

Tłįcho Ndek'àowo

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Tłicho Government

Tł₁ch₀ Government

2024 ANNUAL REPORT







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Message from **Grand Chief**



I am pleased to provide an overview of the Tłycho Government's activities for the 3rd year of the 5th Tłycho Assembly.

The last year has been exceptionally challenging for our citizens across the Northwest Territories. The wildfires of 2023 meant many communities across the north were evacuated including Wekweètì, Behchokò, and Yellowknife. We saw the loss of homes and cabins

and thousands of hectares of our land burnt. The actions taken and decisions made were rooted in the Tłįcho value of unity, and that we looked after each other as we have always done. As we reflect and learn from our experiences, we know that the Tłįcho Government provided support to Tłįcho citizens in a variety of ways and was responsive to the needs of our people.

We have shown that we have the capacity, passion, and willingness to work collaboratively in the best interests of our people and our land. We are using our experiences and lessons learned to ensure we are part of the territorial emergency planning process at all levels.

Despite the challenges over the past year, our government has accomplished many exciting things and continues to develop and grow. Tłycho Government continues to build strong relationships with other governments. We have had many intergovernmental meetings with the Government of the Northwest Territories, Government of Canada and other Indigenous Governments that have resulted in important work being done for the protection of our land and resources as well as looking after the health and wellbeing of Tłįcho citizens. We have also hosted and met with foreign dignitaries over the past year highlighting our Tłįcho selfgovernment and land claims.

Our financing agreement with Canada was extended to ensure financial stability for the next 10 years. Negotiations have continued towards renewing the Intergovernmental Services Agreement in such a way that it allows us to build a vision for the taking up of Tłįcho jurisdiction that has always been the intention of Tłįcho Elders and ancestors. We are currently focusing on education and early childhood as our first steps.

As custodians and stewards of our Tłycho lands, we work to ensure that our land, water, and resources are protected. To protect the land for future generations, we have completed the Tłįchǫ Wenek'e Land Use Plan 5-Year Review. Tłıcho Government has also created partnerships to plant one million trees on Tłįcho lands over the next three years as part of a reforestation project to help our land heal from the wildfire devastation.

We are developing a procurement framework with Canada for the Giant Mine Remediation project that will guarantee employment, contracts, and training opportunities for Tłıcho citizens and companies. We have also seen the Intergovernmental Council further its goals of working with other governments—public and Indigenous—on systems and resource management throughout the NWT.

We are also focusing on the health and well-being of our Tłıcho citizens through implementing our Tłįcho Hotiì Ts'eeda Edets'àts'edi Eto, or the Tłıcho Healing Path. This project is a multi-year initiative that aims to strengthen support for Tłįcho citizens at all stages of their journey toward addiction recovery and wellness.

This year, Tłıcho Government hosted Eghàlats'iida/Let's Work Tłıcho Workers Gathering which brought together youth, Tłįcho employees, and mine and remote workers. The goal was to provide information and networking opportunities to improve employment and training, apprenticeships, and overall wellness for Tłįcho citizens in the future. Tłįcho Government also understands the importance of housing and infrastructure as critical for Tłįcho citizens, so we have continued the implementation of the Housing Action Plan and have created a Tłįcho Infrastructure Plan.

Tłįcho Government continues to promote and protect Tłįcho culture, language, and way of life in all of our work. Tłįcho Elders have always shared with us that we have a duty and responsibility to ensure the well-being of our people and our land. I am honoured to stand with our leadership and staff as we reflect on the past year and look to the future. Together we all strive for change and a better world for our children and grandchildren.

In Tłycho Unity

Grand Chief Jackson Lafferty









Executive

The Executive team plays an essential role in providing special expertise and counsel to the Tłįcho Executive Officer (TEO), Chief's Executive Council (CEC), and the Departments.

Policy Review

In 2023, the Executive began a comprehensive administrative policy review. Since the Tłıcho Government's recognition in 2005, a thorough review has only been undertaken once, in 2010. Since then, the Administrative Policy Manual has more than doubled, and the government has become more complex. The current review will focus on making policies more concise and accessible. It will also focus on developing strong policy statements and new standard operating procedures to accompany the new policy manual. The review will include consultation and review by stakeholders, including selected staff, senior managers, and the TEO, and finally, review and approval by the Chiefs Executive Council. As new policies are approved, they will be available on the Tłıcho Government website.

ERP Implementation

The Tłıcho Government has grown exponentially since the Tłıcho Agreement became effective in 2005. Unfortunately, its human resource and financial management systems have not. To meet the government's continually evolving needs and complexity, an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system has been selected, and the government has started transitioning its finance and HR functions to this new system. An ERP is essentially a single system to manage and integrate business processes. They are highly sophisticated and complex systems, but when working effectively, they streamline systems and processes and improve communication and coordination. An ERP can be a solid technical backbone that enables self-government's aspirational and tactical objectives. The first phase of ERP implementation is expected to take approximately two years, with subsequent phases planned for the next three to five years.

Evacuation

Last summer was a time of great upheaval for Tłįchǫ people in all of our communities – evacuations from Wekweèti, Behchokò, and Yellowknife touched us all in some way. As our people always do in times of crisis, we were able to find a way to keep each other safe through our unity and resilience.

We have learned many lessons from responding to these evacuations, primarily how we work with other governments, such as our community governments, the GNWT, and Canada. The Tłįcho Government is working hard to ensure that for any future crisis, we are at the table with the emergency management and planning groups from other governments.

Housing

Tłıcho Government continues its work to relieve the housing crisis in our communities.

Last summer, around the evacuations, we were able to carry out housing assessments of almost all private homes in Tłycho communities. We are now carrying out a priority assessment of the homes in most need and have already invested significant resources into repairs and renovations to improve the conditions of private homes.

We have also brought in over 70 new homes into the Tłįcho region for private rental units. We aim to continue moving income earners out of public housing units wherever possible into private rental units – providing affordable and stable homes for our citizens and employees to live in our communities.

Social Housing remains the responsibility of the GNWT. We are working with the GNWT to continue reviewing programs and policies to ensure they work for our citizens who need housing support.

Ouri Scott, a highly recognized Tłıcho architect, and her team have toured our communities. The purpose of these visits was to ask Tłįchǫ citizens what "home" looks like for them. Based on this engagement, we are developing plans for building more new housing that meets the needs of Tłįcho citizens.

Infrastructure

We have invested significant resources into community infrastructure to support our housing plans and improve the standard of life in our communities. This includes resources to chip seal roads, provide street lights, and develop the new subdivision in Behchokò.

Our infrastructure team is coordinating, planning, or reviewing several projects in the Tłıcho region; examples include:

- Gamètì and Wekweètì All Season Roads
- Sprinkler Trailer Options
- Street Lights for Behchokò
- Whatì Presence Office Renovations
- Purchasing Phase 7 Modular Homes
- · Gamètì Family Centre
- Wekweètì Family Centre
- Construction of Stick-Built Homes
- Tłįchǫ Government Office Expansions

We have developed a regional infrastructure plan to help our government prioritize projects, costs, and timing.

This plan will tell us what projects we will work on and when. It outlines how we will improve our community and regional infrastructure for our citizens, companies, and communities. The planned infrastructure projects will also provide employment opportunities for our nation.

To manage these initiatives, we are creating an Infrastructure Department to lead the development of these projects for our government.

Organizational Chart

Tłįcho Annual Gathering

Tłįchǫ Assembly

Chiefs Executive Council

Tłįcho Executive Officer

Governance/ Presence Offices

Department of Client Services

Department of Corporate Service

Department of Culture and Lands Protection

Department of Early Childhood

Department of Healing

Department of Planning and Partnerships













Governance

Governance is responsible for legislative management functions of the Tłįcho Government, such as supporting Assembly members, planning and coordinating Assembly Sessions, Assembly Workshops, Annual Gatherings, and other events as requested. Governance provides support to the Mine Liaison Coordinator, Assembly Researcher and Policy Analyst, and oversees the Community Directors in Behchokò, Whatì, Gamètì, Wekweètì, and the Yellowknife office.

Community Events 2023-2024

Assembly Sessions and Annual Gathering

The following Assembly Sessions and the 19th Tłįcho Annual Gathering took place in the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

- 10th Session of the Tł_Icho Assembly Gamètì, May 30 to June 1, 2023
- 19th Tłįchǫ Annual Gathering and 11th Session of the Tłįchǫ Assembly Gamètì, July 10 to 13, 2023
- 12th Session of the Tłįcho Assembly Wekweèti, October 10 to 12, 2023
- 13th Session of the Tł_Icho Assembly Behchokò, November 7 to 9, 2023
- 14th Session of the Tłıcho Assembly Whati, February 14 to 16, 2024

Sessions were live-streamed so that Tłįcho citizens could view them remotely.

Directives and Laws

Several Directives and laws were approved by the Tłįcho Assembly between April 1, 2023 and March 31, 2024. This information is available on the Tłıcho Government's website at www.tlicho.ca.

Workshops

Two workshops for Assembly members took place this year: June 28 to 29, 2023, and January 30 to February 1, 2024, and included a mid-term review of the implementation of Ilè do gha goita – In Tłįcho Unity: Our Strategic Framework and Intentions 2021-2025.



10th Tłįcho Assembly 5th Session, Gamètì, May 30 to June 1, 2023.

Community Programs and Projects

Community Caribou Hunts

Community Presence Offices organized community caribou hunts. Caribou meat was brought back to each community and distributed to community members who do not have harvesters of their own, as well as Elders, single parents, and low-income families. This initiative provided food security as store-bought food prices continue to rise.

Trails of Our Ancestors

The Trails of Our Ancestors Program was coordinated according to the route travelled and the number of people travelling from each community to Gamètì.

Trail Breaking

The annual Trail Breaking initiative ensures traditional harvesters can utilize the trails.

Tłįcho Imbè Program

Community Presence Offices helped support the Department of Culture and Lands Protection's annual Imbè program. Program staff and participants can earn certificates, plan, and carry out community service projects, and spend time on the land learning from Elders.

50/50 Program and Healthy Communities

The 50/50 Program assisted households in purchasing equipment, tools, and materials for traditional purposes up to a maximum of \$10,000.

Home Exterior Painting, Step Repair, and Community Summer Projects

From June to August 2023, home exterior painting and step repair projects took place in all Tłycho communities. The hands-on outdoor summer project employed approximately 15 people and three Supervisors. Project participants also assisted the Community Government in building a firebreak around the community, and students learned carpentry and other skills.

Gravesite Cleaning and Crib Fixing Project

Community Presence Offices helped to maintain and clean gravesites and graveyards. The project educates youth about the proper way to fix ancestor cribs and provides Elders and youth with an opportunity to work together and share stories.



Wekweètì ladies, Winter Lake, August 11 to 21, 2023.

Caribou Harvest, Moose Harvest, Fur Harvest Gas Subsidy

In partnership with the Department of Culture and Lands Protection, the Community Presence Offices subsidized citizens with vehicle gas for caribou, moose, and fur harvesting purposes. This initiative also provided food security for families.

Men, Women, and Families On-the-Land Program

All Community Presence Offices assisted with family, Elders, youth, women's, and men's On-the-Land programming.

Community Events 2023-2024

Throughout 2023-2024, Community Presence Offices hosted or assisted other departments to unite communities to celebrate special events, play games, decorate, provide gifts, prizes, flowers, and enjoy food.

Additional Programs and Services

Behchokò Community Presence Office

- Fish Net Distribution
- Natural Material Drop-off for Homeowners
- CJBS Graduation Sweaters
- Clearing of Walkways and Snow Removal for Elders
- Hand Game Tournament

Whati Community Presence Office

- Fish Net Distribution
- Hand Game Tournaments
- Sewing Program
- Behchokò and Yellowknife Fire Evacuation Support
- Whatì Falls Project

Gamètì Community Presence Office

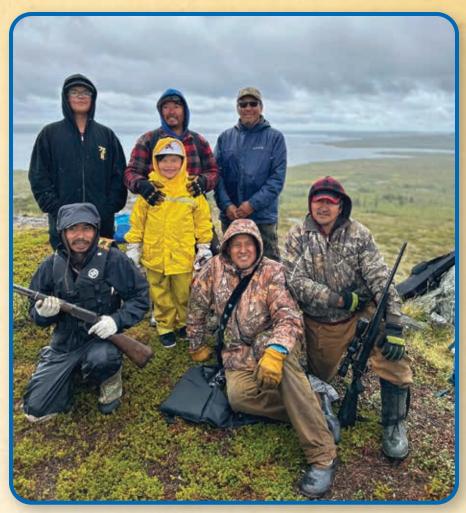
- Family Fish Camp
- Community Moose Harvest Program
- Trapping Program
- Gamètì Golf Course

Wekweeti Community Presence Office

- Office Life Skills Training
- Hide Program
- Community Freezer Meat Preparation and Distribution
- Fish Harvesting Program



Whatì Hand Games Tournament, January 5 to 7, 2024.



Winter Lake August 11 to 21, 2023



Gamètì Golf Tournament, 2023.



Department of Client Services

The Department of Client Services provides professional client-focused services to assist Tłıcho citizens in pursuing education, training, and career development opportunities. Client Services delivers programs and services such as Career Development, Communications, Economic Development, Enrolment, and Justice and Victim Services. They also support students engaged in Apprenticeships and other Post-Secondary programs. These programs and services support the building of local workforce capacity and enhance the Tłycho way of life.

Career Development

Career Counselling and Career Action Planning

Career Development provides career counselling to help Tłįchǫ citizens better understand career choices, employment pathways, and industries so that they can make informed decisions. Career counselling helps Tłįcho citizens draw upon their strengths, skills, education, and experience and identify areas of career potential, industry trends, and hiring practices.

Career Development also helps Tłįcho citizens develop an individualized Career Action Plan. These plans help them achieve their customized career goals and map out a step-by-step plan to achieve them.

Employment Maintenance Support

Career Development supports employment placement through various programs, including the Workwear and Safety Gear Program, skills development, license renewal, and employment-related health and medical examinations.

Career Training Programs

Core programming was frequently available within the region. It ensured that Tłycho citizens had access to skill development support through Open Houses and training in various areas, including driver training, Industrial Safety, Wilderness safety training, and Aspire Literacy programs.





Tłįcho Apprenticeship Services Program

The Tłycho Government has been working on developing a Tłycho Apprenticeship Services Program, which supports employers in hiring first-year apprentices, matching potential apprentices with employers, and raising awareness of apprenticeship opportunities for Tłįchǫ citizens. This program was made possible through government funding, which ended in April 2024. Client Services plans to source additional funding to continue the program.

Communications

Wildfire Emergency Response

As a member of the Emergency Response Team, Communications focused on ensuring information was available on platforms such as social media, web, print, radio, email, and bulletin board notices and provided photos, videos, and onsite coordination. Communications created numerous onlocation signs for posting in the North and at evacuation centers in Calgary, Edmonton, Grande Prairie, and others, and set up a multi-line toll-free phone number where Tłįcho residents could access information through live personnel seven days a week.









Tłycho Night

The planning and launch of "Tłįcho Night" provided the Tłįcho Government with an opportunity to maximize its profile at the annual Association for Mineral Exploration (AME) in Vancouver. Working together, Governance, the Tłįcho Investment Corporation, and Communications formed an organizing committee to develop the event. Due to the outstanding success of the event, the team was asked to plan a similar showcase for 2024-2025.

Website Upgrade

To upgrade the www.tłicho.ca website, Communications began transitioning the current site from Drupal 7 to Drupal 10 technology. This upgrade will reduce the risk of operational issues and extend the life of the current site while Drupal 7 technology is sunsetted. A further web priority will be planning and developing a new corporate site.

Economic Development

2nd Annual Tłįcho Arts Holiday Showcase and Sale

Twenty Tłıcho artists from all four Tłıcho communities and Yellowknife were brought together to put on a stunning showcase of their crafts and art products and connect with approximately 1,200 holiday shoppers. The Showcase also connected artists from across the Tłįcho communities with each other and with the Economic Development Officers who provide services and support for the artists.

Labour Marketing Information Surveys

Economic Development Officers in Whati, Gamèti, and Wekweèti worked with Career Development Officers in Behchokò to conduct Labour Market Information Surveys. The data (collected by Canada) will support a traditional economy study led by the Department of Planning and Partnerships as part of an Effectiveness Review regarding Chapter 26 of the Tłįcho Agreement.

Business Planning Workshops

Working with Crowe MacKay, the Tłįcho Government delivered business planning workshops in Behchokò and Whatì, with Whatì high school students also participating in the program.

Canada Volunteer Income Tax Program – Volunteer Training

Training was offered to those who wished to register with the Canadian Revenue Agency as a Tax Program Volunteer. Six new tax volunteers were registered, ensuring that they have the equipment, credentials, and security clearances needed to help others with their annual tax return and provide service in the Tłįchǫ language.

Giant Mine Remediation Project Training Initiatives

Two industrial safety programs for Tłıcho citizens with paid work internship placements were delivered in 2023-2024. A total of 19 trainees completed the industrial safety training program. Sixteen of those trainees went on to participate in Tłįcho Government-funded workplace internships at Quantum Murray Metcor, Forward Mining, and the Tłįcho Investment Corporation.

A Class 3 Driver's training program was also delivered in Yellowknife to six Tłıcho citizens. The driver training program creates opportunities for certification and work experience and enhances the resumes of Tłįcho citizens, better positioning them for employment in both public and private sector workplaces.

Enrolment

Enrolment remains committed to building and maintaining accurate records of Tłıcho citizenship through the incorporation of enrolment deadlines and applications (July and November 15). Enrolment also offers a number of other services and supports to Tłycho citizens, including Commission of Oaths training, preparation of Wills and Estates, management of the Citizenship Database, and Birth and Death Certificate Reimbursement.

Justice and Victim Services

Public Programming

The Justice and Victim Services Team builds community awareness of current issues and the available support to help deal with, overcome, or avoid the situation through sound decision-making. Some of the activities hosted by Justice and Victim Services in 2023-2024 include Child Safety, Community Safety, Domestic Violence, Drunk Driving, Suicide Prevention, Family Game Day, and Youth All-Nighters.

Justice Care and Support

The Justice and Victim Services team offered support and guidance through the judicial process, community relief, and justice support. These efforts were intended to support the judicial process when applied to court-ordered diversion, precharge diversion, restorative justice, interactions with the Justice Committee, and assist those participating in mediation and recovery.





Post-Secondary

Northern Youth Abroad

The Client Services Department worked with Northern Youth Abroad to deliver programming to Tłįchǫ youth through various programs and services. The program includes several pathways to success, including The Canadian Program, Northern Compass, Remote Tutoring services for Tłįcho students, and the Next Program, which took place at Algonquin College in Ottawa.

Post-Secondary Education Conference

Client Services combined the Let's Work Conference and the Post-Secondary Education Conference to deliver Edanet'e Eghalatss'iida: Learning and Working Together Tłıcho Gathering. The event connected Tłıcho citizens, employers, and organizations with career, post-secondary, apprenticeship employment opportunities and industry learning.

MacEwan University Programming

Tłycho Government has partnered with MacEwan University to provide professional development and preparatory courses for Tłįchǫ citizens and Tłycho Government staff from the four Tłycho communities. Courses and topics offered include Executive Assistant Training, Creative Business, Leadership, Office Management, Change Management, Managing Projects, Managing Conflict, Microsoft Excel, and Financial Literacy,

The Do Nake Laani Nats'etso/Strong Like Two People Bursary

The Do Nake Laani Nats'etso/Strong Like Two People Bursary is available to students who are members of the former First Nations bands of Dogrib Rae Band, Whati First Nation, Gameti First Nation, and Dechi Laot'i First Nation who are enrolled in a certificate, diploma, or degree program at an eligible post-secondary educational institution.

University College Entrance Preparation Program (UCEPP)

The University and College Entrance Program (UCEP) enables Tłįcho students to attain the academic level required for entrance into degree and diploma credit programs. The program provides non-repayable financial support for Tłycho students enrolled in accepted university and college entrance preparation programs.

ONE – Top-Up Program

The ONE – Top-Up Program is a financial top-up program available to full-time Tłįcho citizens in post-secondary programs. Running since 1997 and funded by corporate partners, the program has contributed significantly to the success of our students.

Adult Basic Education (ABE)

The Adult Basic Education National program provides funding to support the implementation and expansion of secondary programming as part of the Post-Secondary Education Strategy.

Treaty Simulation

In partnership with The Gordon Foundation, the Tłįcho Government held the Treaty Simulation in Behchokò. It was open to anyone in the four Tłįcho communities and Yellowknife. Participants were given opportunities to:

- Learn about the Tłicho Land Claims and Self-Government Agreement
- Learn about treaty negotiation practices, issues, and career paths
- Gain new skills in leadership, teamwork, communication, and problem-solving
- Hear from Tłįchǫ advisors, leaders, and Elders, and
- learning and support.



Department of Corporate Services

The Department of Corporate Services consists of two divisions: Finance and Human Resources. The Finance Division is responsible for all the day-to-day transactional accounting needs of the Tłıcho Government. This includes payroll, accounts payable, accounts receivable, accounting and reporting. The Human Resources Division is responsible for recruitment, compensation and benefits, training and development, employee relations, and occupational health and safety.

Streamline Processes

The Finance Division of Corporate Services developed and issued comprehensive binders across all departments containing detailed account list codes and rate policies. The project aimed to streamline financial processes, improve cross-team understanding, and provide financial transparency.

Improve Resource Management and Data Accuracy

Implementing an ERP system will revolutionize Finance and HR management, enhancing accuracy and efficiency. Streamlining financial and HR processes will improve resource management and data accuracy.

Professional Growth

Partnering with MacEwan University, the HR Division initiated targeted professional development programs to improve staff skills and capabilities. Corporate Services actively contributes to a more effective and adaptable workforce by building and enhancing employee skills and professional growth.

Investing in Research

In 2023-2024, Corporate Services invested in analytics research to better understand trends, inform decisions, and adapt strategies effectively. The benefits of data-driven decision-making result in improved organizational strategy and operational effectiveness.

Working with the Executive, the HR Division continues to revise Casual Hire Forms to create a more user-friendly experience. These efforts recognize the importance of simplifying administrative procedures for staff and lead to a faster and more efficient casual hiring process.

Ensuring Ongoing Compliance

The Human Resources division appointed dedicated staff to assist in monitoring the casual hire process and ensuring ongoing compliance. By streamlining the hiring processes and ensuring compliance with organizational standards, the Tłįcho Government can better manage temporary staff.

Mental Health Support

The Human Resources division conducted staff surveys to evaluate the effectiveness of in-house counselling and identify the need for additional employee mental health support. Through the awareness of employee mental health issues and the corresponding mental health supports, the Tłıcho Government is encouraging employees to lead a healthier lifestyle and create a more supportive environment in the workplace.



Department of Culture and Lands Protection

The Department of Culture and Lands Protection (DCLP) promotes the Tłıcho way of life while protecting and managing the 39,000 square kilometres of Tłįchǫ land, including its surface and sub-surface resources.

The Department works closely with numerous environmental agencies, governments, resource development companies, and the Tłįchǫ Assembly, helping to serve and protect Tłįcho lands, water, and wildlife.

Lands Regulation

Engagement with Burgundy Diamonds Mine Ltd. on the Ekati Mine Expansion Plan

DCLP Lands Regulation and Burgundy held monthly meetings to increase regulatory collaboration and efficiencies. Burgundy plans to extend the life of the Ekati Mine by developing Sable and Fox underground mines below the existing open pits.

Lands Regulation was actively involved in the Ekati Mine Renewal proceedings, including the Public Hearing held in Behchoko in June 2023 and a review of many management plans and monitoring reports for the mine.

We continue to work closely with Burgundy Diamonds to ensure the Ekati Mine is operated in a way that minimizes environmental and cultural impacts and allows for continuing employment and economic benefits.



Tłįcho Government staff, Elders, and Burgundy staff during a site visit as part of Engagement with Burgundy Mine Ltd., January 2024.



Site Visit as part of Engagement with Burgundy, Ekati Diamond Mine Site January 2024, Tłįchǫ Government staff, Elders, and Burgundy staff were present.

Engagement with Rio Tinto on the Diavik Mine Closure

Lands Regulation worked closely with Elders, youth, technical experts, and Diavik on the anticipated closure of Diavik Mine in 2026. These efforts included coordinating site visits and workshops and participating in a review of regulatory submissions. In 2023, this work included:

- Meeting monthly with Diavik staff to discuss closure planning and regulatory updates
- Organized site visits and workshops for representatives of each Tłıcho community regarding the closure plans
- Active participation in the Diavik Decommissioning Amendment Water License Proceeding, including the Public Hearing
- Submission of comments and recommendations on the Final Closure and **Reclamation Plan**

Active participation and engagement with Diavik in and out of the regulatory processes ensure that Tłıcho perspectives are communicated to the company directly and early enough to impact closure planning.



Tłįcho Government-organized Engagement Workshop with Diavik Diamond Mines Inc., April 2023, Yellowknife.

Active Engagement with Diavik to Ensure That Tłycho **Perspectives are Communicated Early Enough to Impact Closure Planning**

Lands Regulation, federal agencies (such as CIRNAC-CARD), and private proponents regularly engaged through meetings, site visits, and regulatory reviews for the remediation and monitoring of contaminated sites within Mowhi Gogha Dè Niithèe. Highlights of 2023-2024 include collaboration with CIRNAC-CARD, contractors (AECOM, Sanexen), and its regulatory agencies, as well as with members of the Kwetipaa Elders Committee (KEC) and Tłycho Government-hired scientists on the remediation planning for the Rayrock site. Significant work and engagement also took place for the remediation and monitoring of Indore-Hottah, Great Bear Lake sites, Sun Main, Colomac, and, to a lesser extent, the Giant Mine site.

This important work led to the signing of the Tłįcho Government-Canada Rayrock Remediation Agreement in 2023, as well as a three-year, \$2.1 million funding agreement to support Tłycho Government Elders, youth, and citizen engagement in the environmental, cultural, and socioeconomic remediation and monitoring activities for the Rayrock site.

At the Colomac site, the Tłįcho Government helped connect citizens to monitor training opportunities and events. Tłycho Government-led fish sampling with Elders and youth generally indicated safe and healthy fish at the site. Traditional knowledge studies were begun for the Indore-Hottah and Great Bear Lake sites to further guide the remediation process with CIRNAC-CARD.



Tłլcho Mine Site Remediation Update public meeting with the Kwetլլշaà Elders Committee (KEC), February 14, 2024, Behchoko.



Regulatory Reviews, GNWT Consultations, Tłycho Lands **Access, and Engagement**

As part of responding to requests, DCLP encourages culturally appropriate methods of engagement through the Weghàà Eleyatits'eedi Engagement Guidelines.

Lands Regulation ensures that the Tłycho Government has 'eyes on all activities' within Mowhi Gogha Dè Niţtlèè to look for potential impacts on Tłįcho people, culture, and way of life by reviewing applications and requests sent from companies, the GNWT, federal agencies, and the Land and Water Boards. These efforts were supported through regulatory reviews, GNWT consultation requests on lease or permit applications, and Tłįcho lands Access Applications. Some of the projects that Lands Regulation oversees include the Diamond Mines (Diavik, Ekati, Gahcho Kué, Snap Lake), Nechalacho, Nighthawk/STLLR Gold Colomac Project, Gold Terra Yellowknife Gold Project, and various other explorations projects for lithium, gold, diamonds and other minerals within Mowhi.

Lands Regulation tracks all regulatory activities and requests through weekly meetings. In 2023, the division received about 149 public review items, and each application is considered based on priority and the nature of the project or application. By doing so, we work to ensure that all traditional lands of the Tłįcho are protected and that Tłįcho employment is promoted wherever possible.

Conference Presentation and Participation

The staff presented or co-presented at several conferences in 2023, such as:

- Federal Contaminated Sites Remediation Conference (Toronto, ON)
- Geoscience (Yellowknife, NT)
- Society for Ecological Restoration (SER) Conference on Ecological Restoration (Darwin, Australia)

Lands Regulation staff have also participated in the Annual Conference on Western Indigenous Consultation and Engagement, Association for Mineral Exploration (AME): Round-Up, and Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada (PDAC).

Lands Protection and Renewable Resources

Tłycho Aquatic Ecosystem Monitoring Program

The Tłycho Aquatic Ecosystem Monitoring Program (TAEMP) is a community-driven initiative aimed at assessing changes in fish, water, and sediment quality over time and evaluating the safety of fish and water for consumption. TAEMP conducts scientific fish, water, and sediment sampling on a rotational basis across the four Tłįcho communities, ensuring each community undergoes sampling and analysis every four years.



The Marian Watershed Stewardship Program

The Marian Watershed Stewardship Program (MWSP) monitors aquatic effects within the Marian Watershed. Established to track the cumulative impacts of development, land disturbances, and climate change, MWSP integrates both Western and Indigenous scientific approaches to establish baseline conditions and



observe changes over time. Like the TAEMP, MWSP employs thorough laboratory analyses of the collected samples. Findings are shared annually with the communities involved. The follow-up results give community members a better understanding of aquatic ecosystem health.

Fish Food Security

To address the high cost of food, DCLP launched a Fish Food Security Program aimed at catching and distributing fish to community members. Approximately 2,000 pounds (1 ton) of fresh fish was made available, with all fish cut or filleted upon demand. All fish was free, caught in Marian Lake, and made available to anybody seeking good food.



Tłįcho Wenek'e Land Use Plan

Implemented in 2013, the Land Use Plan serves as a vital framework for the stewardship of Tłįcho lands, employing maps, policies, and comprehensive documentation under Tłįchǫ Wenek'e. Its primary aim is to safeguard Tłįchǫ cultural heritage and lifestyle. The plan delineates the approach to future development, emphasizing the conservation of Tłįchǫ lands and prescribing appropriate developmental and activity patterns on these lands.

In November 2023, the Tłycho Government conducted its inaugural in-depth review and enhancement of Wenek'e, adhering to the guidelines of policy 7.9 in the Land Use Plan. This review covered several vital aspects, including land use zones, directives, permissible activities, the use of Tłįchǫ Yatı, and overarching objectives.

Dınàgà Wek'èhodì Protected Area

The Tłıcho Government is actively pursuing and supporting the official designation of Dınàgà Wek'èhodì as a Territorial Protected Area along the North Arm of Great Slave Lake. Focused efforts by the Tłįcho Government in Dınàgà Wek'èhodì encompass cultural programming, environmental surveillance, conservation projects, and enhancing local capabilities. For 2023-2024, the Tłįchǫ Government launched new programs in the region which supplement ongoing activities like the Dınàgà Aquatic Ecosystem Monitoring Program (DAEMP) and the yearly caribou hide-tanning workshop at Dehk'e (Frank Channel).

Nàilii Wek'èhodì (Whati Falls) Ticho Protected Area Initiative

Over the past three years, DCLP has dedicated considerable efforts towards planning, designing, and engaging stakeholders in the development of the Nàılıı (Whati Falls) project. Nàılıı holds profound spiritual importance for the Tłycho people, particularly for residents of the neighbouring community of Whati, underscoring the need for its preservation.

In 2023-2024, notable advancements were made in setting up a day-use area and introducing park facilities near the falls, complemented by formulating a five-year strategic plan.

Edéhzhíe Protected Area

The Tłycho Government remains committed to supporting and actively participating in the conservation of the Edéhzhíe (Horn Plateau) Protected Area, situated within the Dehcho region and along the eastern boundary of the Mowhi Gogha Dè Nuthèe. Edéhzhíe stands out as a place of spiritual significance, marked by its distinctive ecological and physical features. Its terrain, aquatic systems, and wildlife are essential for the Dehcho Dene and the Tłıcho communities, each of which shares a longstanding historical bond with this territory. The Tłįcho Government is honoured to partner with the Dehcho First Nations to safeguard this extraordinary area.

Diga (Wolf) Harvesting Program

Amid the declining numbers of the Bathurst ekwò (Caribou) herd and the stabilizing population of the Bluenose East ekwò, the Tłįcho Government and the Government of the Northwest Territories have submitted a five-year collaborative management plan to the Wek'èezhìı Renewable Resources Board (WRRB). This plan is aimed at aiding the recovery of the ekwò herds. The strategy for managing dìga (wolves) focuses on systematically reducing their numbers in the winter habitats of the ekwò herds over five years (2020-2024), with the specifics of annual wolf culls to be adjusted based on the herds' responses to these interventions.

Eighty-one wolves were harvested over the past five years. Considering each wolf potentially preys on about 25 caribou annually, this effort may have contributed to preserving over 2,000 caribou during the program's duration, if not more.

Ekwò (Caribou) Harvest Monitoring Program

In response to the declining numbers of the ekwo herds, the Tłıcho Government has implemented the Ekwò Harvest Monitoring Program, following guidance from the Wek'èezhìi Renewable Resources Board. This initiative is designed to bolster monitoring activities, foster education on and adherence to respectful harvesting practices, and ensure that Tłįcho hunters observe traditional Tłįcho laws during their ekwo hunts. Over the last four years, the program has gathered data on ekwò harvested by Tłįcho hunters along the Tibbitt to Contwoyto Winter Road.

The Tłıcho Elders and harvesters guide the monitoring camp, where they serve as the eyes and ears in the field. They assist and share teachings related to traditional harvesting to prevent wastage and wounding of ekwò and strive to promote respectful harvesting along the winter road, with the hope of encouraging the return of the ekwò.

Elders Plant Knowledge

Research consultations with Elders from Behchokò and Whatì continued this year. New knowledge about plants that had not been previously shared was documented, and the gathered data helped create 31 user-friendly templates, which will be the foundation for developing publications such as field guides, websites, tabletop books, and other items.

Medicinal Plant Field Guide

Volumes 1 and 2 of the Medicinal Plant Field Guide are almost complete. Each volume profiles eleven species. Each profile features clear images and descriptions for identification purposes, habitat, harvest time, harvest method information, and traditional methods of use, medicinal or otherwise.

Plant Medicine Workshops for Children

Workshops that focused on traditional plant medicine were facilitated in schools in Whati (November and December 2023) and Gameti (February 2023).

Activities included crafting spruce gum salves, natural deodorants, botanical soaps, bath soaks, beeswax candles, chocolates, and toffees made with native plant ingredients. Traditional plant knowledge was shared, and the students were encouraged to continue crafting at home using ingredients from the land.







Programs

Tłycho Jmbè Program

The Tłıcho Imbè Program creates opportunities for Tłıcho youth to focus on cultural and traditional skills learning, safety certification, and community service. Spending time on the land with Elders allows the young people participating in the program to gain a solid cultural foundation before attending post-secondary school. Imbè participants in Behchokò helped with the Tłįcho Government's evacuation and emergency response.

Gowhahdoo Gits'o Eto Niwheaaa (Trails of our Ancestors)

This project allows people to explore Tłycho land, traditional trails, and significant cultural sites on a digital map while hearing stories told by Elders. The project is designed to be a powerful teaching and learning tool. DCLP has also developed a Virtual Reality experience that allows Elders to visit cultural sites virtually even when they may be too frail to travel on the land.

Tłicho Film

DCLP has been working with filmmakers and local translators to create and translate hundreds of hours of video and audio content showcasing the Tłįcho language, culture, and way of life. This content will be available for viewing beginning in the summer of 2024. Through this project, six Tłıcho translators were hired to start the vital process of translating and transcribing material in the Tłįcho digital archive.

Reforestation

In response to the Forest Fires in the Summer of 2023, the Tłycho Government launched a project to plant One Million Trees in the region over the next two years. Seeds and cones from local trees have been collected and grown into seedlings in Northern Alberta. Seedlings will be brought back to the region for planting in the summer of 2025. This is the most significant tree-planting project ever undertaken in the NWT.

Hotiì ts'eeda

Funding for Grassroots Health and Wellness Projects

Hoti) ts'eeda offered streamlined funding programs, including project funding for individuals and organizations with health research, knowledge translation, or community project ideas. Funding is for grassroots projects that contribute to building knowledge about health, such as land-based healing programs, hiring local research assistants or Elder advisors, and supporting training and education in health-related fields. The funding promoted health and wellness through community-based initiatives recognizing Northern peoples' relationship to the land, language, culture, and way of life while reducing barriers to federal funding for communities and grassroots projects. This initiative also recognizes traditional ways of knowing and doing in health and wellness.



Graphic Recording Training

Hotiì ts'eeda trained 17 northerners in graphic recording over two workshops in the fall of 2023. Graphic recording illustrates complex concepts to communicate ideas, discussions, meetings, and processes more accessible to a broader audience. The trainees participated in experiential learning, and a digital training component was included in one of the workshops. Participants learned from Drawing Change, a leading graphic facilitation organization in Canada.

Indigenous Evaluation Training

Hotiì ts'eeda brought Indigenous evaluation expert Larry Bremner to a workshop on Indigenous evaluation in the fall of 2023. Twenty participants attended to learn about Indigenous methodologies and applications in program and project evaluation.

Lunch and Learn Series

Hotiì ts'eeda launched a series of Lunch and Learn capacity-building opportunities over the winter 2024 season. These bite-sized training opportunities are intended to build capacity in research and knowledge translation skills, such as designing a research project and media communications. Other sessions provided opportunities to spotlight successful northern research projects in the health and wellness field.

Elèts'ehdèe Annual Gathering

Hotiì ts'eeda hosted the sixth Elèts'ehdèe Gathering, which brought together over 100 community members, advocates, researchers, and policymakers to discuss health and wellness in the NWT, focusing on youth mental wellness.









Department of Early Childhood

The Department of Early Childhood provides care and education to the children and families they serve throughout the Tłįcho communities.

Early Childhood Strategy and Framework

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

- 1. Developing and building an Early Childhood Family Resource Centre in Behchokò. Gamètì and Wekweètì Daycare modular units were recently approved by Chiefs Executive Council (CEC) and will be delivered during the 2025 ice road season. The infrastructure needs of Whati are still being discussed.
- 2. Developing more services for children and families in oral language development and occupational therapy.
- 3. Developing a Tłįcho Early Years Law so that the Tłįcho have the authority and decision-making power over all areas of early learning and childcare.
- 4. A partnership with the Martin Family Initiative to create parenting resources and services that reflect Tłycho Culture, Language, and Way of
- 5. Supporting Tłycho citizens and staff pursuing courses in early learning and childcare online and through distance programs. Discussions continue with Aurora College on a partnership about how we can expand this support.
- 6. Celebrating Families Research interviews completed in Wekweèti and Gamètì is next.
- 7. Professional development training to support Early Childhood staff in carrying out their daily duties.



All of the work being done is rooted in Tłıcho language, culture and way of life. It aims to strengthen our communities, provide the best services to our children and families, and create a vision for the future.

This was a big year for Early Childhood and Tłįcho Government in the implementation of the Early Childhood Strategy and Framework (2017). The Department of Early Childhood was formally established. A Director and a second Manager dedicated to Family Support programs were added to the organizational structure, in addition to the already existing Manager of Daycares. The Healthy Families programs were brought into the new Early Childhood Department. The Department experienced significant growth and development this past year.

Healthy Families Program

Staff provide programs founded in Tłįchǫ language, culture, and way of life. They have a dedicated, passionate, and caring Tłįcho staff who work yearround to give families who are working or who are attending high school, upgrading, or training opportunities with quality daycare and educational services. They also offer much-needed respite for families and children with special needs. The Department also oversees preschool programs in each daycare for children ages two to three and after-school programs in both daycare centres in Behchokò.

The Behchokò Aboriginal Head Start and Healthy Families Program has created baby baskets to provide families and their babies with essential supplies for a comfortable start. These programs also create opportunities for families to come together and engage in activities that support early childhood development and family engagement.

The Healthy Families program in Behchokò and Whatì is now working to provide family programs for parents and their children with a focus on evening scheduling. These initiatives include healthy cooking classes, crafts, drop-in, and home visits. With the assistance of Elders and facilitators, the number of sewing projects has also increased in baby belts and baby slippers.



All Daycare staff attended the Alberta Aboriginal Headstart Regional Training in October 2023

Parent-Toddler Drop-In Program

The Department of Early Childhood offered parents more in-person programming for families and their children in 2023-2024. The Behchokò Aboriginal Head Start program has begun running a Parent-Toddler drop-in program in the afternoons four days a week and once a week in the morning. Each month focuses on a different theme.

The Department of Early Childhood has been working with community partners to highlight family services, such as the community health nurse, an Occupational Therapist, and other Tłįcho Government departments to promote programs further and increase engagement.

Wekweeti has been seeking a casual hire towards the end of 2023 to run the weekly playgroups in the community. Gameti has had pop-up playgroups run by an Occupational Therapist who works with the Department. Our families have very well received these programs in Behchokò and Whatì, and they will only continue to grow and develop, with plans to expand the programs into the communities of Wekweeti and Gameti.

Support During the Wildfire Evacuations

During the Behchokò Wildfire Evacuation 2023, the Tłycho Daycare, Aboriginal Head Start and Healthy Families Program staff set up activities and child care from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. The staff ensured the area was clean and sanitized daily. The Early Childhood staff also supported evacuees so families could take a break during this intensely stressful period. As a follow-up, the Early Childhood programs staff continued to help children and families by providing home educational activity kits and books to families even after



















Department of Healing and Community Wellness

To strengthen Tłycho Government service delivery and provide support to Tłįcho citizens and communities in their healing and wellness journey, several strategic changes were made this year to internal organizational structures and the overall approach to programming.

Significant progress was made in establishing a new Department of Healing and Community Wellness, transitioning staff and programs, and amalgamating the budgets of the previous Department of Community Wellness Programs and the former Tłycho Healing Path Committee. The new Department, which will be formally established in 2024-2025, will employ 30 to 40 staff working in each of the four Tłįcho communities.

On the Land Healing Camps

The Department of Healing and Community Wellness hosted a weeklong On-the-Land Healing (OTL) camps in the four communities. Tłįcho participants received support and healing through traditional on-the-land cultural ceremonies and activities. Counsellors Frank and Beverly Hope, as well as Tłįcho Elders, facilitated the OTL camps. The Healing Camps ran the following dates:

- April 3 to 6, 2023 (Behchokò)
- October 16 to 20, 2024 (Behchokò)
- January 4 to 9, 2024 (Behchokò)
- January 10 to 16, 2024 (Whati)
- January 18 to 23, 2024 (Gamètì)
- January 25 to 31, 2024 (Wekweètì)

Community Driven OTL - Cultural Camp

February 18 to 23, 2024 (Wekweètì)



The Department also collaborated with Behchokò Friendship Centre to assist warming shelter clients to attend Men's and Women's OTL programs. These camps fostered connection, unity, community, and healing, restoring Tłıcho kinship within the participant groups. Many people expressed an interest in attending more camps in the future and identified a need for them in their home communities.

Cultural connection is vital to some people and is a powerful healing force. Many people reported difficulties with cultural connection; however, the camps encouraged them to bond with the land, water, and animals, which met their psychological needs through culture.

On-The-Land Healing Camps allowed participants to receive counseling and assistance within the community context, enhanced by cultural support from Tłįcho Elders and community members. On-The-Land Healing supported and healed community members from Behchokò, Whatì, Gamèti, and Wekweèti using traditional on-the-land cultural practices. Each session included between ten and twenty participants.

Improving Health and Wellness

The Department of Healing and Community Wellness encouraged Tłįcho residents to attend programs and events designed to improve their health and wellness. A wide range of topics and themes were offered, including suicide intervention, naloxone training, mental health first aid, women's gatherings, men's talking circles, counselling, Elder support, traditional healing, and youth and Elder programming.

Warming Shelters

The Behchokò warming shelter, operated by the Healing and Wellness Department, now serves and supports 12 to 17 individuals. The Tłįcho Government has agreed to an extended four-year arrangement with Canada to keep a warming centre space open in Behchokò from 10:00 p.m. to 10:00 a.m., guaranteeing that those experiencing homelessness have a secure place to sleep. Staff and client training resulted in increased demand for shelter staff and a greater understanding of clients' conditions and how they can apply the skills they've learned to improve their lives.



The Magoo Crew

The Magoo Crew is a high-energy, multi-talented Indigenous entertainment group that inspires and empowers people of all ages through dance, song, comedy, culture, and motivational speaking.

Magoo Crew's efforts focus on three key areas:

- 1. Anti-bullying and spreading the message of love and respect for one another,
- 2. Suicide awareness and recognition that every person is loved and needed and
- 3. Everyone has a gift, embrace it.

Beatrice Love

Beatrice Love inspired many during a music event. Through her own struggles with addiction, Love discovered the weapon of casting light on her deepest, darkest parts. Her objectives are to promote honesty, recovery, and acceptance while leveraging her own life experiences as a tool to help others on their journey.

NorthSide Baby

The Dene Tha musician is accustomed to being resilient. For years, Indigenous communities have grappled with suicide and drug-related problems, with children bearing the brunt of the burden. NorthSide Baby presented to several young people from Tłįcho communities, with his music encouraging other young people to escape negative realities through rhythm and community activities.













Department of Planning and Partnerships

The Department of Planning and Partnerships (DPP) ensures that legislation and policies developed by the GNWT and the Federal Government support Tłycho rights under the Tłycho Agreement and protect Tłycho Language, Culture, and Way of Life.

DPP has an important role in ensuring that, as a modern treaty holder, the Tłįcho people's rights and well-being are the priority in all negotiations and conversations. Supported by leadership and senior staff, the department pushes Tłįcho priorities in all forums to ensure Tłįcho voices are heard at all levels of government.

Our Ways of Working and Relationship Building

In the area of Intergovernmental Relations, the Tłycho Government actively participates in several intergovernmental and collaborative tables with the Federal Government, the Territorial Government, and other Indigenous Governments. Through these tables, the Tłįcho Government represents Tłįcho interests and values on an ongoing basis.

It was a busy year with work on several legislative development protocols, housing, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples legislation, arctic sovereignty, and a new school in Behchokò.

Territorial Forums have included:

- CEC-Cabinet Forum
- NWT Council of Leaders
- Intergovernmental Council
- Modern Treaty and Self-Government Partner's Forum
- NWT Project Finance for Permanence

National Forums have included:

- Land Claims Agreement Coalition
- Self-Governing Indigenous Governments Collaborative Fiscal Policy
- Arctic and Northern Policy Framework Committee
- Bi-Lateral Leadership Meetings

The Chiefs Executive Council (CEC) met with many territorial and federal ministers to discuss and advance Tłįcho priorities. The Tłįcho Government has also hosted many ministers and foreign diplomats in our communities.

The Department of Planning and Partnerships played a vital role during the 2023 wildfires and evacuations. During the evacuations, they coordinated and advocated Tłįcho Government priorities at both a territorial and national level to support the needs of Tłycho citizens. The department's work continued after everyone's safe return to push for the fiscal recovery of Tłįcho Government's expenses and advance the need for a fully collaborative response in Emergency Management. Governments have a crucial role in emergency management and must be included at all levels of decision-making.

Negotiating Tłįcho Priorities

The Department of Planning and Partnerships leads work to negotiate and renew the Intergovernmental Services Agreement (ISA) by 2025. The GNWT and the Government of Canada have been informed of the plans to assume jurisdiction over education and early childhood programs and services.

These negotiation tables meet regularly to collaborate on this work. At these tables, the Department works to advance Tłįcho priorities as envisioned by Tłįcho Elders and our ancestors.

The Tłįcho Agreement has always intended for Tłjcho people to be in control of areas like education and the well-being of their children. The time is right for this work to move forward and have Tłįcho people make decisions about their programs and services.

The Tłıcho Agreement is a living document, and DPP works to ensure that the Strategic Intentions and visions of past leaders and current leaders are embedded in all of the work of Tłįcho Government.

Securing New Resources

DPP is responsible for the negotiation of agreements and securing new resources for the work of the Tłįcho Government. In addition to the ISA, DPP is actively negotiating for a:

- NWT Project Finance for Permanence Final Agreement to create a new fund in the NWT that would provide resources for land stewardship activities
- Giant Mine Remediation Project Agreement to build capacity and bring procurement, employment, training, and other benefits to the Tłįchǫ.
- Tłycho Financing Agreement to renew the Tłycho Financing Agreement for a 10-year term to ensure longer-term, stable resources for Tłįcho Government
- 2023 Wildfire Evacuation Recovery Process DPP collaborated with CIRNA to secure \$5.3 million to recover costs, do recovery work, and emergency planning for Tłįcho Government.

Building Capacity

DPP oversees the implementation of the Tłįcho Agreement by participating in the Implementation Committee and the Financing Committee. Implementation of Chapter 26 on Economic Measures has been a priority in recent years, and we have been working on a Traditional Economy Study to define the Tłįcho Traditional Economy, as well as conducting an Effectiveness Review to understand how governments are implementing Chapter 26.

These efforts build the capacity of all governments to ensure Tłįcho economic self-sufficiency.



Tracking Outcomes and Impacts

In the summer of 2023, DPP began building new processes and tools to monitor progress against the 60 activities (also called 'key initiatives and plans') outlined in Our Strategic Framework and Intentions 2021-2025. In collaboration with other Tłįcho Government departments, DPP collected and entered progress updates into a newly developed internal tracking tool, which, for the first time, allows Tłycho Government to track the outcomes and impact of our work as it relates to the Strategic Intentions framework.

This contributes to a greater sense of shared ownership and responsibility for the Strategic Intentions because it encourages knowledge sharing and continuous learning for improvement. These new processes and tools will be an important part of a larger project that DPP plans to launch in 2024-2025 to create whole-of-government processes for strategic planning, priority setting, and monitoring and evaluation that are grounded in Tłįcho values, language, knowledge, and culture.







Dıı sa naet'aa, dıı deh nıılı, dıı de nagoehdo-le nıde, asiı wets'a goet'o hollı 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



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