



WINTER 2021 | VOL 4

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

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YOUR INDIGENOUS PROTECTED AREAS:
UPDATES

DEVELOPING MINING EXPLORATION
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COMMUNITY IN PROFILE: WOLLASTON LAKE

Ya' thi Néné' Land and Resources' purpose is to protect the land, water, and air of Nuhenéné and to promote the people of the Denesufiné 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:

Ya' thi Néné staff have been hard at work over the past few months advancing our projects and working in the Basin communities to support the protection of the land and to promote opportunities for residents. As you'll notice reading this newsletter, we've realized some success with our projects and programs despite the setbacks and challenges in dealing with COVID-19 restrictions.

Like everyone, we've had to cancel, postpone or modify meetings and interactions to reduce the risk of spreading the virus. We were extremely excited that the Athabasca Basin communities would be prioritized to receive COVID-19 vaccinations because vaccinations are one of the best options for keeping Basin communities safe. COVID-19 vaccinations are extremely important and we strongly encourage anyone who has the opportunity to get the vaccine to do so. In fact, many of our Directors, Staff and Committee Members throughout the Basin communities are leading the way in getting vaccinated and protecting themselves and their communities.

As winter progresses and more people throughout the Basin and Saskatchewan do their part in getting vaccinated, the risk of COVID-19 should decrease. Ya' thi Néné anticipates a busy spring and summer with lots of projects advancing and some of our programs maturing.

For our Indigenous Protected Area project, Basin residents will be asked for their input into the location of Saskatchewan's first Indigenous Protected Areas and into the governance and management structures. Proponents involved in mineral exploration throughout Nuhenéné will receive a copy of Ya' thi Néné's Mineral Exploration Guidelines that will outline improved engagement processes. This will benefit both companies and the communities, contributing to meaningful partnerships that respect Aboriginal and Treaty Rights and helping to ensure benefits flow to Basin communities.

Our EXPORT database continues to gain momentum and allow for Basin job seekers to find current training, employment and contract postings. As administrators in each community are trained, community members are encouraged to create profiles and industry partners such as Cameco and Orano begin to post opportunities on the site.

We all have a lot to look forward to in the coming months but we're not there yet. We need to remain vigilant and disciplined and we must do our part by getting vaccinated to keep ourselves and our communities safe.



Updates
from your

DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

FACILITATING WORKFORCE GROWTH, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, AND LIFE LONG LEARNING IN THE BASIN

By Dene Robillard, Ya'thi Néné Development Coordinator

Edlánet'e/tansi, Athabasca community members!

Welcome all to the Winter edition of our quarterly Ya'thi Néné Lands & Resources newsletter! I hope that you are all staying safe and healthy as we continue to navigate life through this COVID-19 pandemic. It has been nearly a full year since our lives and communities have had to change and adapt to the new normal; unfortunately, the impact on our work, which relies heavily on our ability to engage in person, has been greatly impacted. Our ability to conduct the necessary work for some of our projects has suffered. Nonetheless, and despite these challenges, our team continues to do our utmost to stay on track.

I want to take this opportunity to give a shout out and expression of our utmost appreciation to our health care workers on the front lines who are with the Athabasca Health Authority (AHA). We are thankful for their tireless work and tremendous care they demonstrate day in and day out. From our offices, our main priority is to ensure the safety and health of our Basin communities and citizens as we continue to safely engage in opportunities facilitated through our partnerships. With that said, stay safe, sanitize, wear your mask, and maintain some social distance. I will now turn to my update on some of the work we have been doing this past quarter.

ABE 12-Pathways program

We understand that Post-secondary students are required to take specific high school courses prior to admission into a chosen profession. If you do not have the classes you need to apply to the college, the Adult Basic Education (ABE) 12-Pathways program is designed to help you change that so you can start building your pathway into your chosen profession. Northlands College and SIIT, in partnership with the Prince Albert Grand Council (PAGC-Dene) Labour Force Development Program and the communities of Black Lake, Fond du Lac, and Hatchet Lake, are in Phase One (testing and career pathing) of the planned pilot project for grade 12 graduates who want to upgrade their academic skills. Northlands College and SIIT are both excited to partner with each First Nation community, and to explore the opportunity in providing this exciting program! As Development Coordinator, I look forward to hearing from those of you who might be interested in upgrading your academic skills and exploring career options to apply for future Post-secondary programming.

Export Database roll-out campaign a-go!

The EXPORT Database has been launched and administrators in the communities have been trained in how to navigate the program and support people and businesses in creating profiles. A roll-out campaign plan has been developed and to encourage people to create profiles and start accessing training and employment opportunities. But you don't have to wait, you can visit <https://www.yathinene.ca/export-user> to sign-up and create your profile today. Use this online platform to create and store your résumé and tickets and get notifications when one of your certifications needs updating. Also, EXPORT helps to store all your information in one place for easy access, making the process to apply for any training and employment that much easier. You will be able to search available jobs not only within the Basin, but outside as well.

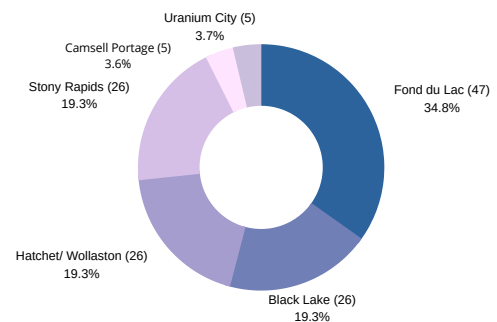
Ground Service Attendant Training Proposal

In partnership with the newly rebranded Rise Air (formerly West Wind Group of Companies) and Ya'thi Néné Lands & Resources (YNLR), we are currently in the planning phase to design and implement a training program for Ground Service Attendant positions for Spring 2021.

The intent of the Ground Service Attendant training is to encourage and support long term meaningful training and employment for Athabasca Basin community membership within Aviation Services. Students who successfully graduate from the course will be eligible to fill vacant positions for the Water bases in Stony Rapids and La Ronge this Spring/Summer season.

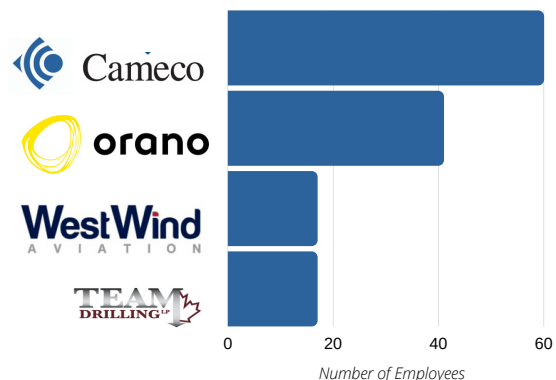
As a company owned by and serving the seven Athabasca Basin communities, this opportunity will allow Rise Air to invest in workforce development that would benefit their clients and shareholders simultaneously as well as strengthen the loyalty and support from community members and community leaders moving forward. Please stay tuned for further updates on our social media, on MBC radio, and the Ya'thi Néné EXPORT Database!

Employees by Location



It is worth noting that both Industry and Basin-owned business employment statistics for this period are still lower than anticipated due to the previous COVID-19 shutdown of operations at Cigar Lake, McClean Lake, and Rabbit Lake sites.

Basin Employer Statistics



These charts provide the (Oct-Dec 2020) employment statistics for both Cameco and Orano, and eligible Basin-owned businesses supported through the Collaboration Agreement. Some employment statistics were not available at time of print.

Ya' thi Néné and the DUTY TO CONSULT

When Ya' thi Néné was formally established in 2016, one of its central mandates was to assist in the Duty to Consult process and ensure that the voices and concerns of the Athabasca Denesųliné were heard and taken into account every time government and industry wanted to develop in Nuhenéné.

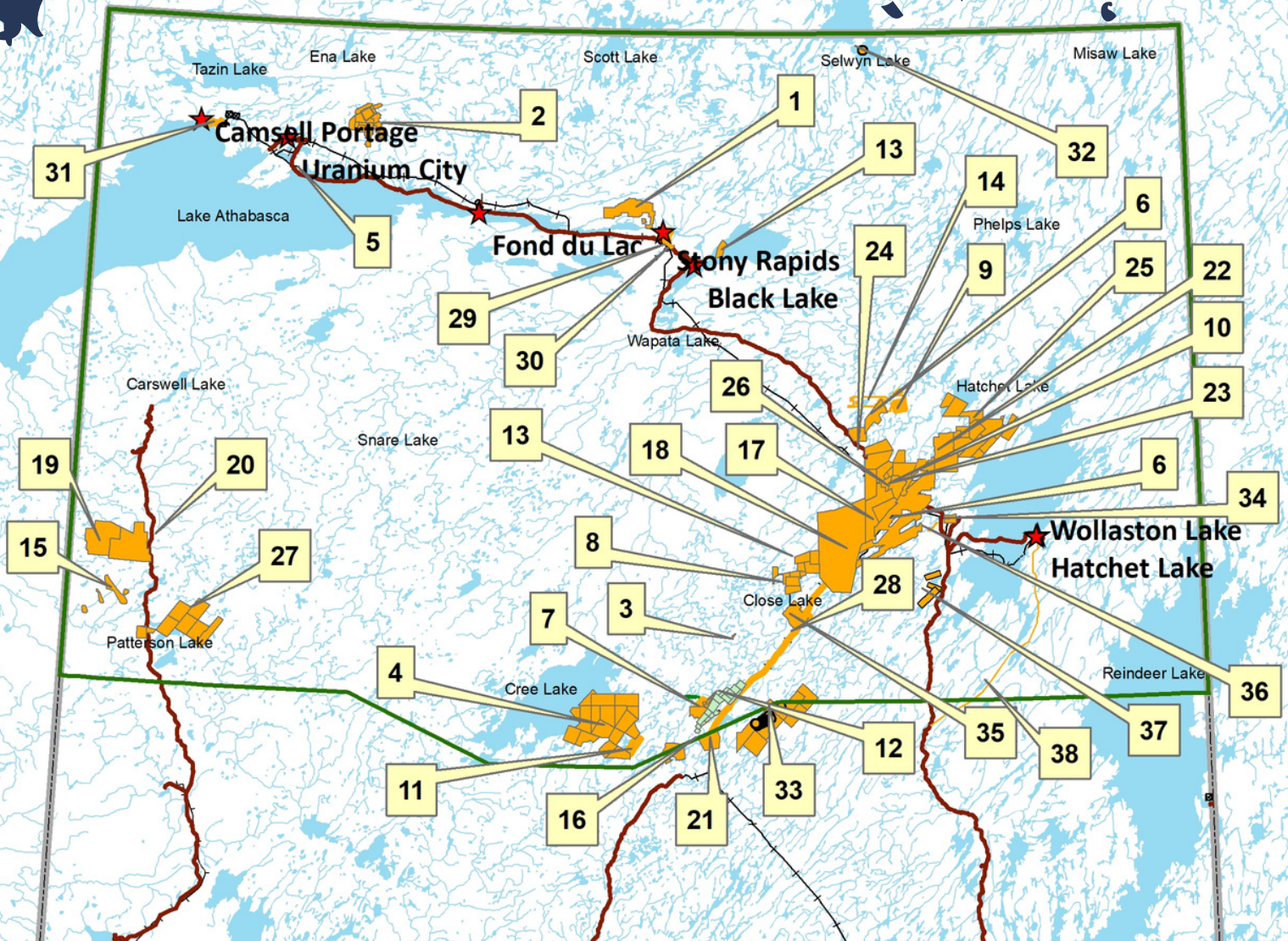
Since October of 2019, we've been doing just that. Every time the Duty to Consult process is triggered by a potential project that may threaten a First Nations' right to hunt, trap for food, gather, or fish, the company or government that proposed the project must consult with the First Nations in question.

That's where we come in. When the Nation is notified, so are we— and we begin immediately to make sure your interests are being safeguarded. We act as a go-between, making sure that government and proponents are consulting and engaging the people. We analyze the permit, we examine our Traditional Knowledge database, develop maps, and consult the chief and council, land users, and wider communities.

The size of the permitted area does not imply the scale of the work. For example – there could only be 15 – 20 exploration drill holes in the entire permitted area. The 35 'Active Permits' identified on the map represent companies requesting permits from October 2019 to date of publication.

The respective companies represented on the map (see list) have all granted approval for Ya'thi Nene Land and Resource Office to share their permitted areas. Other permits exist but would have been issued by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment before October 2019 and are not illustrated on the map.

'Active Permits' represent which companies (e.g. Denison Mines Corp.) possess valid permits and may or may not be performing work. For more information on project status, Basin residents are encouraged to contact Ya' thi Nene directly (Shea Shirley, shea.shirley@yathinene.com).



	Proponent	Permitted Activity	Permit Expiration
1	ALX Resources Firebird Nickel Program	Exploration	March 2021
2	Appia Energy Corp. Alces Lake	Exploration	March 2022
3	CanAlaska Uranium West McArthur	Exploration	March 2021
4	CanAlaska Uranium Cree East	Remediation	March 2021
5	Cameco Corp. Fishhook Bay	Exploration	March 2021
6	Cameco Dawn Lake	Exploration	December 2023
7	Denison Mines Corp. Moon Lake	Exploration	December 2021
8	Denison Mines Corp. Darby Lake	Exploration	March 2021
9	Denison Mines Corp. Murphy Lake	Exploration	March 2021
10	Denison Mines Corp. Waterbury	Exploration	March 2021
11	Denison Mines Corp. Ford Lake	Exploration	March 2021
12	Denison Mines Corp. Wheeler River/Advanced Wheeler River	Exploration	December 2021
13	Forum Energy Fir Island	Exploration	May 2022
14	IsoEnergy Limited Larocque East	Exploration	March 2021
15	NexGen Energy Ltd. SW1	Exploration	March 2021
16	Orano Canada Inc. Martin Lake	Exploration	March 2021
17	Orano Canada Inc. Waterbury UEM	Exploration	December 2023
18	Orano Canada Inc. Waterbury/Cigar Lake	Exploration	March 2021
19	Orano Canada Inc. Alexandra	Exploration	March 2021
20	Orano Canada Inc. Nikita	Exploration	March 2021
21	Orano Canada Inc. Getty Russell	Exploration	March 2021
22	Orano Canada Inc. Wolly	Exploration	December 2023
23	Orano Canada Inc. Midwest	Exploration	December 2023
24	Orano Canada Inc. Waterfound	Exploration	December 2023
25	Purepoint Uranium Group Inc. Red Willow	Exploration	December 2021
26	Purepoint Uranium Group Inc. Henday	Exploration	December 2021
27	Purepoint Uranium Group Inc. Hook Lake	Exploration	December 2021
28	SaskPower IP3 Transmission Line	Power Line Vegetation Maintenance	December 2021
29	SaskPower ST511 Distribution Line	Power Line Vegetation Maintenance	March 2021
30	SaskPower ST512 Distribution Line	Power Line Vegetation Maintenance	March 2021
31	SaskPower CR-403 Camsell Distribution Line	Power Line Vegetation Maintenance	Fall 2021
32	Selwyn Lake Lodge	Legitimize an Existing Lagoon	2025
33	Skyharbour Resources Ltd. Moore Lake	Exploration	March 2021
34	UEX Corporation Vixen Lake	Exploration	December 2023
35	UEX Corporation Christie Lake	Exploration	December 2023
36	UEX Corporation Lampin Lake	Ice Road and Core Recovery	March 2021
37	UEX Corporation West Bear	Exploration	March 2021
38	Wollaston Lake Road (Associated Engineering)	Proposed Easement	March 2021



Photo courtesy of Joe Bigeye

ESTABLISHING MINERAL EXPLORATION GUIDELINES IN THE BASIN

Ya'thi Néné Lands and Resources have developed a set of Mineral Exploration Guidelines (MEG) that will be shared on our website and sent directly to governments and proponents in the coming weeks. The purpose of the MEG are to set out the terms and process by which the communities consent to Projects in or affecting Nuhenéné (Traditional Territory of the Athabasca Denesų́iné).

To acquire the First Nations' consent, consultation and engagement leading to accommodation—whereby all of the First Nations' legitimate concerns about the Project and its potential impacts are addressed—must be completed.

Where all such concerns are addressed, the First Nations' consent will be set out in agreements with Project proponents, with the Crown, or both.

The Guidelines set out the terms for such engagement and accommodation. They ensure that every action or decision by Proponents that has the potential to affect the First Nations' aboriginal and Treaty Rights, Traditional Territory, cultural connections to, heritage values in and spiritual uses of Nuhenéné results in meaningful consultation and accommodation. The process outlined in the Guidelines will also better serve the interests of the communities and Proponents by establishing communication well in advance of existing permitting processes and avoid potential delays.

In most cases, adherence to the Guidelines will lead to an accommodation agreement establishing the First Nations' consent to the Project or decision in question, on specified terms. A large-scale, long-term project will usually take the form of a long-term Impact Benefit Agreement.

In contrast, a small-scale, short-term project such as exploration will usually take the form of a smaller scale agreement of more limited duration, such as an Exploration Agreement.

The Athabasca Communities support responsible development that provides sustainable benefits to its people, and that is conducted in a manner that respects the environment and their Aboriginal and Treaty Rights.

The Guidelines will serve as a basis for Proponents to engage with the First Nations in a respectful, productive, and non-adversarial manner. The Guidelines will also provide certainty to all parties, by ensuring that the requirements of Canadian, international, and Indigenous law are met.

The Athabasca Communities have designed YNLR to be their "one window" for consultation and engagement concerning Crown decisions about land and resource use. Engagement with the Athabasca Communities is necessary to secure social license for developments affecting the long-term residents and Indigenous peoples of the Athabasca Basin.

Proponents are therefore directed to make all consultation and engagement requests in the Athabasca Basin (whether of the Athabasca Denesų́iné First Nations or the Athabasca Communities) through YNLR.

YNLR will work closely with and take direction from the most affected of the First Nations and Athabasca Communities on a project-by-project basis. Larger scale projects may require engagement from all Athabasca Communities and First Nations, and will be at the discretion of YNLR.

[Access the guidelines document on our website.](#)

NEW CONTINUING EDUCATION PILOT PROJECT IN THE WORKS

Northlands College takes pride in providing diverse education and training in a safe, welcoming environment by removing barriers and creating opportunities for people of northern Saskatchewan.

SIIT maintains focus on advancement of post-secondary education, adult education and skill development for all First Nation peoples through multiple pathways that support student success. One of SIIT's key strategies is to enter into partnerships to ensure growth, innovation, and opportunity for Indigenous people.

In partnership with PAGC, Northlands College, SIIT, and the communities of Black Lake, Fond du Lac, and Hatchet Lake, are exploring a pilot project for previous Grade 12 graduates who want to upgrade academic skills in order to go on to post-secondary education. The upgrading program would be held in Stony Rapids to allow a regional approach. Students must be willing to relocate to Stony Rapids while participating in the upgrading program (approximately 9 months).

Phase One of the pilot project includes:

1. Northlands College works with applicants to do testing that helps determine academic strengths.
2. SIIT works with applicants to do career pathing for those who have done the academic testing. Career pathing helps students figure out what careers are suitable for each person and what is needed to pursue these careers.
3. In order to be considered for the potential upgrading program, BOTH the testing and career pathing must be completed.
4. PAGC-Dene/QM Points will provide a student allowance for the assessment portion of the program.

If there is enough interest from students and COVID permitting, testing and career pathing are proposed to take place on dates to be determined soon. **Keep an eye out for this information.**





orano

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.



Plane landing in Fond du Lac with supplies to prepare for COVID-19

Status of McClean Lake Operation

2020 was certainly a series of ups and downs on the production front, and unfortunately at the end of the year the mill had to temporarily suspend production in tandem with the suspension of production at the Cigar Lake mine. While both operations have made substantial efforts to protect employees and contractors from the threat of COVID-19, the province has been experiencing an increase in the number of positive cases. Orano has worked hard to minimize the impact of this pause in production on the workforce. Through coordination with northern leaders, the operation has also been making adjustments to work schedules and pick up points as necessary to respond to localized COVID outbreaks in northern communities.

2020: A Year Defined by Challenge

Thank you to Athabasca Basin leaders, community members and businesses for your partnership in a difficult year. Through regular contact and updates we were able to be flexible and protect the health of our workforce, and in turn the communities where our employees live. We were proud to offer direct financial support and supplies to command centres and Basin communities twice in 2020, and we were impressed by the level of coordination, care and concern at the community level.

JEB TMF Expansion Project Continues

You may have received a brochure in the mail from Orano regarding the expansion of the tailings management facility (TMF) at McClean Lake or recently heard an explanation of the project on MBC Radio. Tailings are the material left behind once uranium is processed. Orano is seeking regulatory approval to expand its existing tailings management facility at the McClean Lake site. We expect the current facility to be full in 2027, so more space will be necessary to accommodate future mining projects. Many options have been considered, but by expanding the existing facility we will not impact any new areas of the environment, we can take advantage of existing roads and infrastructure, and make the most of the experience acquired during the last 20 years.

This expansion has been considered for more than 10 years and at times we have responded to questions about how and where we monitor the facility and surrounding environment, how we will decommission the facility, and whether we have considered a horizontal expansion. We've also heard from community members that they do not want to see numerous tailings management facilities in multiple spots around the operation. Because of these questions and preferences, we continue to see expansion of the current facility as the best option. Our monitoring programs are robust, satisfactory and validated by our regulators.

A Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) public hearing is scheduled for September 2021 on the tailings expansion. You will hear more from the company on the details of the project, and there will be opportunities for feedback, questions and participation in the hearing process. Please feel free to reach out to your local member of the Northern Saskatchewan Environmental Quality Committee or the Athabasca Joint Engagement and Environment Subcommittee for more information or to put forward any questions or concerns.



Glenn Lafleur, Northern Affairs Manager

Mill Operations Training Program

Thank you to everyone who applied for the Mill Operations Training Program, provided in partnership with Northern Career Quest. Through this partnership, we offer support, training, and employment to residents of Saskatchewan's North. We appreciate your commitment to growing your skills and your patience while we reviewed the program. Despite the recent temporary halt of McClean Lake production we expect to run the program this spring. We look forward to meeting our next eight candidates, and if you have any questions please contact Northern Affairs Manager, Glenn Lafleur.



Energizing a clean-air world

As Cameco prepares for re-licensing at its Cigar Lake mine, community liaisons like Darlene Gazandlare have a key role to play.

Darlene acts as the point of contact for both industry and the community as set out by the collaboration agreements Cameco and Orano signed with Athabasca Basin communities. In her role, Darlene meets with leadership regularly, engages with community members (youth, elders, land users), assists with addressing questions and concerns from the community and communicates with industry for follow-up.

"I talk to the community about what's happening - assuring them that Cameco is doing things safely and protecting the environment and providing information if they have questions," said Darlene. "I've worked closely with community leadership and I've developed really strong, open communication with them, so the community is aware of what's being done and has the right information."

In November 2019, Cameco applied to the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) to begin the process to renew the Cigar Lake licence. Cameco is requesting a 10-year licence and the hearing will be held in April 2021. The current licence is valid until June 30, 2021.

During the current licence term Cigar Lake completed construction activities and successfully transitioned through commissioning to commercial production. Throughout this period the site reached several milestones, including:

- External recognition for conventional safety programs on three occasions during the licence term, winning the regional John T. Ryan safety trophy for metal mines in 2018, 2019 and 2020
- Injury statistics have all trended downward
- Low effective doses received by workers
- Measures implemented to reduce treated water loadings to the environment during initial commercial production years and all treated water released from the facility met regulatory requirements and was safe
- No releases that harmed the environment or health and safety of people nearby
- Environmental monitoring consistently showed that fish and plants were safe to eat

Led by Darlene, community engagement for Cigar Lake during the current licensing term focused on providing community leadership and giving Athabasca Joint Implementation Subcommittee (AJES), formally the Athabasca Working Group, members ongoing updates and site tours, including discussion on the surface and underground facilities.

"I try to be everywhere in the community, volunteer at events, do school presentations and just be there for people," said Darlene. "Obviously before COVID that was a lot easier, but since I returned to this liaison role two years ago, my presence has been strong in the community. People know they can come to me if they need help and leadership recognizes me as that main contact too, so it's been really good."

She hasn't let the pandemic stop her outreach either. Darlene's volunteered at Wollaston's COVID Command Centre, delivering care packages to community members who were sick and going on shopping runs to deliver things safely. While COVID fatigue is apparent in Wollaston, Darlene said the arrival of the vaccine has brought hope.

She's also looking forward to a successful Cigar Lake re-licensing process. Workforce development is an important part of the liaison role and she's seen increasing numbers of community members looking for help with resumes and access to online resources to advance their careers and lives. Cigar Lake's continued presence in the north means more opportunities for her people to do just that.

"My job is important because I don't just work for industry and for Cameco, I work for my community as well," said Darlene. "I want to help my community in the best way that I can and that means keeping them aware of Cameco's operations and what's going on with industry, volunteering my services, making them aware of opportunities and getting important information out there."

There have also been several positive economic impacts, including:

- Since the Yá thi Néné Collaboration Agreement was signed in 2016, Cameco and Orano have provided \$414.5 million for workforce development, community investment and business development initiatives for the Athabasca Basin
- \$36.8 million has been invested in workforce development including salaries for Athabasca Basin members
- There are 121 people from the Athabasca Basin employed with Cameco and Orano
- Despite recent workforce reductions throughout Saskatchewan, Cameco has worked to maintain basin employment, reduced only to 93% of the 2017 levels
- More than \$26.9 million has been invested in Athabasca Basin communities and \$350.8 million spent with eligible businesses since 2016. This exceeds the 5-year target of \$250 million under the business development pillar of the agreement.

Cigar Lake re-licensing virtual meeting coming in late February

For anyone interested in learning more about the upcoming re-licensing hearing for Cigar Lake, a virtual meeting will be held on Thursday, February 25th from 10am-11:30am to provide more details and an update from site. Cameco will post a link to the meeting on @camecoconnects Facebook page on the day of the meeting and a virtual tour video of the Cigar Lake operation will be available shortly after.

Other Community Liaisons

Rick Robillard is Cameco and Orano's other community liaison. Rick looks after Black Lake First Nation and the Northern Hamlet of Stony Rapids.

Cameco currently has an opening for a liaison position for the Fond du Lac First Nation, Northern Settlement of Camsell Portage and the Northern Settlement of Uranium City.





Cameco

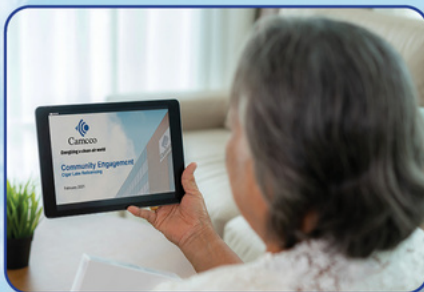
Energizing a clean-air world

VIRTUAL Community Engagement Meeting Cigar Lake Licensing Renewal

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we're unable to hold in-person meetings or a site tour. To ensure the health and safety of all involved, we're hosting a virtual community engagement meeting:

Thursday, February 25 from 10am-11:30am

Cameco will post a link to the meeting on [@camecoconnects Facebook](#) page on the day of the meeting and a virtual tour video of the Cigar Lake operation will be available shortly after. Please contact your local community liaison below for details on how to join us online.



In November 2019, Cameco applied to the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) to begin the process to renew the Cigar Lake licence.

Cameco is requesting a 10-year licence and the hearing will be held in April 2021. The current licence is valid until June 30, 2021.

For more information on Cigar Lake relicensing, please visit us online at www.cameconorth.com/about/businesses/cigar-lake-relicensing

For questions or details on how to join this meeting, please contact one of our Cameco/Orano community liaisons:

Rick Robillard
Black Lake/Stony Rapids
rick_robillard@cameco.com
306-284-2068

Darlene Gazandlare
Hatchet Lake/Wollaston Lake
darlene_gazandlare@cameco.com
306-633-2123





by Derek Cook,
FDL YNLR CLT

Winter on the Land

WITH THE
Fond Du Lac Youth

This January, I was assigned a task by my supervisor Tina Giroux, to take the kids out on the land. It's one of the best parts of my job as a Community Land Technician: the opportunity to get out with the youth from our communities. Although it was short notice, we were able to put an exciting outing together and pass on important culture and traditional teachings on the land. I was thrilled to be out on the land and lake with youth boys and girls due to prolonged community lockdown that we faced, and the restrictions were just opening up at the time.

The youth who participated had the chance to learn how to set a fish net, how to make dry fish and properly fillet the fish. They also learned how to set traps for fur-bearing animals out towards Richards Lake. Lastly they learned how to set beaver traps at 5 different locations at Richards Lake, which is to the south side of Lake Athabasca.

After this great success, we plan to do another outing in April and select a different group of kids that are willing to participate. Some kids did not participate due to cold weather and short notice this time, and we want to make sure that these opportunities are available to all.

Overall, the youth who were selected to go out on the land were happy to get out, especially after dealing with Covid-19 circumstances that the community faced over the holidays and in the past few months. The youth who participated had the chance to learn how to make dry fish, learn how to fillet fish, clean and cut properly to dry and smoke the fish. They were initially taught how to set a fish net through the ice holes, how to use the ice jigger, how to pull fish net, how to take fish off the net and reset the fish net.

Once the youth were done making dry fish at a cabin across the lake, everyone headed out towards Richards Lake on snowmobiles and set traps along the way for fur-bearing animals. They were taught how to safely set a trap and how to block the traps using branches to prevent other animals or birds from taking the bait from the traps. Once all the traps were set, the youth were also taught how to set beaver traps at Richards Lake. The chaperone (Bruce Martin) demonstrated and explained how to set a beaver trap and why it is important to set it at a perfect location from underneath the ice surface. The kids enjoyed every minute of it and listened well, even setting three traps themselves.

Once the traps were set and checked each day, we cooked traditional food out on the land. It was important for the leaders to emphasize on the cold weather and why it is so crucial to move around all the time to keep warm. On the 3rd day the kids were lucky to see the traps in action: a Marten was caught in one of the traps and once we got to the beaver traps the kids were taught how to skin the animal and were amazed to see this done as it was the first time for all of them. We also encountered lots of Moose tracks but did not see any. No beavers were trapped but they did manage to off set the traps! Close but no cigar!

I made sure kids were practicing social distancing while making dry fish and while we were out on the land, especially wearing face masks. I am thankful to see this happen for our youth in our community and need more of this. Mental health is an issue now more than ever with the kids at home, especially with restrictions and community lock down.

When I was asked to do this task by my supervisor Tina Giroux I did not hesitate and got the ball rolling right away. I was initially going to let the school select the kids but because of the school closure I had to approach the parents of the youth that participated and select through a consent approval from their parents. Some students were replaced between the 3 days due to Covid-19 restrictions and maximum of 10 people gatherings. Again I was pleased with the outcome and can't wait for another field trip with the youth in the near future.

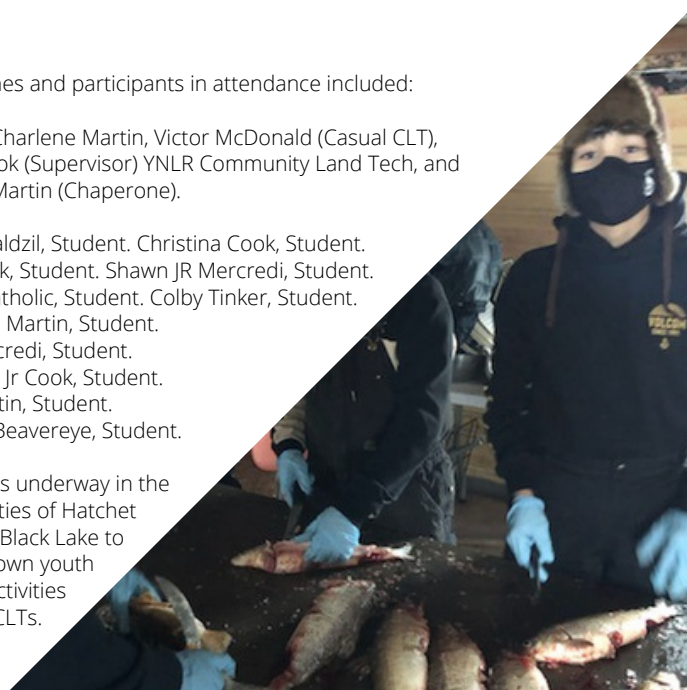
Overall, the kids were happy & excited to go out on the land and learn about our traditional way of life. The kids are already excited for the next "Youth out on the Land" activity that will take place in the near future.

Chaperones and participants in attendance included:

Bruce & Charlene Martin, Victor McDonald (Casual CLT), Derek Cook (Supervisor) YNLR Community Land Tech, and Fredrick Martin (Chaperone).

Felicity Naldzil, Student. Christina Cook, Student. Vada Cook, Student. Shawn JR Mercredi, Student. Tucker Catholic, Student. Colby Tinker, Student. Sebastian Martin, Student. Seth Mercredi, Student. Derekson Jr Cook, Student. Nelly Martin, Student. Daniel Jr Beavereye, Student.

Planning is underway in the communities of Hatchet Lake and Black Lake to do their own youth cultural activities with our CLTs.



"We need to focus on our youth now more than ever before."



WOLLASTON LAKE

In the early 1950's, prior to when it became Wollaston,

there were two community locations, the first settlement was at Cochrane River, called Da'thi. This is where there still remains an old church and also burial sites there to this day. From there, the community moved to Moose Island. The main reason for this move was for commercial fishing, fish were transported to Kinoosao, MB by wagon train. This wagon train had a snow plow on it to make trail at the same time. The wagon train would pick up fish in different locations where people had camps at the northern part of Wollaston Lake. Finally the local community members moved to the present location between 1956-1957. This was because Moose Island was not big enough for community members to settle down and start families.

Wollaston Lake is known as friendly Denesų́liné people who survive off the land. Commercial fishing was the main income for community fishermen. Commercial fishing was one of the ways that Denesų́liné people survived and provided for their families. A fish plant and Co-op was built in the community, then local members built log cabins. Moose Island also had a grocery store where people had to go grocery shopping, there are some people that still camp north of Moose Island.

One of the main events in the community is the winter carnival. The carnival attracts members from surrounding communities like Lac Brochet and Brochet, MB, Black Lake and Fond Du Lac First Nations, and Southend. The main attractions are the dog races, skidoo races, talent show and many more activities. Traditional activities like hand games and snowshoe races also happen. It is usually one week long, with the first three days being set aside for youth. The winter carnival usually takes place the end of February or beginning of March. This year would have been the 51st anniversary of the winter carnival!

To this day, commercial fishing continues to be a big part of the community, with a state of the art fish plant built on the shores of Wollaston Lake! Carnivals also continue to be a highlight of the year, however, unfortunately, this year's Winter Carnival has been cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.





Victor McDonald was hired with Ya'thi Néné before the Christmas holidays to help support the command center with cutting & hauling wood for the local elders and those who were in isolation due to Covid-19. Victor faced some challenges throughout the Christmas holidays while working and providing wood for elders especially through cold weather and the constant demand for wood. Victor continues to cut and haul wood for the community and will do so for as long as he can.

community LAND TECHNICIANS IN PROFILE

Derek Cook kept busy during the Christmas holidays volunteering his time with the community command center assisting emergency services and insights with the Covid-19 command team. The community continues to face lockdowns and restrictions as the Covid-19 cases continue to fluctuate throughout the months of December and January which may also affect Ya'thi Néné carrying out duty to consult public meetings and consultations.

Derek has been busy conducting community consultations for the NexGen Rook 1 project at Patterson Lake, Sk since the beginning of October to present. Environment and community feasibility studies were completed through individual interviews with the local community elders and members at the YNLR local office in Fond Du Lac. Those who participated gave valuable information during the consultations and were also given honorariums as these interviews took hours and sometimes took two days to complete.

Derek is proud that Ya'thi Néné Lands & Resources has given him the opportunity to work with the local leadership and members to share important information that the community needs to hear especially through the Dene language and with the local leadership, elders and members. Due to Covid-19 restrictions and community lock down, we couldn't have public meetings. Derek also feels saddened by the number of community elders that we have lost in the community over the past number of years: elders that passed on with valuable knowledge. The elders hold valuable traditional knowledge, oral history, stories from traditional hunting, trapping, harvesting, travel routes and how people used to gather in the old days. The elders must be respected and our way of life must be carried on through traditional teachings with our children and in our language.



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 Denesūliné 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.

Together, YNLR and the Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment have been working together to research seven existing Indigenous Protected Areas and similar types of protected areas throughout the world.

The purpose of the research was to provide examples to Basin residents and to other people interested in Indigenous Protected Areas on how they are set up and how they operate in other parts of the world. The information from the research will help the Basin communities and other Indigenous communities throughout Saskatchewan decide on what is important to them by seeing what other Indigenous peoples have done in their Traditional Territories.

[Anyone interested is welcome to review the report on our website](#) to understand these new types of protection and to help shape the first IPAs in Nuhenéné. It is important to remember that the research that was done does not represent what we will do in Nuhenéné, but gives us food for thought.

AN UPDATE ON YOUR

Indigenous Protected Areas



The establishment of IPAs in Nuhenéné remains one of Ya' thi Néné Land and Resources' primary objectives despite the ongoing difficulties presented by COVID-19.

As always, if you have questions or concerns, you can reach out to your local Community Land Technician or Project Manager, Tina Giroux at tina.giroux@yathinene.com.

The priority of the Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) team continues to be determining the locations and boundaries for our IPAs in Nuhenéné. Since our Fall Newsletter was printed, we have continued to work on this aspect of the IPAs. We have reviewed and analyzed information from community members where questions were asked specifically about areas the community would like to see protected. There were numerous meetings and projects that asked these questions, dating back decades along with more recent workshops (August 2020). Consistent, recurring areas were identified and identified as priority areas for protection. These areas highly overlap with known important habitat for barren ground caribou. By protecting land that is important wintering habitat for caribou, we know that we will be preserving our culture and way of life. It is important to ensure the caribou are safeguarded.

These priority areas were presented to our Athabasca Land Protection Committee (ALPC) for review and discussion during the December 8, 2020. The direction we received at this ALPC meeting was to ensure that the communities continue to provide direct feedback. Locations of the future protected areas will be very important and will benefit future generations.

Due to Covid-19, we are currently unable to hold large community information sessions. However, we are planning to engage with community members through one-on-one surveys. Our Community Land Technicians will be sitting down with numerous community members, including Elders, youth, women and land-users to review proposed areas for protection and confirm the areas importance to caribou populations.

Interviews will be conducted from **February 4-28, 2021**. **Please contact your local Community Land Technician to sign up for an interview if you want to participate.** Honorariums will be provided.

In addition to Protected Areas boundaries, we are also looking at different **governance** and **management** strategies moving forward.

There are examples from Canada and around the world of other IPAs that have varying governance and management structures. In order to remain Indigenous Protected Areas, majority governance and management must remain with the Indigenous governments. **This will enable the Athabasca Deneşūliné to ensure protection of the land for future generations while supporting reconciliation with the provincial and federal governments.** We look forward to working with our partners to build a strong, competent network of protected lands.

Governance: who decides about what is to be done, and how those decisions are made.

Management: is about what is done to protect the area or the rules that will be followed within the IPA.

UNDRIP

The federal government had committed to legislating the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) by the end of 2020. The UNDRIP recognizes “the urgent need to respect and promote the inherent rights of indigenous peoples which derive from their political, economic and social structures and from their cultures, spiritual traditions, histories and philosophies, especially their rights to their lands, territories and resources,” and “that respect for indigenous knowledge, cultures and traditional practices contributes to sustainable and equitable development and proper management of the environment”. Canada committed to developing legislation that would implement the UNDRIP.

Listed are some excerpts from the UNDRIP that may be relevant to the development of IPAs:

Article 25

Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.

Article 26

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired.
2. Indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired.
3. States shall give legal recognition and protection to these lands, territories and resources. Such recognition shall be conducted with due respect to the customs, traditions and land tenure systems of the indigenous peoples concerned.

Article 29

Indigenous peoples have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources. States shall establish and implement assistance programmes for indigenous peoples for such conservation and protection, without discrimination.

Article 32

Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories and other resources

Your Community Land Technicians are here for you.

YA' THI NÉNÉ'S PURPOSE IS TO PROTECT THE LAND, WATER, AND AIR OF NUHENÉNEÉ AND TO PROMOTE THE PEOPLE OF THE DENESŪHINÉ 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). You can read more about our CLTs on page 3.

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 SHEA SHIRLEY AT
SHEA.SHIRLEY@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 2021 issue!



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