



# What's Inside?

IPA MEETING WITH THE PROVINCE

UPDATES FROM THE COMMUNITY LAND TECHNICIANS

EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND EMPLOYMENT SUMMIT

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



# A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: GARRETT SCHMIDT

Y'a'thi Néné Lands and Resources (YNLR) continues to grow and strengthen through the support of our leadership and communities and through our partnerships with industry and government. We are busier than ever, with significant global interests in what Nuhenéné has to offer with respect to its mineral potential and its significant land base and the ecosystem services it provides to many. YNLR's role is to protect the land while promoting the interests of Basin residents. We support the socio-economic development of the region while enhancing environmental and cultural protection through the decision-making processes of elected leadership and YNLR governance structures.

With the spot price of uranium hovering around \$100 per pound, we see a significant increase in land being secured by exploration companies to potentially explore for energy metals. This increased interest is welcome as it will create employment and business opportunities and add financial contributions to the Athabasca Community Trust. However, it will also put increased pressure on the land, water and Treaty Rights that our members depend on to feed their families and practice their culture. Balancing land development partnerships (i.e. Exploration Agreements) with land protection initiatives (i.e. Indigenous Protected Areas) is critical to optimizing the interests of the people of the Athabasca Region. We've had significant success over the past 5 years with the dedication of our staff, board and community leadership. We look forward to continuing to add value to the communities we serve by maintaining our commitment to stewardship and collaboration.

## Appia Exploration Agreement

Y'a'thi Néné Lands and Resources, owned by the Athabasca Denesuline First Nations of Hatchet Lake, Black Lake, and Fond du Lac, and the municipalities of Stony Rapids, Wollaston Post, Uranium City, and Camsell Portage, recently signed its seventh exploration agreement with Appia Rare Earths & Uranium Corp. The agreement serves as a foundation for continuous communication between the parties, aligning with YNLR's mandate to enhance the environmental, social, economic, and cultural well-being of current and future Athabasca residents.

Appia currently holds surface rights to approximately 113,837.15 hectares (281,297.72 acres) in Saskatchewan, including the Loranger and Eastside properties, both of which are undergoing uranium exploration in Nuhenéné.

*"By establishing this cooperation agreement, we ensure that our people's and communities' wishes regarding land protection and economic development are heard, and our Treaty Rights are respected. We appreciate Appia's commitment to engaging in respectful and mutually beneficial relations with us."*

*-Mary Denechezhe, Elder and YNLR Board Chair*

## The Athabasca Joint Engagement and Environmental Subcommittee Welcomes New Hatchet Lake Member

Y'a'thi Néné Lands and Resources (YNLR) would like to welcome Paul Denechezhe as the new Hatchet Lake representative on the Athabasca Joint Engagement and Environmental Subcommittee (AJES).

The AJES was created in 2016 by the First Nations of Black Lake, Fond du Lac, and Hatchet Lake, and the municipalities of Wollaston Post, Stony Rapids, Uranium City, and Camsell Portage. Together with representatives from YNLR, Cameco, and Orano, each AJES community representative addresses issues raised by the communities and shares information back to their community related to the environment, mining operations, and proposed authorizations.

Paul brings a wealth of traditional land knowledge to the table as an avid fisher, trapper and former dog-musher. Paul has worked as a band councilor through the years and is on the ADNLC Board of Directors. He has worked hard to ensure land and Treaty rights are protected through his work on N60 land claim negotiations for over 20 years. We look forward to his contributions to the committee.

## Athabasca Community Trust

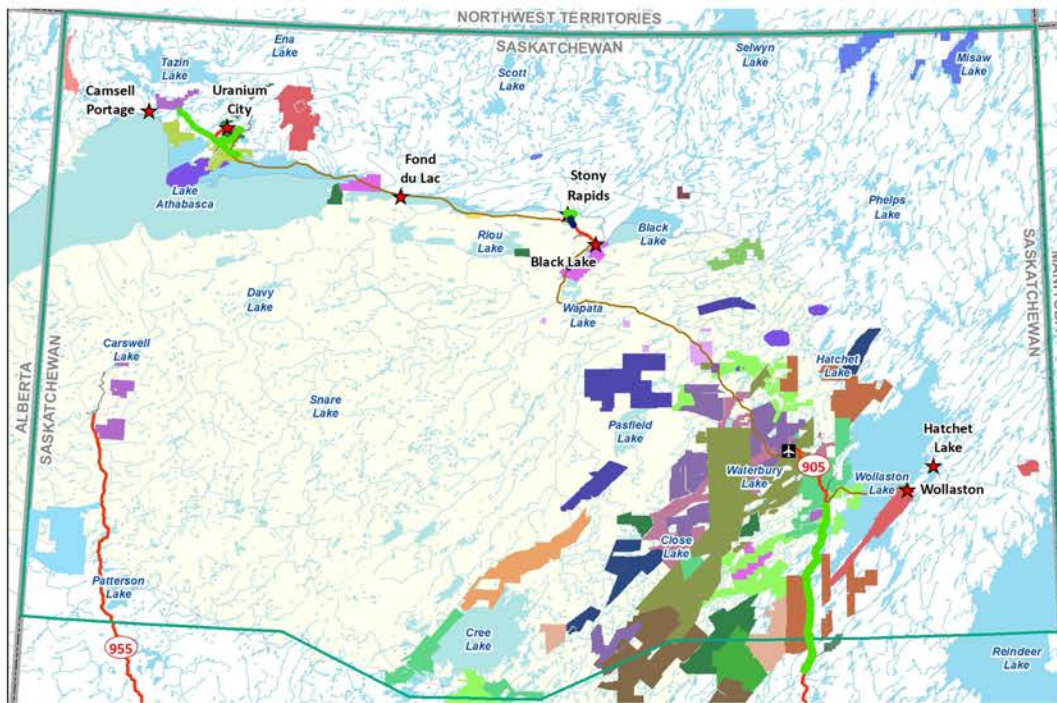
The Athabasca Community Trust committee recently approved funding for two impactful programs in the region.

**Black Lake:** An allocation of \$75,000.00 has been granted for the implementation of a lunch program tailored for students at Father Porte Memorial Dene School. This initiative aims to ensure that every student has access to nutritious, hot meals, including traditional foods such as caribou. Over 500 hot meals are served to students each day, fostering a conducive learning environment, and promoting overall well-being.

**Fond-du-Lac:** \$42,970.00 has been allocated for the development of a new subdivision east playground. This investment promises to enrich the lives of residents, particularly children, by providing a safe and engaging space for recreation and social interaction. The playground will serve as a hub for community gatherings, promoting physical activity and fostering a sense of belonging among residents.

These approved allocations emphasize the commitment to supporting initiatives that address critical community needs and enhance quality of life. By strategically investing in programs like these, we continue to build stronger, more resilient communities where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

# YA'THI NÉNÉ and the DUTY TO CONSULT



Project Name	Permit Expiration	Permit Type	Project Name	Permit Expiration	Permit Type
92 Energy Clover	Aug-25	Exploration	IsoEnergy Laroque West	Dec-24	Exploration
92 Energy Cypress	Nov-24	Exploration	IsoEnergy North Thorburn	Dec-24	Exploration
92 Energy Dorado	Jul-25	Exploration	IsoEnergy Radio	Dec-24	Exploration
92 Energy Gemini	Mar-24	Exploration	IsoEnergy Ranger	Nov-24	Exploration
92 Energy Laydown Site Land Disposition	Jun-27	Exploration	IsoEnergy Thorburn Lake	Dec-24	Exploration
92 Energy Powerline	Nov-24	Exploration	MoE Wollaston Lake Geological Mapping	Unknown	Mapping
92 Energy Tower	Mar-24	Exploration	MoH Aggregate Exploration	Unknown	Infrastructure
92 Energy Wares	Apr-25	Exploration	MoH Wollaston Road Culvert Replacement	Unknown	Maintenance
92 Energy Wormboiler	Apr-25	Exploration	MoH Sand and Gravel Lease KM13	33 years	Infrastructure
ALX Bradley	May-25	Prospecting	MoH Sand and Gravel Lease KM115	33 years	Infrastructure
ALX Crystal Lithium Project	Dec-24	Prospecting	MoH Sand and Gravel Lease Expansion KM152	33 years	Infrastructure
ALX Sabre Uranium	Mar-25	Exploration	MoH Sand and Gravel Lease Expansion 65KM N of Points North	33 years	Infrastructure
Anstag Higginson Lake	May-24	Exploration	MoH Lease 74P004 Expansion	Mar-49	Infrastructure
Appia Alces Lake	Dec-29	Exploration	MoH Lease 74P008 Expansion	Mar-43	Infrastructure
Appia Industrial Lease	Mar-56	Exploration	MoH 74P009 Expansion	Unknown	Lease Expansion
Appia Loranger	Upcoming	Exploration	MoH 74P011 Expansion	Unknown	Lease Expansion
Baselode Hook	Dec-26	Exploration	MoH 74P012 Expansion	Unknown	Lease Expansion
Basin Energy Geikie	Nov-26	Exploration	NexGen Rook 1	Unknown	Exploration
Basin Energy Marshall	Mar-24	Exploration	NexGen SW1	Unknown	Exploration
Brunswick Lake Athabasca	Unknown	Prospecting	Okapi Newnham	Jul-24	Exploration
Brunswick Wollaston	Unknown	Prospecting	Orano Close Lake	Dec-24	Exploration
Cameco Dawn Lake	Sep-25	Exploration	Orano McClean Lake	Jul-26	Exploration
Cameco Forsyth	Dec-25	Exploration	Orano Midwest	Dec-24	Exploration
Cameco Laydowns	Nov-28	Exploration	Orano Waterbury UEM	Dec-24	Exploration
Cameco McArthur River	Dec-25	Exploration	Orano Waterfound River	Dec-25	Exploration
Cameco Read Lake	Sep-24	Exploration	Pegasus Pine Channel Extension	Apr-24	Exploration
Cameco Studer Option	Dec-24	Exploration	Points Athabasca Gravel Pit	Unknown	Extraction
Cameco Surface Lease Amendment	Unknown	Exploration	Potzuz Aggregate Gravel Pit	Unknown	Extraction
Cameco Waterbury/Cigar Lake	Dec-24	Exploration	Purepoint Red Willow	Mar-26	Exploration
CanAlaska Frontier	Unknown	Exploration	Purepoint Tabbernor Group	Unknown	Soil Sampling
CanAlaska Laydowns	Mar-28	Exploration	Purepoint Turnor Lake	Aug-26	Exploration
CanAlaska McTavish	Nov-24	Exploration	Rio Tinto Russell Lake	Apr-25	Exploration
CanAlaska North East Wollaston	Upcoming	Exploration	SaskPower BLS01	Mar-30	Maintenance
CanAlaska North Millennium	Nov-24	Exploration	SaskPower BS1	Dec-24	Maintenance
CanAlaska Seal Lake Camp	Mar-28	Construction	SaskPower C2W	Dec-24	Maintenance
CanAlaska West McArthur	Dec-25	Exploration	SaskPower HDD-511 Pole/Veg Maintenance	Mar-30	Maintenance
Cosa Orion	Dec-26	Exploration	SaskPower P3R Transmission Line	Dec-24	Maintenance
Cosa Ursa	Sep-25	Exploration	SaskPower Hidden Bay	Mar-30	Maintenance
Cree Lake Lodge Airstrip Lease	33 years	Airstrip Lease	SaskPower W3B Transmission Liine	Dec-24	Maintenance
Denison Bell Lake	Dec-24	Exploration	SaskPower WPMP Rebuild	Mar-24	Construction
Denison Crawford Lake	Dec-26	Exploration	Selwyn Lake Lodge Lagoon Refurbishing	Jan-25	Construction
Denison Hatchet Lake	Dec-25	Exploration	Skyharbour Moon Lake	Mar-26	Exploration
Denison Johnston Lake	Dec-25	Exploration	Skyharbour Russell Lake	Apr-25	Exploration
Denison Moon Lake North/South	Dec-26	Exploration	Standard Uranium Ascent	Oct-25	Exploration
Denison Murphy Lake	Dec-25	Exploration	Standard Uranium Atlantic	May-25	Exploration
Denison Wheeler River	Jun-27	Exploration	Standard Uranium Canary	Dec-25	Exploration
Eagle Plains George Lake	Mar-25	Exploration	Standard Uranium Sun Dog	Jun-24	Exploration
Eagle Plains Shasko Bay	In DTC	Exploration	Terra Uranium Hawkrock, Parker, Pasfield	Dec-25	Exploration
F3 Bird Lake	Feb-24	Exploration	Traditional Cabin Use Lease	Nov-56	Lease
F3 Cree Bay	Jun-24	Exploration	Trench Metals Higginson Lake	May-24	Exploration
F3 Hearty Bay	Mar-24	Exploration	UEC Diabase	Dec-24	Exploration
Fortune Bay Goldfields	Oct-24	Exploration	UEC Roughrider	Mar-25	Exploration
Fortune Bay Murmac	Nov-24	Exploration	UEX Christie Lake	Dec-25	Exploration
Fortune Bay Strike	Upcoming	Exploration	UEX Horseshoe-Raven	Mar-24	Exploration
Imperial Oil Bushnell Inlet Cameras	Unknown	Maintenance	UEX Key West	Dec-24	Exploration
IsoEnergy Collins Bay Extension	Dec-24	Exploration	UEX McClean Lake South	Jul-26	Exploration
IsoEnergy East Rim	May-24	Exploration	Valor Resources Cluff Lake	Feb-24	Exploration
IsoEnergy Geiger	Jun-24	Exploration	Valor Resources Hlidden Bay	Dec-26	Exploration
IsoEnergy Hawk	Jun-24	Exploration	ValOre Metals Hatchet Lake	Unknown	Exploration
IsoEnergy Laroque Camp Land Disposition	Jan-27	Exploration	VR Resources Forsyth	Dec-24/24	Exploration
IsoEnergy Laroque East	Jun-24	Exploration	Waterbury Lake Uranium Corp. Waterbury Lake	Mar-26	Exploration

AN UPDATE ON YOUR

# Indigenous Protected Areas

## Presentation to Wildlife Society

On January 26th, 2024, Dana Kellett (Environmental Specialist), Tina Giroux-Robillard (IPA Project Manager), and Keesha Martin (IPA Coordinator) delivered a presentation at the Saskatchewan Chapter of the Wildlife Society Conference. The event, hosted at the University of Saskatchewan, drew an audience of over 50 attendees.

During the 45-minute session, our team covered a range of topics, including Nuhenéné, the Athabasca Denesųłiné culture, caribou, traditions, people, YNLR as an organization, and the ongoing IPA projects. Following the presentation, a Q&A session unfolded, featuring insightful questions from the audience.

We would like to thank Ryan Fisher for extending the invitation to present at this conference. As an additional note, the Wildlife Society of Saskatchewan is offering complimentary memberships this year for individuals identifying as First Nation or Métis. Interested parties can sign up at <https://sktws.com/>.



## IPA Meeting with the Province

On January 18, 2024, the staff of Ya'thi Néné Lands & Resources (YNLR) met with counterparts from the Ministries of Environment and Energy & Resources in Saskatchewan. The aim of this meeting was to bring together the Project Team dedicated to advancing the development of Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs) in Nuhenéné (SK).

The meeting proved to be insightful, with both parties exchanging and acquiring valuable information. A collaborative plan for moving IPAs forward was discussed. The provincial Protected and Conserved Area Network (PCAN) process has played a crucial role in facilitating progress towards establishing IPAs.

Looking ahead, we are eager to continue our partnership with the Province and build upon the relationships cultivated during this process. The strides made signify a positive direction for our conservation initiatives in Nuhenéné.



L to R: Ben Sawa, Habitat Ecologist (MOE); Jessica Killbride, Executive Director (MOE); Keesha Martin, IPA Coordinator (YNLR); Rick Espie, Team Lead (MOE); Tina Giroux-Robillard, IPA Project Manager (YNLR); Bruce Hanbidge, Strategic Advisor (YNLR); Colin Card, Director (MER); Sean Lobb, Geologist (MER).  
Not pictured: Brittany Laing, Outreach and Community Liaison (MER); Tracey Charabin, Director Lands (MOE); Sara Olfert, Director Land Planning (MOE).

## Hatchet Lake Leadership Meetings

During a series of meetings on January 16th and 17th, 2024, Ya'thi Néné Lands & Resources (YNLR) staff, along with Chief and Council members from Hatchet Lake First Nation, engaged with multiple industry companies concerning the Indigenous Protected Areas (IPA) project.

Each session, lasting an hour, was conducted separately with each participating company. These interactions were organized to facilitate comprehensive discussions and foster meaningful dialogues pertaining to the IPA project.



### **SUCCESS STORY:** Making a Difference

My name is Keesha Martin, and I am from Fond du Lac Denesųliné First Nation. I graduated from the University of Saskatchewan in June 2023 with a bachelor's degree in science, majoring in Biology. The journey to earning my degree was challenging, facing many obstacles, including the responsibility of raising three children while studying. Moving away from my hometown and family to an unfamiliar city added to the difficulties, exposing me to culture shock due to the difference in city life compared to my hometown.

When I initially applied for post secondary education, I aimed for an Arts and Science degree, not originally knowing I was going to major in science. Over time, I found myself taking more biology, chemistry, geology, physics and archaeology courses. Leaving Fond du Lac, my goal was to return after establishing a career to contribute to my community. I wanted to help the members of my community, but I was unsure of how I would do that with a science degree and background.

Shortly after graduating, Ya'thi Néné Lands & Resources reached out to me, encouraging me to apply for a position. I was hesitant at first and waited a few months before applying. I was successful and accepted a job offer as an Indigenous Protected Area Coordinator. With my position, I attend meetings with government and industry, working hard to establish Indigenous Protected Areas within Nuhenéné.

My family has lived off the land for generations and with my background in science, I recognize how important it is to protect it. The land and water hold great significance to my culture and traditional way of life. It is very important to me to do work that enables me to merge my education with the protection of land and water. I enjoy the work that I do, it is a good feeling to know I have the potential to make a positive impact on the northern Athabasca communities through YNLR.

### What is an Indigenous Protected Area?

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. This includes things like the values and objectives that are identified as sacred, 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 community members participate 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 process. This is Nuhenéné, and it is important that everyone has the opportunity to have their input.



# COMMUNITY LAND TECHNICIANS in the FIELD

## Ribbon Skirt Project

By Margaret Powder

*Over the winter, the youth program in Uranium City spent some time indoors sewing.*

In December and continuing into the new year, Aurora A., a grade 9 student at Ben McIntyre School, worked on a sewing project as part of her Practical Applied Arts (PAA) curriculum. She sought assistance from me to create ribbon skirts.

She did incredibly well on her first attempt, but she later realized she needed a different size. Aurora insisted on crafting and sewing another ribbon skirt, ensuring precise measurements for her next project. The result was a perfectly fitting skirt that she proudly sewed herself.

It is always a pleasure providing guidance to our youth, sharing knowledge and ensuring our culture and values are passed on.



## Ice Rescue Training

By Trevor Lidguerre

*In February, all the Community Land Technicians and Elder Support Workers gathered in Fond du Lac for two days where we held Ice Rescue Training.*

We had in-class sessions and on-ice training as well. It was a very great experience for us all to meet and work together during the training. This rescue training will be valuable for us and our communities by giving us the knowledge and proper techniques to help others if something serious occurs in the future. It is very practical because we all go out on the land all year round and work in remote areas in the north.

Our instructor also demonstrated what to do if you actually fall into the cold lake during winter months. He submerged himself in the lake and showed us techniques on how to react and stay calm in very cold water.

It was my first time doing this kind of training and I am very happy I got to be a part of it.

# Caribou Guardians Coalition Meeting

By Jean Tsannie

*Jean Tsannie, Ian Donard, and Tina Giroux-Robillard attended a gathering in Yellowknife, NT on January 24th and 25th.*

The Caribou Guardians Coalition Meeting included other representatives and guardians from Inuit and Metis and Dene Nations. Together, we shared a common goal to protect the caribou and their habitat.

At the heart of this meeting was a concern for the declining population of caribou, worsened by environmental challenges such as global warming. Elders, with their valuable traditional knowledge, highlighted the need to maintain the land that is home to the herds. Guardians' programs are helping with this by being the eyes and ears on the land. Collaborating with other communities engaged in similar efforts to protect caribou and their habitat enhances our knowledge and expands our network, thereby increasing our collective efforts.



A poster was created to incorporate the key points of the discussions.

## IPA Patrol

By Ian Donard

*Ian Donard and Bradley Laban, accompanied by two seasoned trappers, traveled by snowmobile for IPA Patrol in early December.*

Covering a distance of 300 kilometers round trip, we made our way across the snow-covered ground, breaking a trail out to Selwyn Lake. Our objectives included documentation, observation, and maintenance, all while enjoying the mild weather and breathtaking beauty of the land.

This trip provided plenty of opportunities for documenting different species of land animals and assessing the thickness of the ice, important tasks for understanding the fine balance of our environment. We checked in at Selwyn Lake, and found everything in order at the IPA cabin, evidence that the winter weather had been kind to this remote outpost.

One memorable moment to note occurred just along the Northwest Territories border, where we stumbled upon caribou tracks heading westward. This added an extra layer to the journey, highlighting the importance of the caribou to the Denesųliné people.



Left: Jean and Ian participate in discussion; Right: Ian opens the meeting with drumming.

During the meeting, Ian and I had the opportunity to showcase our roles as Community Land Technicians (CLTs). We shared our work in youth engagement, site inspections, and harvest monitoring. Using photos and stories, we highlighted the importance of our work at Ya'thi Néné Lands and Resources.

We, as CLTs, have made remarkable progress over the past four years. Site visits have provided us with key information about exploration projects and we have demonstrated the strength of community-led programs in keeping our culture and values alive. As we reflect on the takeaways of the Caribou Guardians Coalition Meeting, it is clear that our community efforts are needed to ensure that the land and water remain usable, not only for the caribou but for all life that depends on it.

IPA Patrol was just one aspect of our busy schedule. In January, with the assistance of the Elder Support Workers, we tackled some Duty to Consult projects, an important aspect of responsible stewardship in the region. I was also honoured to recently attend a meeting with the Caribou Guardians Coalition in Yellowknife, along with two other YNLR representatives, Jean Tsannie and Tina Giroux-Robillard, dedicating two days to discussions and collaborations aimed at safeguarding the caribou populations.

As we reflect on the past few winter months, we are reminded of the importance of our work in preserving and understanding Nuhenéné. Each day brings new insights and challenges, further fueling our passion for the work we do.



# ELDER SUPPORT PROGRAM

*Our Elder Support Program, designed to provide assistance and care to our community Elders, is well underway.*

Led by Victor Howald, this program marks a significant step towards ensuring the well-being and comfort of our Elders in Black Lake, Fond du Lac, Hatchet Lake, Stony Rapids, Wollaston Post, and Uranium City.

Since its launch in the Fall of 2023, through close collaboration with Chief and Council, our objective is to extend a helping hand to Elders aged 65 and above in our communities. The Elder Support Program is proof of our commitment to honouring and valuing the wisdom and contributions of our Elders. Whether it's lending a helping hand with daily tasks or offering companionship, our goal remains to provide compassionate care to those who have given so much to our communities.

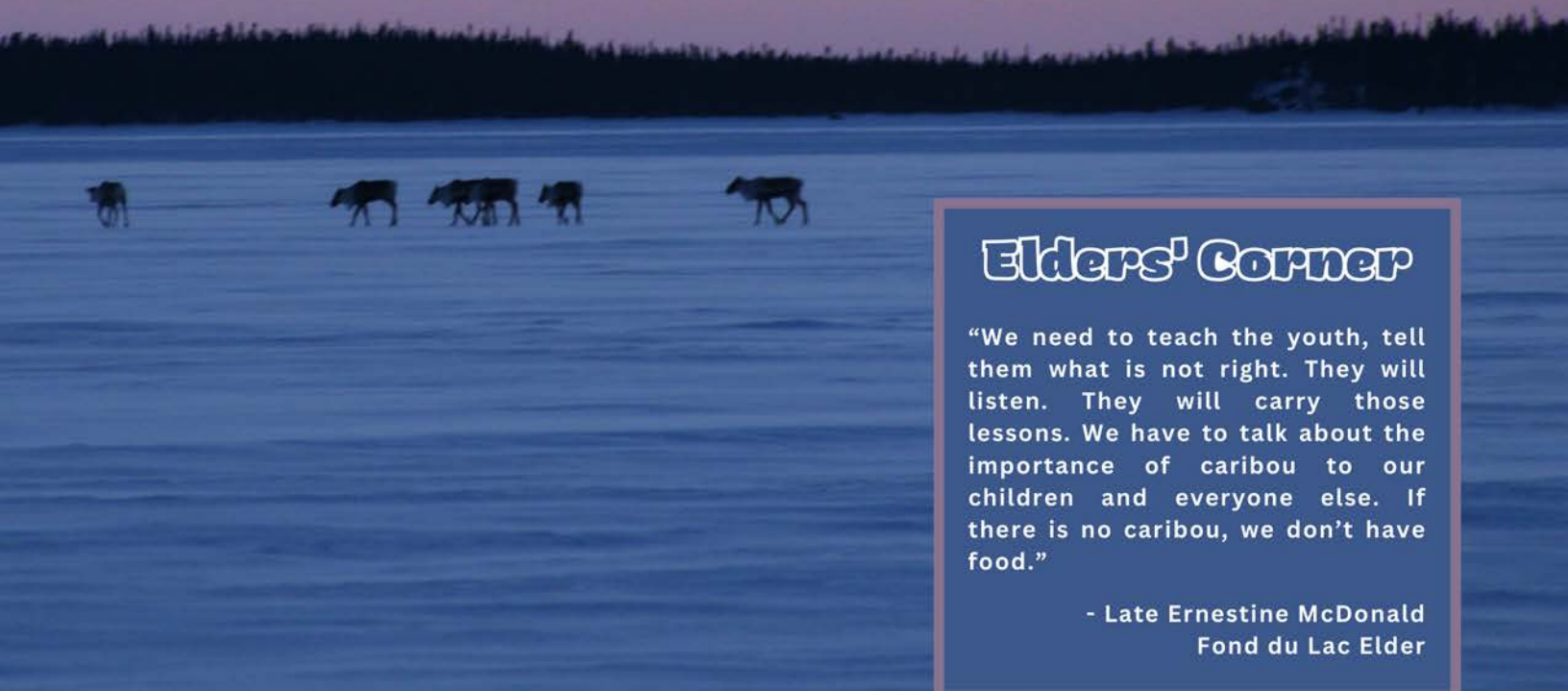
As we deliver these services, we recognize there will be challenges typically involved in establishing a new program. Your patience and understanding as we navigate this initial phase are deeply appreciated. Rest assured, our team is committed to overcoming hurdles and ensuring the smooth operation of the program. Thank you for your continued support.



*Load of wood ready for cutting and delivery.*



*Wood delivery for program recipient.*



## Elders' Corner

“We need to teach the youth, tell them what is not right. They will listen. They will carry those lessons. We have to talk about the importance of caribou to our children and everyone else. If there is no caribou, we don't have food.”

- Late Ernestine McDonald  
Fond du Lac Elder

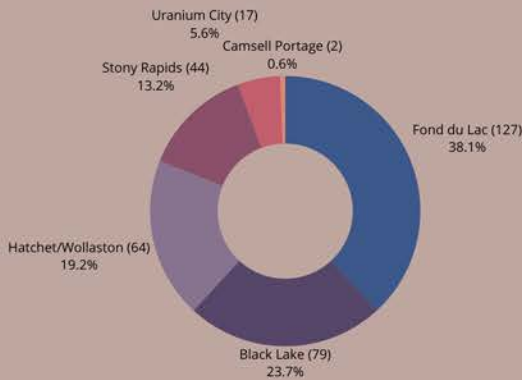


# TRAINING & EMPLOYMENT

Updates in Nuhenēnē

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

Employees by Location



Basin Employer Statistics



## Community Visits

We are continuing to work together with regional stakeholders to identify training and employment opportunities for Basin residents, including the Grade 12 youth.

Recently, May-Britt Jensen was able to connect with the Athabasca Denesūliné Education Authority to arrange visits at Father Megret High School in Wollaston, Father Gamache Memorial School in Fond du Lac, and Father Porte Memorial Dene School in Black Lake.

*“Grade 12 is a time for transition for the youth as they begin to move forward with the next chapter of their lives. I am very excited to be able to sit with each grade 12 student, have them enter their skills into the EXPORT portal and discuss what their aspirations are after graduation. Not only will the youth be able to walk away with a résumé, but they may also have access to scholarships, summer employment if planning on attending post-secondary school, and potential full-time employment if they choose to go right into the workforce after high school.”*

While May-Britt visits Wollaston Lake/Hatchet Lake, Cameco will be presenting to the Grades 9-12 youth on the opportunities that are available in the mining industry. May-Britt will also be available to community members so they may update their EXPORT profile or become a first-time user of the platform. For further details on the dates, times, and locations please contact your local Ya’thi Néné Lands and Resources Office.

## Education, Training, and Employment Summit

On March 13th and 14th, the Athabasca Education, Employment and Development Committee (AEEDC) and its partner organizations will be hosting an Education, Training, and Employment Summit in Saskatoon. This two-day event was spearheaded and developed by AEEDC and will bring together community leadership, industry partners, government representatives and other community stakeholders. The focus will be to share current successful initiatives, forthcoming opportunities and what is needed and how to take action to address the education and training gaps that are currently present in the Athabasca region. Informative panel discussions, workshops, along with networking opportunities are on the agenda and being planned which will give everyone who attends, from any sector, an opportunity to fully participate and take something away for their community and organization.

For further information email [admin@yathinene.com](mailto:admin@yathinene.com)

### AEEDC Partner Organizations

Fond du Lac Development Corp   Black Lake Ventures   Hatchet Lake Development LP   Athabasca Permanent Resident Organization





# orano

## From Trainees to Employees: The Impact of Orano's Mill Utility Training Program

Orano Canada is thrilled to share the success of its Mill Utility Training Program (MUTP) that ran from October 3 to December 20, 2023, at the McClean Lake Operation. Six trainees from the communities of Black Lake, Fond du Lac, and Wollaston Lake completed the comprehensive six-week (462 work hours) initiative.

During the MUTP, trainees developed various skills and an understanding of what is required to work safely and effectively in a uranium milling operation. This was achieved by rotating each trainee through a department every week for job-shadowing before spending the final two weeks with the Operations Group.

The instruction covered a wide range of areas, including Mill Operator Unit Process, Lockout/Tagout, Confined Space Entry, Personal Fall Protection, Radiation Protection, Transportation of Dangerous Goods, GHS/WHMIS, and Fire Extinguisher training.

The program's schedule, which involved flying in and out of the site and regular working days, also gave the participants a realistic experience of the work-life balance requirements of a McClean Lake employee and remote work sites in general.

The program utilized the Test of Workplace Essential Skills (TOWES), a nationally recognized assessment tool, which was administered at the start and end of the program to gauge the MUTP's impact on their professional development. The final TOWES scores showed a marked improvement in reading, document use and numeracy skills, underscoring the program's effectiveness in enhancing these essential workplace competencies.

At the end of the program, five of the six trainees were offered employment opportunities with Orano and were placed in the Operations Group, Safety Group, and Radiation Group.

The success of the 2023 MUTP can be attributed to a Training Service Agreement with Ya'thi Néné Lands and Resources that brought in additional federal funding, McClean Lake's administration, employees, and trainers who shared their knowledge, Orano's long-term contractors that provided catering and transport services and the efforts made by the participants themselves.

It is expected that the program will run again in 2024 and it typically has an intake period between June and July. If you or someone you know is interested in participating, is over 18 years old, has completed Grade 12, and is a resident of the Athabasca Basin, please email [ocmillops@orano.group](mailto:ocmillops@orano.group) or follow Orano Canada on social media for more information.



*Mill trainee program participant, Ronnie Sanger.*

## Preparing for Mining Production

At the end of January, Orano was proud to announce, in conjunction with joint-venture partner Denison, plans for a restart of McClean Lake uranium mining operations. Mining is planned to start at the McClean North deposit in 2025, with 2024 activities focused on preparations to ready the existing SABRE mining site and equipment for continuous commercial operations, as well as the installation of eight pilot holes for the first mining cavities planned for excavation. The approved budget for this work in 2024 is \$7 million.



*SABRE mining site.*

Approximately 800,000 lbs U3O8 are targeted for production from McClean North in 2025, with approximately 3,000,000 lbs U3O8 identified for potential additional production from a combination of the McClean North and Caribou deposits during the years 2026 to 2030.

Jim Corman, Orano Canada's President and Chief Executive Officer, stated, "Our current ability to capitalize on the strengthening uranium and nuclear markets is the result of a long-term investment in R&D ... The groundwork we do over the course of 2024, is expected to put the joint venture in a position to see SABRE in action and to commence production in 2025. It is anticipated that the McClean Lake mill will have sufficient capacity to process this ore, while continuing with committed planned production from Cigar Lake. It's an exciting time for employees, partners, and the industry as we return to a focus on growth."

## Orano Winter Exploration Program

The 2024 winter exploration program has commenced with the mobilization of the Waterbury-Cigar, Waterfound River and Midwest drill and ground geophysical programs. The Orano team and contractors are utilizing Points North and McClean Lake as bases for this work.

On the west side of the province, personnel have mobilized to the Preston Lake Project, south of Patterson Lake, to start work on a ground geophysical survey and soil sampling program.

Two additional ground geophysical surveys are planned Marguerite River, situated along the Alberta border, and at Close Lake, west of Waterbury-Cigar. Both projects are scheduled to have their work completed by April 2024.

Orano anticipates the safe completion of 30 drill holes, totaling 15,000m, 135km of ground geophysics and 1,100 soil samples to be completed by the end of August 2024.

Orano exploration team is ISO 14001:2015 and ISO 45001:2018 certified and plans projects to prioritize the health and safety of the team and minimize potential impacts to the environment.



**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](http://oranocanada.com) or social media.



*Energizing a clean-air world*

# Interested in a career with Cameco?

Contact your community liaison to learn more.

*Black Lake/Stony Rapids*

**Rick Robillard**

Phone: 306-961-2189

Email: [rick\\_robillard@cameco.com](mailto:rick_robillard@cameco.com)

*Wollaston Lake/Hatchet Lake*

**Darlene Gazandlare**

Phone: 306-930-9404

Email: [darlene\\_gazandlare@cameco.com](mailto:darlene_gazandlare@cameco.com)

*Camsell Portage/Fond du Lac/Uranium City*

**Victor Fern Sr.**

Phone: 306-960-9156

Email: [victor\\_fernsr@cameco.com](mailto:victor_fernsr@cameco.com)



# 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 Denesúliné 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 Dana Kellett, YNLR Environmental Specialist  
dana.kellett@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 with the  
subject line "YNLR Newsletter" to  
be featured in our Spring 2024  
issue!



## YA' THI NÉNÉ LANDS AND RESOURCES

100 – 335 Packham Avenue  
Saskatoon, SK  
S7N 4S1

Phone: 306-477-1251  
Fax: 306-802-4800

Email: admin@yathinene.com

Office Hours 9:00 to 5:00 weekdays