

SPRING 2022 | VOL 9  
YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

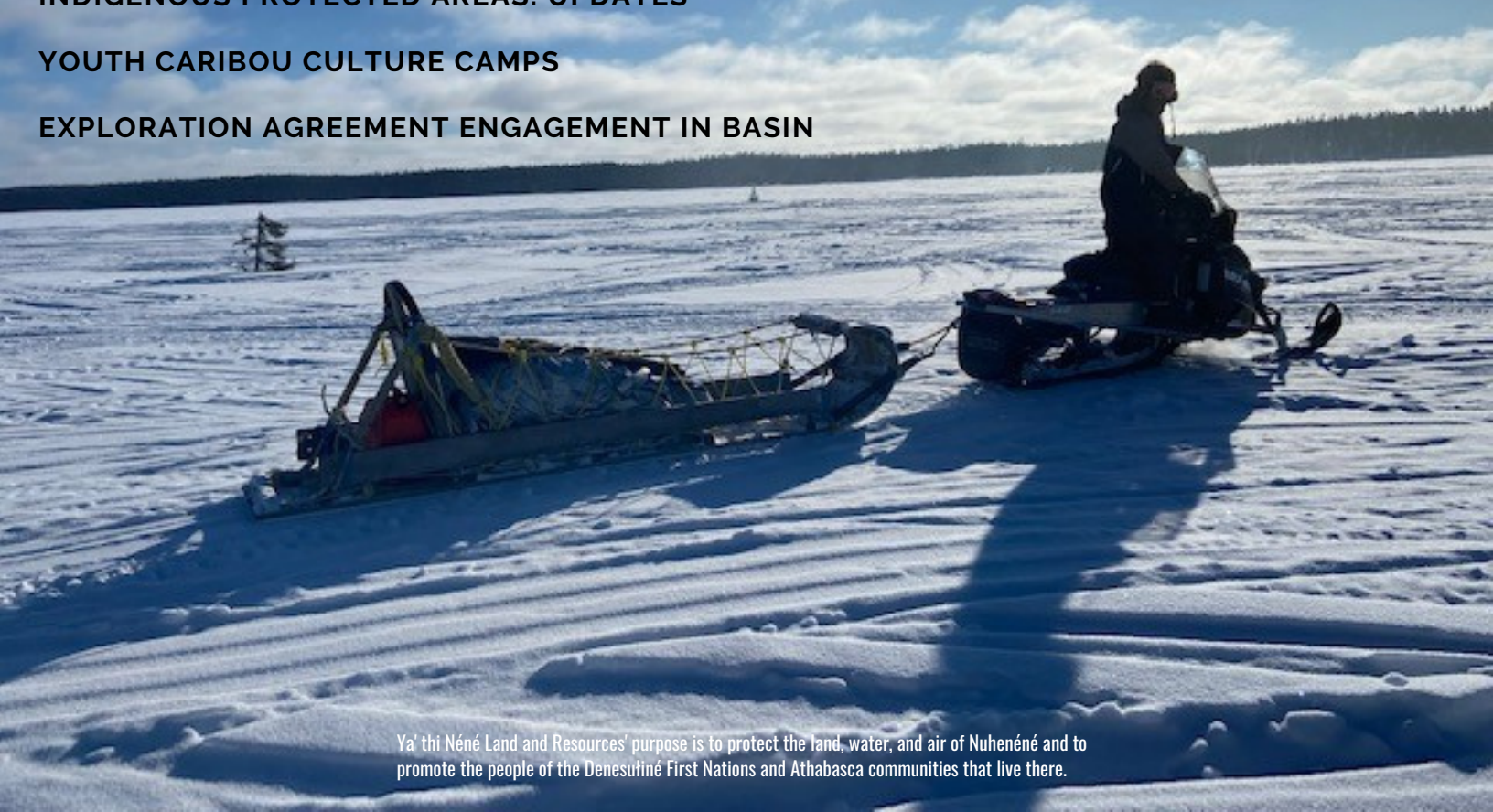


# Whats Inside?

INDIGENOUS PROTECTED AREAS: UPDATES

YOUTH CARIBOU CULTURE CAMPS

EXPLORATION AGREEMENT ENGAGEMENT IN BASIN



Ya'thi Néné Land and Resources' purpose is to protect the land, water, and air of Nuhenéné and to promote the people of the Denesuline First Nations and Athabasca communities that live there.

# WHAT IS YA' THI NÉNÉ?



Ya' thi Néné is a non-profit organization owned by the seven Athabasca Basin communities of Hatchet Lake Denesuliné First Nation, Black Lake Denesuliné First Nation, Fond du Lac Denesuliné First Nation and the municipalities of Stony Rapids, Uranium City, Wollaston Lake, and Camsell Portage.

Our mission is to protect the lands and waters of the Athabasca Basin for the long-term benefit of its Denesuliné First Nations and Athabasca communities, guided by their knowledge, traditions, and ambitions, while being a respected partner in relations with industries, governments, and organizations who seek to develop the Athabasca Basin's resources.

*A message from Garrett Schmidt, Executive Director of Ya' thi Néné:*

Spring is a time for renewal and growth. After many months of cold and darkness we welcome the longer days of sunlight and warmth. With Spring comes other changes within Nuhenéné such as the announcement of the reopening of McArthur River mine and Key Lake mill, the continued advancement of our Indigenous Protected Areas, the start of the SKI Woodland Caribou Range Planning process and increasing interest in mineral exploration throughout Nuhenéné. All of these activities and many more are happening within the Traditional Territory and all of them have the potential for both a positive and negative impact on the land and on the people. Regardless of activity, YNLR is committed to protecting the land and promoting the people which means we rigorously assess proposed activities, communicate with community members and leadership about them and if determined to be acceptable, we work with the government and/or proponent to maximize the participation and benefit of community members.

This process can sometimes be quick and straightforward and other times slow and complex depending on the activity in question and a host of other factors. Often YNLR works with organizations who are sincerely interested to advance meaningful relationships with the Denesuliné First Nations and Athabasca communities. Partnerships with these organizations progress quickly and are based on mutual respect. At the same time, we sometimes work with organizations who are more interested in maintaining the status quo and prefer the old way of doing things where relationships with the Denesuliné First Nations and Athabasca communities were either superficial or avoided entirely.

Partnerships with these organizations require more work and are typically delayed. Regardless, YNLR works with all organizations who have ongoing interests and activities within Nuhenéné with the objective of finding alignment and forming mutually respectful and beneficial relationships.

Progress and growth is happening. We're excited to soon be opening our 5th office in Uranium City at the Ben McIntyre school. We've recently hired 2 new staff in our Saskatoon office and have plans for providing more training to our Community Land Technicians with the potential to hire others. Some key projects and partnerships are advancing while we look forward to strengthening others.

Protecting the land while promoting the people presents unique challenges that can be complex in balancing economic, environmental, cultural and social considerations. Often there are trades-offs that need to be clearly understood and communicated to leadership and decision-makers before projects can advance. The YNLR Board and staff continually strive to understand and communicate these considerations efficiently and effectively, and always with the community's best interest as the top priority. Strong, mutually beneficial partnerships support this process and enables optimum outcomes for all parties. We look forward to enjoying the Spring season and the continued growth in relationships between the communities, industry and government.





School is expensive. We can help.

# SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE



**DEADLINE TO APPLY IS JULY 31, 2022**

**For more information or to apply, check out  
[www.yathinene.ca/scholarships/](http://www.yathinene.ca/scholarships/)**



## YA'THI NÉNÉ NEW STAFF

Join us in welcoming YNLR's newest staff members!

Megan Wallace is the newest addition to the YNLR team. Megan is the Environmental Land Use Planner. She joined the team on 23, 2022. Megan brings her extensive Geographic Information System (GIS) expertise to our organization. Megan has a Masters Degree in Art with Distinction in Archeology and has completed her Project Management Certificate (PMI). She has demonstrated professional experience across a variety of industries within both the public and private sectors utilizing GIS and project management. Megan's areas of expertise include analyses, data management, quality control, and map making with GIS software. Megan's skills will add significant value to managing the Traditional Knowledge Land Use and Occupancy database that YNLR uses on a regular basis to support decision making.

Dana Kellett is YNLR's new Environmental Specialist. Dana joined our team on May 9, 2022. She has over 20 years of professional work experience and has a PhD in Ecology. She conducted field research for nearly 3 decades in a diversity of prairie, boreal, and arctic ecosystems. She has worked extensively for Environment and Climate Change Canada, at an Arctic Research Station. Dana has a broad base of experiences in management, extensive field experience (e.g., participation in Saskatchewan Breeding Bird Atlas surveys in boreal ecosystems, guiding backcountry kayak trips on the Wheeler/Geikie Rivers) and research (i.e., she has published close to 30 research papers).

*Ya'thi Néné Land and Resource Office (YNLR) continues to develop and to build additional support and capacity in our organization. YNLR has 10 full-time and 5 casual employees who help us protect the land and promote the people. We're excited about the new additions to our team as we continue to provide efficient and effective services to the Basin.*



**MEGAN WALLACE**  
ENVIRONMENTAL LAND USE PLANNER



**DR. DANA KELLETT**  
ENVIRONMENTAL SPECIALIST



## NexGen and the Rook I Project

- NexGen is guided by its values of honesty, respect, resilience, and accountability, and driven by the vision of becoming a global leader in delivering uranium for the world's current and future clean energy needs.
- The Rook I Project is a proposed new uranium mine and mill to support the mining and on-site processing of the Arrow deposit. The proposed operation would produce approximately 30 million lbs of uranium concentrate at peak production.
- The Rook I Project is located near Patterson Lake and includes an underground mine, a uranium mill, an underground tailings management facility, surface mine rock storage, water treatment facilities, an airstrip, and a camp.
- NexGen's commitment to environmental excellence includes an Underground Tailings Management Facility (UGTMF); there would be no tailings facility on surface during or after the mining operations.
- NexGen is committed to meaningful, long-lasting partnerships and programs with Indigenous Peoples (First Nations and Métis) and local communities to maximize the sustainable benefits of the Rook I Project.
- NexGen is focused on achieving elite standards in all areas and through every stage of the Rook I Project—from pre-development through to construction, operations, decommissioning and reclamation, and final closure.

## What is Next?

NexGen has started the processes required to obtain regulatory approval to proceed with the development of the Rook I Project. This includes:

- Obtaining Environmental Assessment approval from both the Federal and Provincial governments.
- Preparing an application for a Licence to Prepare Site and Construct from the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) and the various applications for the Province.

NexGen has completed the environmental assessment and is scheduled to submit a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in Spring 2022.

## Community Engagement

In 2020, NexGen provided funding for Ya' thi Néné Lands and Resources to complete a self-directed Traditional Knowledge, Land Use and Occupancy (TKLUO) Study. Information from the TKLUO played an important role in supporting the environmental assessment for the Rook I Project.

NexGen looks forward to continued regular engagement with Ya' thi Néné Lands and Resources community members, including women, youth, and Elders.



*Robert St. Pierre  
in front of NexGen's office in the  
Dene Empowerment Building in  
La Loche*

## NexGen's Project Liaison Manager and Office in La Loche

**Robert St. Pierre**  
Project Liaison Manager

Robert is NexGen's Project Liaison Manager. Robert is based in La Loche and brings a wealth of experience and credibility having held the positions of President and Vice President, Local Métis 39 and serving as the mayor of La Loche from 2016 to 2020. He has also served as a Board Trustee with the Northern Lights School Division #113 from 2009 until 2012.

NexGen's office is located in the Dene Empowerment Centre in La Loche. Robert encourages everyone who has questions about NexGen and the Rook I Project to visit the office between 9 am and 5 pm Monday to Friday for more information. Robert can be reached directly at [rstpierre@nxe-energy.ca](mailto:rstpierre@nxe-energy.ca) or by calling 306-822-7579.

### Interested in Learning More?

Contact us at **1-833-333-8895** or  
**[engagement@nxe-energy.ca](mailto:engagement@nxe-energy.ca)**

Let us know if you have any questions—  
we are interested in what you think!

AN UPDATE ON YOUR

# Indigenous Protected Conservation Areas

Introducing you to our fourth and final featured IPC Indigenous Protected Area  
"Dene Tene Néné" Indigenous Protected Area. Black Lake Denesųliné First Nation

*"We live off these lands. Lots of our knowledge comes from these lands, waters and from our ancestors. We need to protect our land for our future generations so we can pass on our knowledge. Save our land, waters, rivers, animals and our people, so we can live longer."*

These IPA's will afford high level, legislated protection of land and water for future generations. IPAs are areas where the communities are leading in their development and in the future will work with our partners to decide on the management structure.

The Dene Tene Néné IPA proposed by Black Lake Denesųliné First Nation and Stony Rapids, SK is located in Nuhenéné, north of the community of Black Lake, SK. It represents an area of approximately 591,000 ha. It includes numerous important lakes and trail systems which are considered significant places for the Athabasca Denesųliné communities. This area is also located within three ecoregions, including the Tazin Taiga Upland, the Selwyn Lake Upland, and the Athabasca Plain!

The establishment of the Dene Tene Néné IPA will help ensure that Denesųliné traditional ways can continue for many more generations. The proposed IPA overlaps with over 2,900 land and occupancy (LUO) sites recorded in the Athabasca Denesųliné database, including 432 gathering sites, an incredible 9,855 animal harvest sites, and 1,509 heritage sites! This area really is important to the communities, as it reflects the extensive use of the lands and how the Athabasca Denesųliné travel within this area.

Examples of areas that are very important to membership include the community namesake – Black Lake. The community is located on the shores of Black Lake, a lake that provides accessible traditional country foods, recreation, and travel routes that extend into Nuhenéné. The main travel route north to Selwyn Lake begins through a portage on the north shore of Black Lake. This trail opens up access to the north. This area is at the heart of what enables community members to preserve their language, culture, and way of life. This proposed area is filled with family campsites/cabins, large caribou butchering sites, intensive trail networks and areas only known by their Dene names. In fact, the name Dene Tene Néné means "Dene traditional route".

During our community member interviews on protected areas, some of our members said:

*"These areas are highly important to me because of the beauty of the wild, abundant fish and our ancestors have used it."*

*"We use these lands for trapping, hunting. I've been taught about our Dene knowledge in this area."*

*"We live off these lands. Lots of our knowledge comes from these lands, waters and from our ancestors. We need to protect our land for our future generations so we can pass on our knowledge. Save our land, waters, rivers, animals and our people, so we can live longer."*

## What's an Indigenous Protected Area (IPA)?

IPAs are usually defined as conservation areas whose creation and ongoing management are Indigenous led, with Indigenous Peoples having the primary role in determining what is important to that specific IPA. That includes things like the values and objectives that the IPA holds as sacred, the boundaries of the IPA, the management plans for the IPA, and the governance structures for the IPA.

For the Nuhenéné IPA, this means that the Athabasca Denesųliné decide what values and priorities will guide and direct all work being done to develop protected areas. The communities also all get participation in the process of determining where the protected areas will be located and their size. Elders, youth, leadership, and land-users are involved every step of the way. This is Nuhenéné, and it is important to us so you have your say.

## Barren Ground Caribou

Barren ground caribou (Bathurst, Ahiak, Beverly and Qamanirjuaq herds) are the most important species for the Athabasca Denesųliné. For this reason, habitat that is important for caribou was identified as some of the most critical for protection. Because of this, we made sure to include Traditional Knowledge on barren-ground caribou habitat, behaviour and cultural use when looking to define areas for fulsome protection. The Dene Tene Nene IPA overlaps entirely with the barren ground caribou range; it also includes important caribou wintering habitat, with more than 395,200 ha of old forest (50 years and older), which represents 49% of the total area.

Barren-ground caribou are currently being considered for listing as a "threatened" species under the federal Species at Risk Act (SARA), and are currently listed under the NWT SARA. It is especially important, as their numbers decline, that their habitat is protected, especially since there is currently little barren-ground caribou winter feeding habitat protected through legislation.

## Existing Interests

Black Lake Denesųliné First Nation and Stony Rapids are not opposed to economic development and the benefits they bring. They want to ensure a balanced approach where different tools are applied to ensure land is protected for the future, while other areas are open for development.

Mineral activities have an impact on the land as they both modify the surface conditions which can harm wildlife habitat. Other activities and infrastructure such as cutlines can greatly impact wildlife. This practice fragments habitats and constricts certain species to a smaller habitat or forcing them to relocate which can then lead to increased competitions with other species and more limited resources. Black Lake First Nation is very aware of the existing disturbances contained within the Dene Tene Nene IPA and do not want any further disturbances occurring.

Mineral dispositions are areas where rights are granted to a company to drill, produce or extract any mineral. The proposed IPA overlaps with 83 active mineral dispositions, representing 21.6% of the proposed total area.



Casual CLT Eric Cook, on Selwyn Lake

### Next Steps

Now that the boundary has been selected by Black Lake Denesųliné First Nation and Stony Rapids, work will continue with our partners towards confirming the boundary and defining the management of the Dene Tene Néné Indigenous Protected Area through a Management Plan. Governance agreements and long-term financing plans will be researched and established.

Please note that Ya'thi Nene Lands and Resources will be working with partner organizations on addressing existing dispositions found within the boundary. Additionally, we will be looking at securing an interim land withdrawal or other appropriate mechanism to prevent future dispositions and limit stakers within the IPA boundary.

### Ya'thi Néné Land and Resource office has been busy moving the Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) project forward!

There are many tools that are available to the Athabasca Denesųliné to protect the land, water and animals. Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs) are an important and exciting option for Nuhenéné. IPAs will afford high level, legislated protection from impacts of development. Indigenous Protected Areas are areas where the communities will lead the development, location, and management of these areas. The Athabasca Denesųliné have always been guardians or stewards of the land and water. By developing Indigenous Protected Areas, the communities will have a tool to ensure that future generations can enjoy and practice their Denesųliné culture.

The goals of Ya'thi Néné when working to establish these IPAs are:

- Protecting the land and water,
- Safeguarding these areas for future generations,
- Be guided by our Elders every step of the way,
- Ensuring that Denesųliné continue to use the land for Treaty Rights (hunting, fishing, trapping, and gathering),
- Supporting Denesųliné language.

### Conclusion

The Dene Tene Néné IPA boundary was determined by looking holistically at land and water protection, cultural significance to our communities, protection of Treaty Rights and sustainable, balanced economic opportunities.

Indigenous Protected Areas also have the potential to meaningfully stimulate the economy through land-based employment initiatives, cultural and language preservation, food security and ecological protection. The potential for increased employment through environmental monitoring, eco-tourism and research as well as potential for carbon sequestration, and improved certainty for the mining industry are significant advantages for all governments and stakeholders moving forward. The considerable input of funding into the region by the federal government and private foundations has and will continue to invigorate local and provincial economies. Partnership with industry presents additional opportunity for consideration.

The Dene Tene Néné Indigenous Protected Area boundary has been carefully selected. Black Lake Denesųliné First Nation and Stony Rapids seek to find a balance between both protection and economic opportunity in Nuhenéné. By creating this Indigenous Protected Area, we will ensure that protection of the land and water continue for future generations. This IPA will add almost 0.91% to the provincial goal of reaching 12% of protected land and water. This is a significant and exciting step towards meaningful reconciliation between the Crown and Indigenous communities.



## WILD LIFE VALUES & WOODLAND CARIBOU MEETINGS

In collaboration with Ya'thi Néné Lands & Resources, the Ministry of Environment held facilitated meetings from April 19-21, 2022, hosted by the First Nations of Hatchet lake, Black Lake and Fond du Lac. (Fond du Lac Denesųliné First Nation meeting was postponed out of respect for recent losses in the community).

During the morning, the Ministry of Environment engaged with First Nations leadership and community members in the development of a shared values for wildlife management document. The goal of this exercise was to share knowledge about wildlife populations, management and values. This engagement session will built on previous sessions carried out with the Federation of Sovereign Indian Nations (FSIN) and sessions with other First Nations communities. The meetings followed a similar format to previous meetings with those in attendance discussing and answering several questions. The information collected will be respected, valued, and used to aid in the development of a shared values for wildlife management document.

Some of the questions discussed included:

**Question 1** - What teachings are used to ensure wildlife populations stay healthy into the future?

**Question 2** - What are you observing in wildlife populations? What impacts those populations? Share any observations/concerns.

**Question 3** - What are important factors to consider when planning wildlife harvest?

**Question 4** - What values, information, and practices can we use to work together for wildlife management?

During the afternoon session, the Ministry of Environment held initial SKI Woodland Caribou Range Plan information meetings. This meeting introduced the range planning process, explained Saskatchewan's goals and requirements in regards to woodland caribou conservation and provided opportunity for community involvement in the range planning process. Ya'thi Nene will be working with the province closely in the development of the SKI Woodland Caribou Range Plan.

A lot of great discussions took place during these meeting. High school students at Father Porte Memorial School were able to attend and provided a much needed youth perspective in the meetings. Many thanks to the teachers who allowed the students to participate in this meeting!



# COMMUNITY LAND TECHNICIANS in the FIELD

## CLTS PARTICIPATE IN CARIBOU CULTURE CAMPS

*By: Derek Cook & Jean Tsannie*

The Athabasca Denesųliné Ne Ne Land Corporation (ADNLC) hosted a Culture Camp at Firedrake Lake, NWT from April 5-12, 2022. This camp was organized by both Fond du Lac and Black Lake communities. It was a success! Ya'thi Nene Lands & Resources provided in-kind support for this camp through our Community Land Technicians Derek Cook and Ian Donard. The students were selected by their teachers and showed a lot of courage for going up to the far north! They experienced harsh weather conditions for a couple of days and although we had a lot of snow and strong winds/blizzards it did not stop the students from going out on the land.

The CLTs (Derek Cook and Ian Donard) hosted a survival night which included making forts with students. The students enjoyed making forts in groups and provided wood for themselves to keep the fires going until midnight. They also made tea and prepared traditional food. They really enjoyed it and wanted to go out again the next day! The students were taught how to make dry meat by the Elders. The Elders also taught them how to butcher caribou and the importance of cleaning the meat with caribou blood. The students learned first hand how to hunt caribou and to traditionally prepare the caribou out on the land.

A scavenger hunt arranged by ADNLC where the students had to find answers to all 10 questions relating to our Dene language, traditional practices and tools used in the old days. Two students from each community were successful and were both given rewards provided by ADNLC. The students also experienced great story telling about our legend stories on animals such as the wolverine by Elders Joe Beavereye and Freddie Throassie, while a wolverine was being skinned by Joe Beavereye.

Traditional food was the primary food prepared to ensure the students experienced the reality of surviving on the land. There was one deviation from traditional food as the cooks prepared a meal of stir-fry and other treats, this was enjoyed by everyone. The cooks did an outstanding job feeding everyone and everyone was grateful.

As for myself, Ian Donard and Travis Fern (casual CLT), it was our first time coordinating a culture camp to this extent and we really enjoyed it and we will learn from it going forward!

The whole experience was a learning opportunity and we gained new skills organizing and coordinating this culture camp. We appreciate the support from community leadership, ADNLC and YNLR who supported this event. It was an exciting event to be a part of and a real learning experience. We are grateful and honored that we had the opportunity to be a part of and to witness our elders and our youth out on the land together. To hear and see the Elders pass down our traditions and culture to the students and the importance of the caribou to our people. The students who participated received two caribou which were delivered to their families. Hats off to Air Tindi for a job well done.

The caribou have returned again and we must continue to utilize the caribou drum and have traditional ceremonies for the caribou with our young generation. We must continue to respect the 10 Traditional Caribou Harvest Protocols and continue to help each other as Dene People.



*Caribou Culture Camp Group Photo at Fire Drake Lake, (29) Members of Black Lake First Nation, and (13) Members of Fond du Lac First Nation.*

Ya'thi Nene was also happy to participate and provide in-kind support towards the ADNLC Hatchet Lake Caribou Culture camp held at Many Islands Lake, SK, March 3-9th, 2022. CLTs Jean Tsannie and Curtis Tsannie assisted in the planning/logistics of the camp, and provided support during the week. Youth (both male/female) were transported to the camp, along with Elders, by Twin Otter.

An opening fire ceremony was held with Dene drumming and tobacco offerings. It was very exciting that the barren ground caribou had returned to Saskatchewan this winter, only 150-200 km north of Hatchet Lake Denesųliné First Nation. Because of their proximity, youth had the opportunity to travel together to see the caribou, and participate in a hunt as a group.

Chief Bart Tsannie led the way, and a feast of caribou delicacies were enjoyed by all following the hunt. Back at camp, youth participated in making dry meat, butchering, ice fishing, and listening to presentations from Ya'thi Nene on land protection, caribou protocols and North of 60 negotiations. The youth enjoyed themselves and did not want the camp to end! Executive Director Garrett Schmidt also participated in the camp, his first time on a caribou culture camp. An experience he will never forget!



Elder Marie Benonie, making dry meat



YNLR Executive Director, Garrett Schmidt during the Caribou Culture Camp



Gabriel Benonie, Jean Tsannie, and Garrett Schmidt present to youth at the culture camp



Hatchet Lake youth, Ceejay Tsannie

## EXPLORATION AGREEMENT UPDATE MEETINGS *in the Basin*

Between May 11-14, YNLR staff and Directors traveled to all Basin communities to present information on our work with mineral exploration companies. Unfortunately, we were unable to land in Camsell Portage due to concerns with the runway being too soft. However, a virtual update meeting for Camsell Portage is being planned in the near future.

Leadership, Elders, youth and community members attended the community meetings. YNLR staff and Directors provided an overview of exploration activities within Nuhenéné and the work YNLR is doing to make sure community members are aware of projects, impacts to the land are being prevented or minimized and how community members can actively participate and benefit. YNLR explained Exploration Agreements in detail and the direction YNLR has received from the Board and community leadership to establish Exploration Agreements between the seven Basin communities and the numerous exploration companies operating within Nuhenéné provided the projects are in locations acceptable to the communities. These agreements are beneficial to the communities and to the companies as they provide certainty for the communities to meaningfully participate in the projects through regular environmental monitoring, training, employment and contracting as well as for communities to benefit from the projects through financial contributions to the Athabasca Community Trust.

Community members were provided a meal and some received door prizes. Lots of good questions were asked regarding Exploration Agreements and other YNLR projects.



Lunch during Stony meeting, prepared by Stony Rapids Community School



Councillor Rudy Adam speaks during Fond du Lac meeting



Cake prepared by Principal Joyce Torrie for our Stony Rapids Lunch meeting



Councillor Peter Gazandlare speaks during Hatchet Lake meeting



Presenting in Uranium City



# AN UPDATE FROM..

## Your Development Coordinator

Facilitating workforce growth, business development, and lifelong learning in the Basin.

### Ed'lenate, happy Spring Issue 2022! Here are highlights for this quarter. -Dene Robillard

#### Spark Mentorship Program- IT Support Technicians

On April 25th, Optek Solutions CEO Kevin Aebig flew up to Stony Rapids / Black Lake where he met with and interviewed 8 community members. Each member had expressed interest in the mentorship program. Kevin spent time discussing what each interviewee is interested in and what they hoped to learn from the program. The purpose of the Spark Mentorship Program is to train IT Support Technicians. Optek is nearly done the interviews and will be prepared to select the first group of 6 participants. We are all eager and excited to get the program started, as I am sure participants are as well.

The remainder of Kevin's trip was packed with trips to see different parts of Black Lake and Stony Rapids, including tours of the school, the store, and the band office. Kevin will be meeting with local leaders to further engage in Optek's commitment to helping in different ways.

Sadly, the trip to Fond du Lac had to be postponed. Since 3 participants were unable to attend the interviews in-person, Optek decided to schedule them as virtual conferences later (the same goes for Hatchet Lake/Wollaston Post). Kevin is eager for the opportunity to be able to visit the other First Nations of Hatchet Lake and Fond du Lac.

#### Participants/trainees will receive:

- 12-weeks of learning plus 6 months paid internship (internship is part-time hours)
- Online-based internship from the comfort of their own home
- Regular IT mentorship to help them learn and stay on track
- Google IT Support Professional certification that is recognized industry-wide for IT professionals

Kevin mentioned that it was, so far, encouraging to see how excited community members were to be involved and how much they wanted the opportunity to participate. If you have any questions and/or comments regarding this program, please contact me at [dene.robillard@yathinene.com](mailto:dene.robillard@yathinene.com), or at our YNLR Office (306) 477-1251.

#### New Athabasca Education and Economic Development (AEEDC) Youth/Committee Member

On behalf of our Athabasca Education, Employment & Development Committee (AEEDC), it is my pleasure to welcome our newest AEEDC member Jennita Pacquette! Jennita has recently accepted the role as Youth/Committee representative to our AEEDC forum which focuses on all things related to education, training and employment of community members resided in the Athabasca Basin.

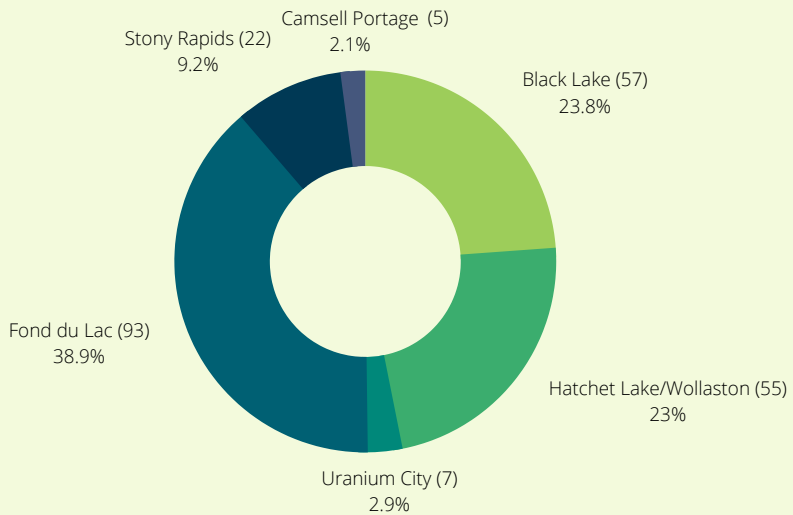
Jennita brings a wealth of experience in working closely with youth in her home community of Fond du Lac – as a collective, we are excited, and we look forward to her knowledge and insight that she'll bring to our respective Committee.

#### Athabasca Catering LP- Pre-Employment Training Opportunity

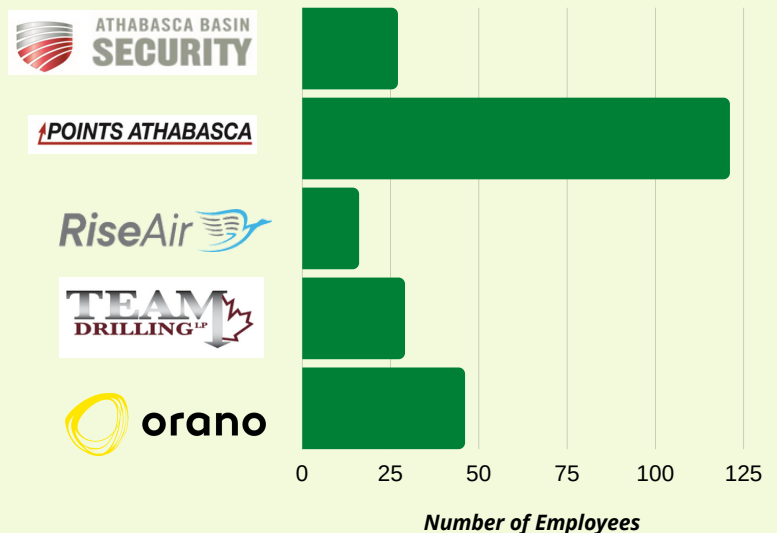
Black Lake, Hatchet Lake, and Fond du Lake Denesuline First Nation, in collaboration with Athabasca Catering LP, will be offering a two-week pre-employment training program in each of the First Nation communities. Athabasca Catering LP has committed to training 12 residents per community.

The Black Lake program will run from Monday, June 13th to Friday, June 24th, 2022. Interview and screening for Black Lake is scheduled for May 30th & 31st (via Zoom) at the Black Lake Ventures board room. Hatchet Lake and Fond du Lac program dates are still TBD. If you would like to be kept in the loop and updated as to the upcoming program dates in Hatchet Lake and Fond du Lac, please feel free to connect with me at [dene.robillard@yathinene.com](mailto:dene.robillard@yathinene.com) or contact your local community economic development office.

#### Employees by Location



#### Basin Employer Statistics





A group of 2022 McClean Lake summer students participated in the Pathway to Safety Training at the mill. Left to Right: Charlotte Isadore (Admin), Alannah McDonald (Safety); Kamden Logan (Services Projects); Darwin Bouvier (Site Services); and Camryn Mercredi (Radiation).

### Mill Operator Training Program

By all measures, the 2022 Mill Operator Training Program (MOTP), which was completed in March 2022, was a huge success. Nine trainees completed the course and all of them have been offered employment at the McClean Lake Operation. It's great to see so many fresh faces around the mill.

A second program is scheduled for the fall of 2022 and will accept applicants from the Athabasca Basin only. In partnership with Northern Career Quest, Orano is looking forward to welcoming the next group of trainees and will be offering applicants the chance to prepare for the TOWES (Test of Workplace Essential Skills) test with trained volunteers. Reach out to your local community liaison to get started on your application and preparation. The MOTP is a gateway into many mining and milling careers, and previous operators have gone on to positions as Safety Officer, Leadhand, supervisor, mill trainer and in the warehouse.

### TMF License Amendment Approved

Earlier this year the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) announced its decision regarding expansion of the McClean Lake JEB Tailings Management Facility (TMF), which is expected to be at capacity by 2027. We were pleased to learn that the licence amendment required for expansion of this facility was approved.

"The hearing and resulting decision was many years of work in the making, and I am very proud of the great teamwork I've witnessed over the years. This decision secures McClean Lake's future as a regional milling centre for decades of operation on the east side of the Athabasca Basin," said President and CEO Jim Corman.

Congratulations to all of the departments and individuals involved in the project over the years. Thank you to the many community organizations that participated in the process. We appreciate your involvement, questions, and contributions

### Athabasca Basin Summer Student Employment

Nine Athabasca Basin post-secondary students were welcomed to Orano facilities at the beginning of May to start their summer placements, up from the five that were employed over the summer of 2021. Students from Black Lake, Fond du Lac, and Wollaston have taken positions in administration, communications, site services, maintenance, radiation protection, safety, and the warehouse. It's been great to see a few faces return to site from past placements and we wish the 2022 crew a successful summer.

### Athabasca Basin School Visits

The Orano Canada McClean Lake, Human Resource and Northern Affairs team is back on the road and coming to a school near you. It has been a long two years, but we are very pleased to be planning events in the Basin communities and finding opportunities to meet with high school students and community leaders. Coming up, we expect to be in Wollaston Lake on May 25, visiting students from Black Lake and Stony Rapids on June 7, and Fond du Lac on June 8.



## Contact us

As always, we welcome questions and comments any time. Please call us at: **306-343-4500** or reach out through our website: **oranocanada.com** or social media



## CAMECO 2023 LICENCE RENEWALS; RABBIT LAKE, KEY LAKE AND MCARTHUR RIVER OPERATIONS

In 2021, Cameco applied to the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) to begin the process to renew the McArthur River, Key Lake and Rabbit Lake licences. Within this application, Cameco requested an indefinite licence term. The current licences are valid until October 31, 2023.

Although not much will change with an indefinite term, Cameco would have an increased level of regulatory certainty and predictability for these operations, enabling us to make longer-term investments with greater confidence, delivering more benefits to the north, and better planning for our commitments under the 2016 collaboration agreement with the Athabasca Basin communities.

Cameco has a 30-plus year history in northern Saskatchewan and has developed long-term relationships with the Athabasca Basin. During the current licence term, Cameco has been a qualified operator with strong channels of communication and an engagement process established under the collaboration agreement.

We have mature management systems in place at these sites, and we would continue to operate within the established licensing requirements. Uranium is one of the most heavily regulated industries in the world, and we would continue to monitor and report on the environmental, radiation protection, and health and safety performance of all of our mines and mills. Regular regulatory inspections of these operations by both federal and provincial authorities would likewise occur as they always have.

The annual CNSC Regulatory Oversight Report would also continue to provide an opportunity to receive participant funding, submit interventions and engage in a meeting of the Commission every year, regardless of the licence term.

Country food monitoring programs, such as Eastern Athabasca Regional Monitoring Program and the Community Based Environmental Monitoring Program, continually demonstrate that the fish, wild game, vegetation, and water near the communities downstream of these operations are not being impacted and that they are safe to eat and drink.

We are committed to keeping the Athabasca Basin communities engaged and informed. Please reach out to your community relations liaisons for more information or visit us online at [www.cameconorth.com](http://www.cameconorth.com).

**Victor Fern (Fond du Lac, Uranium City and Camsell Portage), Rick Robillard (Stony Rapids and Black Lake), Darlene Gazandlare (Hatchet Lake and Wollaston Lake).**

McArthur River is the world's largest, high-grade uranium mine, and Key Lake is the largest uranium mill. Key Lake and McArthur River were placed in a safe state of care and maintenance in 2018. In February 2022, Cameco announced it planned to restart these operations.

Opened in 1975, Rabbit Lake was the longest operating uranium mine in North America. Over 41 years of mining, the operation produced more than 203 million pounds of uranium concentrates. Rabbit Lake was transitioned into safe care and maintenance in 2016.



Key Lake Mine

# Your Community Land Technicians are here for you.

Ya' thi Néné's purpose is to protect the land, water, and air of Nuhenéné and to promote the people of the Denesyliné First Nations and Athabasca communities that reside there.

That's why we're always on the lookout for issues and observations from residents of the Basin. If you or someone you know has an observation, notices something, or hears a concern related to the land and water, we ask that you report it to one of our Community Land Technicians (CLTs).

When you make a report to your CLT, they will take the time to listen to your concerns and ask you questions. After collecting as much information as possible they will refer the issue to our head office, where research and analysis will be done and actions to resolve the issue will be determined.

Updates will be provided to the person(s) who reported the issue on a regular basis. Issues that are successfully resolved will be communicated to the communities.

Some examples of issues that could be reported include:

- Seeing an outfitter abandoning an out-post camp, leaving debris and garbage
- Finding an abandoned exploration camp with waste left behind
- A sick or diseased animal (e.g. fish with unknown cysts)
- Observations on changes to the environment (animal behaviour, habitat, etc.)
- Issues with hunting/trapping/fishing/gathering

For more information, contact your local Community Land Technician or Bruce Hanbidge, YNLR Operations Manager [bruce.hanbidge@yathinene.com](mailto:bruce.hanbidge@yathinene.com) or call (306) 477-1251.



## EXPORT

EXPORT is a web-based skills inventory and business registration database built to increase communication between community members and partners operating in the region in order to maximize training, employment and business opportunities in the Basin.

### WHAT CAN EXPORT DO FOR YOU?

EXPORT brings companies and communities together with a database of resumes of skilled individuals. EXPORT was built by and for Basin communities and people, providing a platform to give regional partners a direct connection to Basin residents and Basin businesses to better meet community needs and to maximize regional opportunity.

**JOIN EXPORT NOW TO  
FIND YOUR NEXT  
EMPLOYMENT  
OPPORTUNITY.**



WE NEED CONTENT FOR OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER.

Send your photos to [admin@yathinene.com](mailto:admin@yathinene.com) with the subject line "YNLR Newsletter" to be featured in our Summer 2022 issue!



## YA' THI NÉNÉ LANDS AND RESOURCES

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