for the Youth. Care packages were dropped off at CJBS to deliver to Youth in Grades 7 to 12.

Behchokò Valentine’s Day Candy Grams

The Community Wellness Program delivered Valentines candy grams to participants to promote healthy relationships, a sense of love and caring for couples, parents and a warming way to say “thank you” to others in our community.

Tłıchq Annual Youth Conference

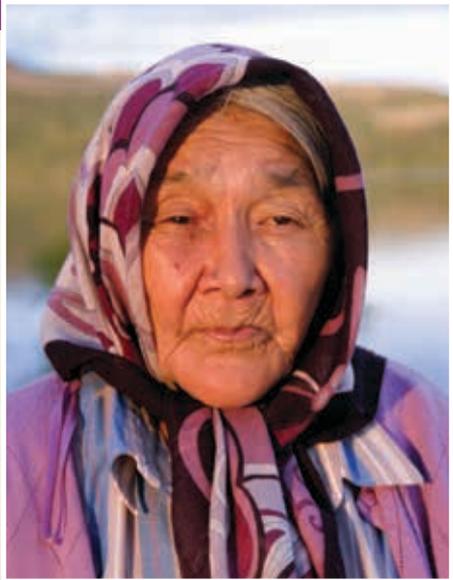
The Community Wellness Programs department postponed the Annual Youth Conference due to COVID-19 pandemic guidelines and protocols.

Zahk’e Youth on the Land

The Community Wellness Programs held a Youth on the land program at Marion Lake for five days. Youth were taught traditional activities and survival skills. They also visited historical sites and informed them of the sites and why they were “significant” to Tłıchq ancestors. Youth were reconnecting with Elders and their stories they shared with the youth. The last night of their stay, they all had a bonfire and sang drum dance songs.



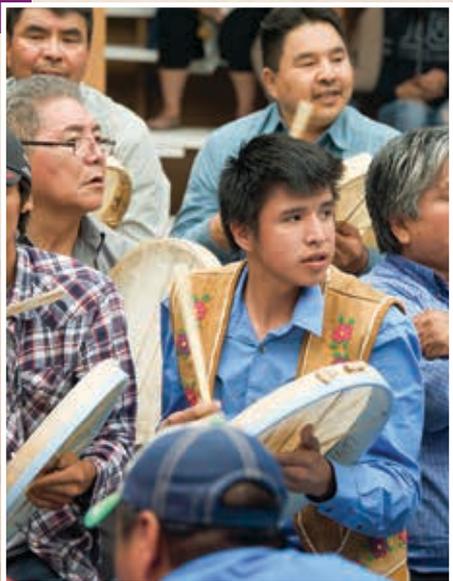
Tłıchq Government



Tłıchq Government



Tłıchq Government



Tłıchq Government



Department of Client Services

The Department of Client Services has adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic, and continues to increase client services for the Tłıchq people. The department remained constant and continuous in our service based on the needs of Tłıchq citizens, through relationship building, partnerships and collaboration.

Client Services is responsible for providing leadership and direction in programing related to: postsecondary education, training, capacity development and literacy; economic development; communications, and the enrolment of Tłıchq citizens. Including the communications and the social media presence of the Tłıchq Government online.

Career Development

The Career Development program served 298 Tłıchq citizens. The Federal Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISETS) Program operating plan has trained 166 citizens in the Tłıchq Region in 2020. 197 were trained under the Skills Partnership Agreement (SPA).

The ISETS Program coordinated a variety of training opportunities in 2020 oriented around environmental training, including wilderness safety training, environmental monitoring training, wilderness and wildlife safety, and the Canadian Firearms Safety Course (non-restricted). Included were opportunities for past trainees to receive recertification where applicable.

Through partnerships with Watson Management and Aurora College, the Tłıchq Government was able to deliver eLearning Software Testing training, Start your Own Business, Intro to Office Skills, Pre-Trades Math, Literacy and Numeracy Essentials and Camp Cook. Partnerships with Laughing Lichen and the Northern Farming Training Institute (NFTI) allowed ISETPs deliver training on foraging and wildcraft, and the BRIDGE Program with NFTI (Building Resilient Individuals through Development, Growth and Empowerment) included Tłıchq youth participants.

In addition, security training was offered, which saw participants gain the skill sets to be hired as Security Guards. Heavy Equipment training was offered along with opportunities for Heavy Duty Mechanic Apprenticeships.

The ISETS Program also supported Tłıchq youth in the Northern Youth Abroad program in 2020. A range of programs have also been offered to the Client Services staff as opportunities for professional development. Numerous programs under the ISETS Program have been enhanced through partnerships with Skills and Partnership Fund (SPF) Program.

The SPF funded many programs including: Eco Canada's Building Environmental Aboriginal Human Resources (BEAHR), Wilderness Safety Training, and the Youth Land Navigation Program and the Youth Skills Enhancement programs. Where possible, these programs are run in coordination with the Community Government and held within each of the communities.



Tłıchq Government



There were opportunities for training in a variety of topics related to roles and responsibilities of a Geoscience Field Assistant, and the duties and responsibilities of a Wildlife Monitor. This includes a range of topics from the Tłıchq Government policies, health and wellness, to Canadian Firearms Safety course, reading maps and GPS, as well as bear safety, bear guard, trip planning, trip emergency and crisis scenarios, snowmobile safety, chainsaw orientation and safety training.

The Tłıchq Government staff enhanced the number of driver training programs provided in the past year. There have been Class 1, 3, 5 and 7 courses in Behchokq, Whatı, Wekweetı and Gametı. When students are ready, additional training has been coordinated in Hay River along with testing, so that they may receive an unrestricted license. The Tłıchq Government supported 138 citizens this past year.

The Tłıchq Government also supported the Camp Cook program in Fort Smith, as well as the costs for travel and accommodation for the six students.

Communications

The Tłıchq Government website and Facebook page help the Tłıchq Government provide up-to-date news and information to Tłıchq citizens, and others interested in the activities and work of the Tłıchq Government. The website is also intended to be a celebration of all things Tłıchq and has sections on Tłıchq communities, culture and Tłıchq history. In 2020/2021, there have been over 65,000 users visiting the site.

Economic Development

The focus for economic development is to develop collaborative partnerships in the Tłıchq region, including ongoing framework and strategic economic development plans that meet client, community and regional goals and objectives.

The Tłıchq Regional Economic and Development Working Group, is updating the Training, and Economic Development Strategy in 2021 to 2022.

Enrolment

There are 4,485 active Tłıchq citizens. Enrolment provides a variety of services for Tłıchq citizens. A new service is providing assistance to Tłıchq citizens with Wills and Estates.



Tłıchq Government



Tłıchq Government



Department of Early Childhood Programs

The Tłıchq Government Early Childhood programs have had a difficult year in the face of COVID-19. Despite all of the ups and downs, the programs continue to provide learning and care to the children and families served throughout the Tłıchq communities. With some small closures throughout the year, the Tłıchq Early Childhood programs provided childcare services to essential workers during the lockdown in the spring of 2020 and were fully back up and running by September 2020.

The Early Childhood staff are able to provide programs founded in Tłıchq culture, language and way of life. Early childhood programs provide families who work with quality daycare and help parents to attend high school, upgrading or training opportunities, and provide much needed respite for families and children with special needs.

Recognizing the importance of the early years for the health and wellness of the Tłıchq people, the Tłıchq Government has made early learning and childcare a priority and is working to carry out the visions of the Tłıchq people which were outlined in the Early Childhood Strategy and Framework (2017). Some of the goals that the Tłıchq Government has been working on this past year have been:

- The development and building of an Early Childhood Family Resource Centre in each community.
- The development of more speech and language services for children and families.
- The development of a Tłıchq Early Years Law so that Tłıchq have the authority and decision-making power over all areas of early learning and childcare.
- The development of a Tłıchq Early Years Training Certificate and Diploma Program.
- The development of more early childhood supports, services and programs for children and families.

All of the early childhood work is rooted in Tłıchq culture, language and way of life in order to strengthen Tłıchq communities, provide the best services to children and families and to develop a vision for the future.



Tłıchq Government



Department of Corporate Services

The Department of Corporate Services is responsible for providing administration in all areas of the finance and human resource management. Finance division ensures efficient financial management, and the human resources division focuses on the development of human resources policies and programs that strengthen the Tłıchq Government.

The Department continued to improve the administration of financial management and human resources functions, through improvement in policies and procedures, and employee safety training, specifically focusing on enhanced office safety measures to make sure all staff are working in a healthy environment. The Department continued to expand and filled some key positions within Finance and Human Resources.

Department of Planning and Partnerships

The Department of Planning and Partnerships is a new department with a mandate to provide intergovernmental support and provide strategic planning support for the Tłıchq Government. Some of the key areas the new department include:

Intergovernmental Forums

The Tłıchq Government has been a leader in creating new forums with the GNWT to discuss matters of importance to Tłıchq people and communities. These new forums include the NWT Council of Leaders, meetings of the NWT Modern Treaty holders and the GNWT and ongoing bilateral meetings.

Wek'èezhì Land Use Planning Committee

The GNWT, the Tłıchq Government and the Federal Government have been working collaboratively since 2014 to develop a land use planning process and a Land Use Plan for Public Lands in the Wek'èezhì area. This process is recommended under Section 22.5 of the Tłıchq Agreement. A Wek'èezhì Land Use Planning Committee was formed and is made up of all three parties to lead this work. The working group is now in the final stages of reviewing and completing the Cooperation Agreement and a Terms of Reference document, which will provide guidance in setting up the Planning Office and Planning Committee. The Planning Office will lead the planning process and develop a land use plan for public lands in the Wek'èezhì while the Planning Committee will oversee the running and functioning of the Planning Office.



Tłıchq/Akaitcho Overlap Process

The Tłıchq Government and the Yellowknives Dene First Nation (YKDFN) on behalf of the Akaitcho Territory Government are working together to implement the 2002 Tłıchq and Akaitcho Overlap Agreement. This process is intended to allow both governments to collaborate on shared interests in the overlap area and continue to build on a strong, bilateral working relationship. Tłıchq leadership and senior officials have met with the YKDFN leadership and senior officials in the last year to discuss steps to work together. A working group between the two governments has now been formed and mutual issues relating to land use and land use planning, Caribou management, and the implementation of the Overlap Agreement are the immediate focus of the working group.

Education

There has been a great deal of action from the GNWT in the area of education this past year that has required the Tłıchq Government to provide government to government input and direction, including:

- The Education Act Modernization
- The JK-Grade Curriculum Renewal
- The Early Learning and Child Care Strategy 2030

These changes will have a huge impact on Tłıchq citizens and need to be considered and addressed with urgency and importance. Based on direction from the CEC, the Department is working to ensure that the Tłıchq Government is being consulted as equal partners as the GNWT moves forward.

As well, the Department of Planning and Partnerships has been involved in the discussion with the GNWT regarding the new Chief Jimmy Bruneau School. The department has coordinated and facilitated a working group with the TCSA and the GNWT to move this project forward. The CEC has given direction to pursue the idea of larger school which will house all students in Behchok̓ from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 and potentially some post-secondary options.

The Department of Planning and Partnerships has also been working on the development of a Tłıchq Early Years Law which will have the Tłıchq Government assume authority over all early childhood programs, including daycare legislation. This will also continue the work being done to formally establish an early year's department in the Tłıchq Government and the development of an Early Childhood Family Resource Centre in each of the communities. This law is unique and one of the first laws in the Tłıchq Government that will focus on jurisdiction and authority.



Tłıchq Government



Policy Development

The Tłıchq Government has been managing the development, implementation and monitoring of the Tłıchq Government administrative policies and making sure they are compliant with applicable Tłıchq Laws, as well as applicable Territorial and Federal legislation.

Communications

A current priority is coordinating the planning, and implementation of a comprehensive communications strategy that includes goals and measurable objectives which ensure the Tłıchq Government messaging is reaching both its citizens and interested people outside the communities.

COVID-19 Planning

Developing and implementing all measures and guidelines related to keeping the Tłıchq Government workplaces safe through the COVID-19 pandemic was a priority for the Tłıchq Government. This included monitoring safe work practices as documented in the Tłıchq Government **Exposure Control Plan** as well as implementing a safe workplace according to the Tłıchq Government **Returning to the Workplace Plan**.

These plans detail how the Tłıchq Government works, holds meetings and gatherings and serves Tłıchq citizens at each phase of the GNWT Emerging Wisely Plan. The protocols and processes in these documents have been put in place to protect the health and wellbeing of the Tłıchq Government staff and Tłıchq citizens and community members accessing the Tłıchq Government offices.



Tłıchq Government



Tłıchq Government



Tłıchq Government



Tłıchq Government



Community Presence Reports

Each community presence office coordinates and supports a number of community activities each year. Many of these are carried out in cooperation with other departments and agencies including community governments and the TCSA. The following is just a snapshot of those events:

Wekweètì

- **Gravesite Cleaning/Ancestors Crib Fixing Project**
The Ancestors Crib Fixing Project was developed to teach Tłıchq youth the history of Tłıchq ancestry stories. The program teaches youth the proper way of fixing the ancestor cribs, gives Elders and youths an opportunity to work together and share stories in the evenings on the land. 23 participants took part in this project.
- **Women on the Land Program**
Women on the land program is the highlight of the community of Wekweètì. Each year women get together to share their stories, work together, teach one another traditional clothing projects and just have fun out on the land. 12 women participated in 2020.
- **Christmas Parade Celebration**
Wekweètì had their 3rd Annual Christmas Parade. Christmas is about love, family and being together as unity in the community. The celebration brings laughter, socializing and family love.

Behchokò

- **Feeding of the Fire**
Every 1st Friday of every month, a Feeding of the Fire is held for the community of Behchokò. The Feeding of the Fire consists of drumming, prayer songs, and offerings made to the fire followed by a lunch.
- **Alternative Food Project**
This program has been running all year round. The harvesters supply Elders and low-income families with traditional food such as fish, beaver, muskrats, rabbit, ducks, etc.
- **Graveyard Beautification/Crib Making Project**
Work was carried out to beautify the local cemetery, upgrade cribs and make cribs for those that didn't have one.
- **Community Caribou Meat Distribution**
In 2020, the community of Wekweètì assisted Behchokò in caribou harvesting and distribution to community members.
- **Home Exterior Painting and Step Repair Project**
Youth were employed to paint the exterior of homes, as well as the fences and balconies of private homes.
- **Church Refurbishing**
New rugs were purchased for St. Michael's Church and repairs were carried out. A 20' x 24' shed was also constructed for the church to keep their supplies in.
- **Teepee Chapel Construction for Behchokò's Cemetery**
A new teepee chapel for Behchokò Cemetery was constructed to replace the existing one.



- **Happy Daze**
A fishing derby was held in the community, as well as the Happy Daze BBQ.
- **Thanksgiving**
A traditional turkey dinner was put together and pre-packaged (COVID-19 friendly) for the community members.
- **Trapping Subsidy**
A trapping subsidy (gas) was provided up to \$300.00 per household. This subsidy was to encourage and assist fellow trappers continuing with this Tłıchq lifestyle.
- **Trapping Program**
Youth were taught how to trap and how to properly prepare the fur. The camp involved 10 participants and five facilitators. The program also encouraged the youth to fill out GHL applications which will in turn assist the youth selling their furs to the Department of ENR.

Gamètì

- **Hamper Program**
Hampers were given out to community members during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Community Beautification**
Summer students worked on minor projects in the community such as the old daycare touch up. This building will be the culture building to do activities and programs.
- **Infrastructure Projects**
The Tłıchq Government worked on several projects:
 - church benches that were donated to our community church from Lethbridge Alberta, were installed,
 - outside balcony/steps replaced/painted at Elders' homes,
 - minor touch ups such as floors replaced, and heaters fixed and water leaks fixed in Elders' homes,
 - minor painting in homes.
- **Faber Lake Graveyard Clean Up**
Elders and Youth fixed and painted the old cribs and cleaned up on the island. The community graveyard was also cleaned up. Old cribs were replaced and painted.
- **Culture Camp**
30 to 40 people attended a culture camp 30 minutes away from Gamètì by boat for 10 days. The Elders camped out on the land with the youth and young adults, told stories, set fish nets and taught youth to cut and dry fish as well as caribou.

Whatì

- **Community Beautification**
Young people were hired to carry out the community beautification project. The first priority were given to the Elders. Over 25 or more houses were completed.
- **Cabin and Warehouse Upgrade**
Three cabins were upgraded and are available for community members to use, and the warehouse was reconstructed. 8 to 10 summer students were hired.
- **Community Hunt and Meat Distribution**
Community members held a community hunt and distributed meat to community members.



Post-Secondary Education – ONE

The Tłıchǫ Government’s **ONE program: One Nation Education Student Financial Support Program** for post-secondary students has provided supplementary funding for post-secondary training or education programs for Tłıchǫ citizens since 1997. By financially assisting students who are attending post-secondary educational programs, the Tłıchǫ Government is helping to strengthen our people, their families and our communities.

ONE program is for all Tłıchǫ citizens. Eligibility to receive ONE funding requires you to be a Tłıchǫ citizen, attending full-time in an approved program at a designated post-secondary institution, which will lead to a certificate, diploma, undergraduate, masters or doctoral degree.

Statistics

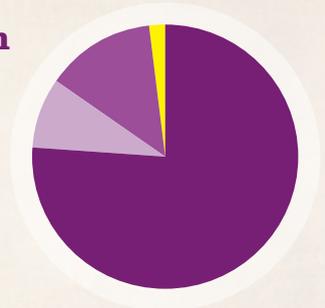
Total Students accessed the ONE Program: 101

Total Students accessed the ONE payment: 89

Total Students from the Tłıchǫ Region

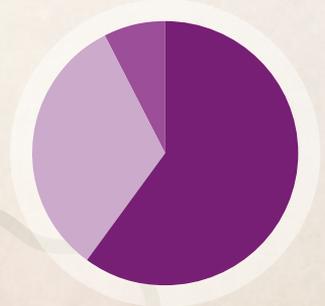
(Behchokò, Whatì, Gamètì, and Wekweètì):

- 45 Behchokò
- 5 Whatì
- 8 Gamètì
- 1 Wekweètì



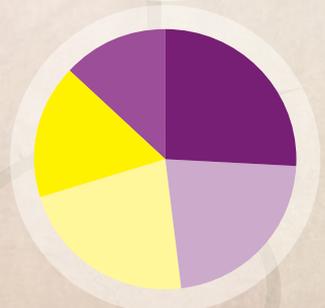
Total students in the rest of Canada

- 24 Northwest Territories
- 13 Alberta
- 3 British Columbia



Areas of Interest

- 14 Bachelor Degree (Arts, Education, Interdisciplinary Studies, Criminal Justice, Fine Arts, Management, Natives Studies and Education, Business Administration, Science in Nursing, Social Work, and Kinesiology)
- 12 Early Learning and Child Care
- 12 University and College Access Program (UCAP) and OCAP
- 9 Business Administration
- 7 Personal Support Worker



For more information, please see our presence on the website at www.tlicho.ca, or if you have questions, email us at one@tlicho.com.



Jamie Stevenson Photography



Jamie Stevenson Photography



Thank You to Our Partners!

Since 1997, our corporate partners have been contributing to the success of our students! Their financial assistance is greatly appreciated and we look forward to their continuing participation in this wonderful program. Ması Cho!





Tłicho Government

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*Du sa naet'aa, du deh nı́ıı, du dè nàgoèhdò-le nı́dè,
asù wets'à goet'ò hqı́ı ha-le.*

– Monfwi, 1921

*As long as the sun will rise, as long as the rivers
will flow, if the land is not moved, we cannot be
limited from our way of life.*

– Monfwi, 1921