

Kwanlin Dän Ch'a

KWANLIN PEOPLE OF WHITEHORSE, HOW ARE YOU?

FALL 2023



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QUICK REFERENCE CONTACT NUMBERS

For emergencies always call..... **911**

KDFN Community Safety Officers
(If there's no answer, leave a message):
867-332-9551

KDFN Tips Line (anonymously report
community concerns):
867-456-TIPS (8477)
Messages are checked daily.

RCMP in Whitehorse (non-emergency):
867-667-5555

Whitehorse Fire Department
(non-emergency): **867-668-2462**

Mental Wellness Supports

KDFN's Natsékhi Kù Health Centre:
867-668-7289

Yukon Mental Wellness Services:
867-456-3838

The Canadian Mental Health
Association, Yukon Division:
867-668-6429

National Indian Residential School
Crisis Line: **1-866-925-4419**

Hope for Wellness National Crisis Line:
1-855-242-3310

KDFN Government Departments

KDFN Main Reception: **867-633-7800**

Education and Social Development: **867-633-8422**

Heritage, Lands, and Resources: **867-633-7800, ext. 128**

Natsékhi Kù Health Centre: **867-668-7289**

Justice: **867-633-7800 ext. 601**

Community Services (staff are available at this number on-call
24/7 for tenant home emergencies): **867-633-7833**

Youth Recreation: **867-332-3060**

KDFN Council (comments and concerns): **867-336-0106**

Substance Use Support and Harm Reduction

KDFN's Natsékhi Kù Health Centre
(Weekdays 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.): **867-668-7289**

Whitehorse Outreach Van (Daily 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.):
867-334-1647

KDFN Community Safety Officers (Naloxone kits): **867-332-9551**

Yukon's Supervised Consumption Site at **6189 – 6th Avenue**.
Open weekdays 12 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Wellness Together Canada: If someone you care about is in
distress, speak with a counsellor at **1-866-585-0445**

National Overdose Response Service (NORS): Call while you're
using if you have to use alone: **1-888-688-NORS (6677)**

Hope for Wellness National Crisis Line: **1-855-242-3310**

Child and Family Supports

Child & Family Liaison after hours on-call line: **867-332-2414**

Yukon Government Social Workers – 24/7: **867-667-3002**

Child & Family Liaison: **867-332-2414**

Animal Control

City of Whitehorse Bylaw Officers: **867-667-2111**

Looking for a phone number? **kwanlindun.com/find-a-phone-number**



CUT OUT THIS PAGE AND KEEP ON YOUR FRIDGE FOR QUICK REFERENCE.

A Message from the Chief

Welcome to the fall issue of Kwanlin Dän Ch'a!

In Southern Tutchone Nákwädäk'ō Kwäch'é (fall time) is what our ancestors have said is the time when the yāw (snow) covers our beautiful traditional territory and tăn (ice) covers the lakes and rivers.

In this issue, we're highlighting some great work of KDFN Citizens like Eddy Shorty, a lifelong learner who has made huge strides toward achieving his goal of learning Northern Tutchone. It makes me proud to see the talent in our community.

In these pages, you'll read about the launch of our book "Kwanlin Dün Dă Kwändur Ghày Ghakwad'indur, Our Story in Our Words". It feels like forever since it was published during the pandemic, but it was an amazing experience to finally share that wonderful moment with all of you.

You'll also read about the completion of the Haeckel Hill - Thay T'äw - Eagle Hill Wind Energy Project - a historic achievement that will benefit our people for years to come and reduce Yukon's electrical system to be less reliant on fossil fuel energy generation.

On top of that, we have lots of exciting stories to share from within our departments. Such as, Heritage Lands and Resources has been hard at work alongside Community Services to clean up and remove abandoned vehicles from KDFN settlement lands.

Health and Wellness, Education & Social Development, and Justice continue to provide programming to benefit our Citizens, youth, and Elders.

It has been busy in our community and I encourage you to read up on Southern Tutchone classes and cultural programming that is on-going, and see what the students at Dusk'a Head Start Learning Centre have been up to, check out photos from events this fall, and much more...

Shāw nithän, másin cho, gunatch'ish,

Uyenéts'echja
Chief Sean Smith



is
to



Fighting forest fires

Shout out to the KDFN crew of wildland firefighters hard at work last fire season.

They were busy working side-by-side with other Yukon crews and Nova Scotia firefighters to suppress the Takhini Bridge fire. That work included securing the fire's edge, hose lays and extinguishing hotspots with hand tools and water around the perimeter of the fire.

Fourteen of Yukon's 23 initial attack firefighting crews are contracted through service agreements with Yukon First Nations. The Kwanlin Dūn First Nation crew works out of the Southern Lakes regional firebase.

Pictured left to right: Joey Mewett, Zach Nault, Adam Robinson.

SHOUT



Providing emergency services

Last August, KDFN worked to provide emergency services for Mayo and Old Crow wildfire evacuees.

Nàkwāt'a Kų Potlatch House was opened to provide food, refreshments, and support to those evacuated.

Shăw nít'hăn, másin cho, gunałchîsh, and thank you to everyone who helped out.

We hold our hands up to all who've been impacted by wildfires.

Seeds of kindness

Shout out to the students at Dusk'a Head Start Learning Centre! This past summer, they painted a sign for the Natsékhi Kų Health Centre community garden.

We'd also like to give a shout out to everyone who volunteered at the garden this season.

Friday family fall hunt

Shout out to the Friday family for a successful fall moose hunt!

Check out this photo of Elliott Friday on his second ever hunt.

Shăw nít'hăn, másin cho, gunałchîsh, and thank you to Troy Friday for sharing this with us.



Building up the community

Shout out to these Pathways Participants who built a structure outside of Kenāḍān Kù House of Learning!

This structure will be a space for events and programming.

Shāw níthān, másin cho, gunaḗchîsh, and thank you for a job well done!



Men's Group at Jackson Lake Healing Camp

Shāw níthān, másin cho, gunaḗchîsh, and thank you to everyone who took part in September's Men's Group at Jackson Lake Healing Camp. This camp was put on by KDFN Justice and KDFN's Pathways to Empowerment and Support Program.

We look forward to hosting more in the future!

Hitting the medicine trail

Shout out to everyone who took part in Nā Tān (medicine trail) this fall!

Shāw níthān, másin cho, gunaḗchîsh, and thank you for coming out.

KDFN's Pathways to Empowerment hosted Nā Tān every Friday from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The group came together to connect with the land, teach, learn, and discover the gifts our boreal forest has to offer.



SHOUT OUTS!

Do you know a KDFN Citizen, Beneficiary, or employee who deserves a shout out? Let us know!
Email: communications@kdfn.net

Please make sure to tell the person, as we'll need their permission to publish a story.



General Assembly

The 2023 KDFN General Assembly was held at Nàkwät'à Kų Potlatch House

Shăw níthän, másin cho, gunałchîsh, and thank you to all who took time on October 27 and 28 to attend the General Assembly.

Shout out to everybody who worked so hard to make this happen.

It was wonderful to see everybody come together.





Teagyn Vallevand resident KDFN artist

KDFN Citizen and artist Teagyn Vallevand was recently a part of the Kluane Lake Artists Residency.

BY: *Olivia Gatensby*

You may know Teagyn Vallevand from her many projects around the Yukon, such as her work with Youth For Lateral Kindness - a joint project between herself and Aurora Hardy to address the effects of lateral violence. But these are far from her only impactful endeavors. Picture the glaciers at Kluane Lake, and imagine staying in that environment for weeks, guiding people through your artistic process. This is one of Teagyn's most recent projects: the Kluane Artist Residency for Parks Canada, the Yukon Arts Centre, and the University of Alberta.

"Last Spring I saw that the Yukon Arts Centre was advertising for this Artist Residency for different parks here in the Yukon," she explains about how she discovered the opportunity. "I didn't realize, but it was a pretty intense process with over 50 applicants... but I got shortlisted, then eventually selected as one of the four chosen artists."

This isn't Teagyn's first time doing this. She participated in the Shakat residency at the Kwanlin Dūn Cultural Centre, as well as a similar program in Carcross. She noted that this most recent residency was a bit different from the others.

"My experience in previous events was that I would be set up in a spot where you can talk to people and sell your goods from 9 to 5 until it was time to go, but this one was a bit different. I was in a bunch of different locations throughout the event which was a special experience for me, says Teagyn."

Highlights of her trip included staying in the Kluane Lake Research Station, touring the Daku Cultural Centre and seeing their "living collection" of regalia which is available to be used for cultural endeavors, which she notes as being a particularly good experience, as she had previously only visited the cultural center for potlatches.

Teagyn says being out on the land is really good for her culturally. When she's in the city, she feels it's "like being a little raven next to the dumpster outside McDonalds just hanging out." Compared to when she's in nature, she feels like "a beautiful raven out on the land beside the highway."

"It was very healing and nice to be out there," says Teagyn about the residency.





She explains that an important part of the project was connecting science with art, feeling that “with science you’re presented with info and facts, but art makes you feel.

With this in mind she hosted art workshops, and worked on her own bigger art project.

Unfortunately, Teagyn is keeping the specific details about her art piece a secret to be revealed at a future date, but she was happy to explain the idea behind it as a sort of sneak peak.

“My original plan was to make a medicine bag based on the beautiful area I was in, but after being there and hearing from all of the people involved, my idea shifted,” says Teagyn. So now I want it to be a call to action based on my experience, and seeing how climate change affects the area... I want to connect science with art in a way that makes people feel that call to action.”

We look forward to seeing how Teagyn connects science with art when she finally unveils her project!

“

*Seeing how climate change affects the area...
I want to connect science with art in a way that makes people feel that call to action.*

Teagyn Vallevand



Bannock that slaps!

**'I'm just living my dream,' says
KDFN Citizen Christine Lewis.**

BY: **Dylan MacNeil**

KDFN Citizen Christine Lewis meticulously mixes her bannock dough. She's getting ready for the lunch rush on Main Street, Whitehorse. Christine owns the food truck Bannock Slap Indigenous Soul Food.

Opened this summer, Bannock Slap serves up bannock and stew, bannock burgers, and Christine's signature dish, bannock slap. You may be wondering, 'what is a bannock slap?'

The dish starts with a piece of bannock as the base.

"Pour some piping hot chilli over the top 'til it's dripping over the side. Crunchy lettuce, diced up tomatoes, and a dollop of salsa and sour cream - boom baby, you've got a bannock slap," Christine explains.

The name Bannock Slap is close to Christine's heart. While making bannock with her mom, inspiration hit her square in the face.

"[My mom] asked me, 'did you ever get a bannock slap?'" says Christine.

That's when Christine's mom gave her a playful slap upside the head.

"It was soft and powdery," says Christine.

Making bannock is something that Christine's family has done for generations. The recipe she uses comes from her grandmother.

Christine is happy to have her loved ones behind her.

"When I think about my food and the things that I want to do, I always think about my family and my community. I'm so thankful now for my family and my mom being so supportive and always showing continuous love," says Christine.

Christine says business has been good since opening.

"It's been great. I definitely can't complain," says Christine. "Now, I'm just living my dream."

To get the latest updates from Christine, check out the Facebook page Bannock Slap Indigenous Soul Food.



Bannock slap, Christine's signature dish features bannock with chili, lettuce, tomatoes, salsa, and sour cream on top.

Fresh from the garden

Try these recipes at home!

Check out these recipes from Natsékhi Kù Health Centre community garden volunteer Rae Mombourquette. Rae made these dishes with ingredients fresh from the garden. We can't wait until the next growing season to see all of our wonderful volunteers again!

SALAD WITH PASTA AND SALMON

SALAD

Combine thinned baby lettuce, lamb's quarter, chickweed, mint, basil, cucumber, radish, thinned carrot tops (leaves, not stems), chives, and chive flowers. Top with feta cheese and yellow tomatoes.

DRESSING

Mix olive oil, apple cider vinegar, stone ground mustard, soy sauce, and lemon juice.

PESTO

With a food processor, combine chick weed, carrot greens, basil, thinned carrot roots, sunflower seeds, olive oil, salt, pepper, nutritional yeast, garlic, and lemon juice.

PASTA

Cook egg noodles al dente. Serve on a bed of thinned whole baby kale (massaged with lemon juice, olive oil, and nutritional yeast), tomatoes, and chili flakes. Top with pesto and cooked salmon.

EGGS ON BROWN BUTTER SAUTÉED SPINACH SEED HEADS

Scramble eggs and season to taste. Serve on a bed of brown butter sautéed spinach seed heads.

Top with red chilli flakes and aged cheddar. Plate with white basmati rice and a bouquet of fireweed.

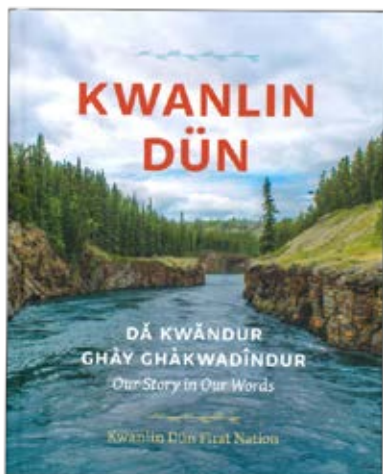
TIP: use 1 tbsp of water per egg, rather than milk to make fluffy and light scrambled eggs.

BABY SPINACH SALAD WITH FRESH RASPBERRIES

Mix baby spinach with fresh raspberries, red onion, feta cheese, and pumpkin seeds. Add your favourite dressing or vinaigrette.

Serve with homemade burgers for a hearty meal!





Community celebrates Kwanlin Dün Dǃ Kwǃndur Ghǃy Ghǃkwadĭndur, *Our Story in Our Words*

Published during the pandemic, a book launch was finally held last October.





Kwanlin Dün Citizens, members of the community, partners, stakeholders and members of the public were invited to the Kashgêk' Building on October 25, 2023 to celebrate the official launch of the Kwanlin Dün Dă Kwăndur Ghày Ghakwadîndur, Our Story in Our Words. The evening included family focus exhibits, book readings, Indigenous food fusion, song, dance, and a screening of Elder video footage collected during the Kwanlin Dün Waterfront Heritage Project (2015-2018).

Elder Linda Harvey presented a new Dank'e song called "Our Story and Our Song." The song commemorates the seven-year community-based research project that documented and interpreted Kwanlin Dün First Nation written, oral, and pictorial history along the Whitehorse waterfront. This project highlights the implementation of KDFN's Final Agreement Heritage Chapter 13, Schedule C.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we could not host a celebration when the book was published. Last October, we finally came together to commemorate this momentous achievement and publicly acknowledge the community's contribution. A private luncheon to thank and honour the Elders and families that contributed to the book is being planned.



Kwanlin Dün Dă Kwăndur Ghày Ghakwadîndur, Our Story in Our Words received the 2020 Yukon Heritage Award for Innovation, Education and Community Engagement. It also won the 2020 BC/Yukon Book of The Year Award for non-fiction.

Shăw nithän, másin cho, gunałchîsh, and thank you to our major funder Parks Canada, and to Yukon 125 for making this event a reality and to our sponsors Air North and the Whitehorse Cross Country Ski Club. Most importantly, thank you to the many Citizens and Elders who shared their stories, family history, photographs, time and effort.



Coming together to celebrate language

BBQ held at community ball field

On June 14, 2023, KDFN hosted a language celebration at the McIntyre Community ball field.

Attendees were treated to a BBQ, took part in a scavenger hunt, and played games in Indigenous languages.

KDFN Citizen Äyínzhia (Cory Holway), alongside Shāwkwälitā (Nathan Easterson-Moore) from Kluane First Nation led a game of Ätsqä äni, or grandma says. Some may know the game by another name, Simon says.

And, shout out to Äyínzhia and Shāwkwälitā for graduating from the Indigenous Language Proficiency program from Simon Fraser University, through the Yukon Native Language Centre, on June 9.

Eddy Shorty's life long language journey

BY: *Dylan MacNeil*

"I love it," says Eddy about learning Northern Tutchone

This fall, 64-year-old Eddy Shorty of the Crow clan started Northern Tutchone lessons through the Yukon Native Language Centre. For Eddy, this has been a life long goal.

"It's my parent's language. All my sisters and everybody older than me learned it when they were kids," says Eddy.

When Eddy got sent to residential school, he lost his connection to Northern Tutchone. He never learned the language. As time went on, life got in the way.

"All my life I wanted to learn but there's been no time, you've got to work and stuff," says Eddy.

Then, the COVID-19 pandemic hit the world. Eddy had time to reflect.

"I figured this would be a good time to learn. I went over to the House of Learning to see if they could help me and sure enough, they helped me," he says.

KDFN's Post-Secondary Coordinator Mark Smith helped connect Eddy with the Yukon Native Language Centre. Eddy previously took a one-year class on Southern Tutchone. He says a lot of the words are similar to Northern Tutchone.

"It's not that hard to learn if you're interested in it," says Eddy.

With his education in Southern Tutchone and now Northern Tutchone, Eddy is using Indigenous languages more and more in his daily life. He's now able to pick up some words he hears on CHONfm when they play old recordings of Elders.

"That makes you feel really good. Before, you just hear it and you don't know what they're saying," says Eddy.

Eddy feels the times are changing. With more resources available, it is now easier to learn Indigenous languages. He is hopeful for the future.

"Back in the day you just learned from your Elders. Now a days, it's in schools and everywhere. I think that's really good," says Eddy. "There's lots of learning from books and stuff because there's less speakers."

He hopes that the number of language speakers goes up. He would like to be a fluent speaker one day and pass the language on to his grandchildren.

"When you get to this age, you need to teach what you know," he says. "I love it."





Learning language

Southern Tutchone lessons at Kenädän Kų

This September, KDFN Education and Social Development started Southern Tutchone language lessons.

Lessons take place Tuesdays & Thursdays. They run until March 2024.

Classes are led by Pricilla Dawson. To register or for more info, email Pricilla.dawson@kdfn.net.

Here are a few phrases you can practice right now:

Dännch'e? – *How are you?*

Shăw itj – *I am fine*

Nāshų k'ē dännch'e? – *how about you?*

Shāshų shăw itj – *Me too, I'm fine.*

Dăch'e? – *how is he/she?*

Shăw inlj. – *He/she is fine.*



For a video with pronunciations, check out [youtube.com/@KwanlinDun](https://www.youtube.com/@KwanlinDun). There, you'll also find more phrases!

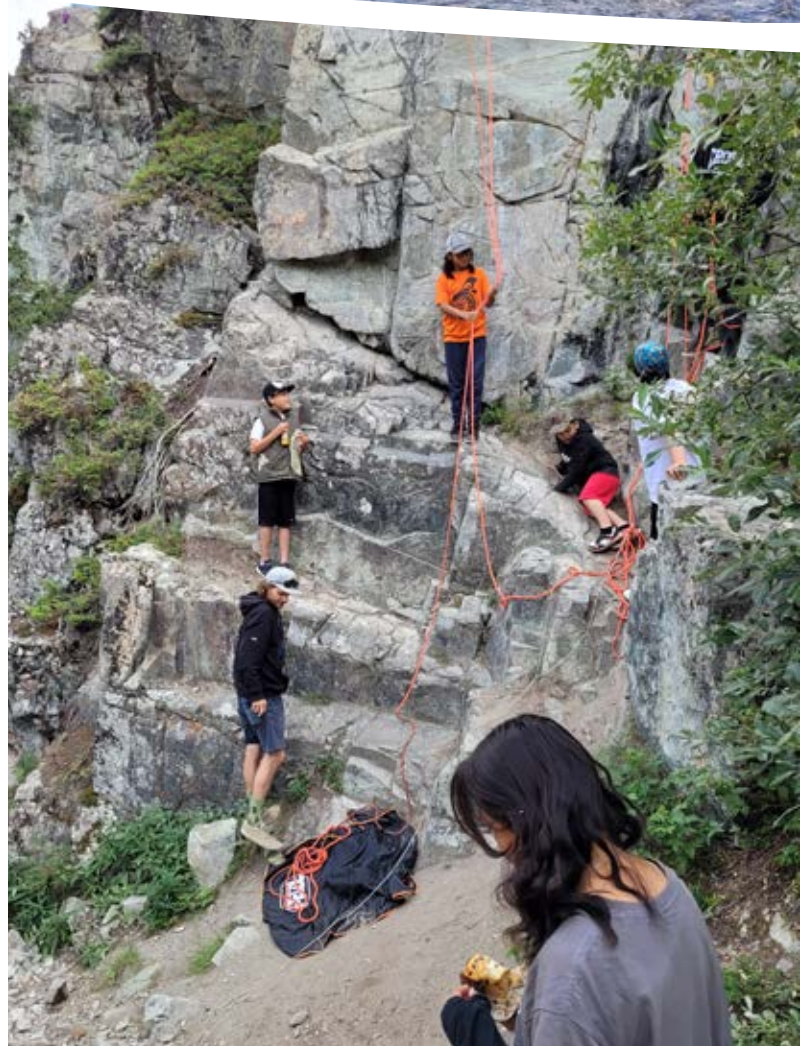


Ukrainian officials arrive in Whitehorse

From Chortkiv to Yukon

Last October, Kwanlin Dün First Nation Chief Sean Smith, alongside Ta'an Kwäch'än Council Chief Amanda Leas, welcomed a delegation of Ukrainian officials arriving at the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport. The delegation includes Volodymyr Shmatko, Mayor of Chortkiv, Marta Hlubish, Chair of Department of International Relations, Innovations, and Energy Management, and Dr. Serhii Budenkevych, Deputy of City of Chortkiv and Chair of Chortkiv Medical Branch. Shāw nithān, másín cho, gunāłchísh, and thank you to everyone who made this trip possible.





WHAT HAS YOUTH REC BEEN UP TO?



Youth Rec had a lot of exciting programs for young Citizens this summer!

We hit the river with many of our youths, learning about paddling, building on skills, and having a great time! We got out on the Yukon, Tatshenshini and Takhini Rivers using pack rafts, large rafts and canoes! We also had some great outings where we went to the fireweed community market, wildlife preserve, the animal shelter and many visits to our local lakes.

We were excited to partner with some great organizations including YFNED, Yukon Canoe Kayak Club, Skills Canada and Yukon University which allowed us to provide some unique experiences to our youth! Other summer activities included basketball, biking, baking, swimming, fishing, berry picking, visiting Jackson Lake camp, fish camp and more.

As the fall season started and our youth returned to school, we moved back into afterschool programming, where we shifted to lots of playing in the gym, more biking, many crafts and park outings.

We also hosted beading nights which we are so excited about and are looking forward to continuing throughout the rest of the year and beyond!

If you want more information about Youth Recreation programs please call:

Youth Rec main line
867-332-3060

Nadine Poirier,
Recreation Coordinator
867-332-1744

Courtney Terriah,
Recreation Manager
867-334-8718







YOUTH SHOUT OUTS ! ●

The best part about Youth Rec is the young people we get to work with! To get to know them better, we asked a few questions for them to share with the community.

1. Name, age and Clan
2. If you ran Rec for a day, what would you do?
3. What is your favorite community event and what events are you looking forward to?
4. Share a favorite quote or message to the community!



NATILEE THOMPSON • Age 14 • Yanyeti/wolf clan

"If I ran Rec for the day I would take everyone to Disney Land and back.

My favourite community event is when they have the holiday parties.

Favorite quote is 'and like the moon, we must go through phases of emptiness to feel full again.'"

MAHLAYA JEFFERIES • Age 10 • Wolf clan

"If I ran Rec for the day I would have g-kart racing in the parking lot.

My favorite community event is when we do stuff on the land. I am looking forward to going back to Rec.

My favorite quote from my Grandma is 'What are we going to do with these kids?'"

"Life is about touching everyone's glasses" - Mahkayla Jefferies.



RILEY VANCE • Age 10 • Wolf clan

"If I ran Rec for a day I would get everyone to clean my house.

My favorite community event is Christmas. I look forward to my birthday in November."

"My favorite quote is 'I like to go fishing and make my own trail on my quad because it's fun' - Riley Vance



On a sunny mountain, overlooking Whitehorse, the Ta'āi Gopher family set out to pick berries.

The autumn sun was shining, and the *ints'i dhol nits'i* south wind was carrying warmth as it blew up the mountain from the valley below. Momma *Āmq*, Granny *Ātsuq*, Olive and Louie found the perfect patch where there were lots of cranberries



Children's book tells traditional story

Thay T'āw Kwändür (Golden Eagle Nest Story) explores the purpose of the wind

KDFN's Heritage, Lands, and Resources teamed up with Education and Social Development to produce an illustrated children's book to accompany the launch of Eagle Hill Energy LP's (a wholly-owned subsidiary of Chu Niiqwān Limited Partnership) new Wind Energy Project on Thay Tāw, Golden Eagle Nest, known today as Haeckel Hill. A sneak peek of the book was shown at the opening of the Haeckel Hill-Thay T'āw Wind Energy Project.

The book titled "The Winds Over Whitehorse – Thay T'āw Kwändür (Golden Eagle Nest Story)," is intended for children 3 - 5 years old and will be distributed through the Yukon's Imagination Library. The book combines Southern Tutchone oral history shared by the late KDFN Elder Äyenjiatā, Louie Smith. The story introduces the purpose of the wind turbines, including a new translation for "wind turbine": *Ints'i ghay shadät'l'äl* (by the wind, more

than one part moves, in a circle). Elder Louie shared that when he was small, his family would walk from Ta'an Män, known today as Lake Laberge, to Kwanlin, now known as Whitehorse, and pass by Thay Tāw. When they walked at the base of this hill, he was told to walk tsen ch'ü, or quietly. Louie said that if you made too much noise or called too much attention to yourself, a giant thay, or golden eagle, would fly off his nest and pick you up like a tsäl, or gopher, and eat you. That story is about a time before the world was fixed and made safe for us all to live on this land.

The story was interpreted and reimagined by Kikchuks, Rae Mombourquette and translated to Dän'ke (Southern Tutchone) by Äy'zhia, Cory Holoway with mentorship from Ta'an Kwäch'än Elder Nakhela Hazel Bunbury. The book is illustrated by Yukon artist Tedd Tucker.



Bringing back the '90s Bike Rodeo

Creating core memories

This June, KDFN hosted a bike rodeo - an event for youth that hasn't happened in quite some time in our community.

There was an amazing obstacle course, a parade of bikes, a BBQ, and lots of fun activities for youth. They even had an opportunity to decorate a police vehicle!

Community Justice Worker Sheliah Sutherland organized the event as a way to bring back recreational events she remembers fondly.

"We haven't had a formal bike rodeo since the '90s. It's a core memory for a lot of us," she explains. "As a mother, I wanted to bring that back for my kids so they can experience that and create core memories of their own."

Thank you Sheliah, for promoting fun and healthy activities for our youth!



Getting ready for school

Back to school BBQ at Dusk'a

On September 13, KDFN hosted a Back to School BBQ outside of Dusk'a Head Start Family Learning Centre.

Attendees enjoyed food hot off the grill, chatted with KDFN staff about education, and gathered around the fire to make bannock on a stick.

KDFN staff were there to help parents register their children for Dusk'a Head Start Family Learning Centre. The Health and Wellness team spoke about back to school needs. BBQ guests also learned about the Pathways to Empowerment and Support Program, met KDFN's Post-Secondary Coordinator, and more!

Shăw níthän, másin cho, gunatchîsh, and thank you to everyone who came out.

It was wonderful to see you all!







New students at Dusk'a

Learning about language, culture and play!

Dusk'a Head Start Family Learning Centre welcomed seven new students this fall. We are enjoying learning, playing, getting to know all the new faces, and seeing all the growth in our existing group. We have been having great times while we learn about language, culture and play here at the centre. Shāw níthān, másin cho, gunałchîsh, and thank you to all our families who participate and learn with us to make our program the success it is!

Southern Tutchone

Nàkwäye. – *He/She is playing*

Kedän – *Learn*

Ye Yindän? – *What are you learning?*

Tłingit

Daa Sá yisikóo? – *What are you learning?*

Ash Koolyát. – *He/She is playing*









Celebrating Haeckel Hill-Thay T'äw Wind Energy Project

**A step towards
reconciliation and
sustainability**

Eagle Hill Energy LP (EHELP) marked a historic moment on October 3, celebrating the construction completion of the Haeckel Hill-Thay T'äw Wind Energy Project with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. At the event, KDFN Chief Sean Smith emphasized the project's historic significance as northern Canada's first 100% Indigenous-owned wind energy venture, and an important step for reconciliation and climate action. Notable speakers at the event included Yukon's Energy, Mines, and Resources Minister John Streicker, Whitehorse Mayor Laura Cabott, former KDFN Chief and Chu Níikwän LP CEO Rick O'Brien, and EHELP directors Les Wilson and Malek Tawashy, among others. The event underscored the crucial role of this 4.0 MW wind project in Yukon's clean energy future. Following the ceremony, guests took a trip up Haeckel Hill-Thay T'äw to see the four newly completed turbines, which are scheduled to begin generating electricity for the Yukon Grid by late Fall 2023.





Legacy projects unveiled: interpretive sign and YukonU scholarship

As part of the celebration, Eagle Hill Energy LP introduced several legacy projects to accompany the wind turbines' construction:

Interpretive sign: A new interpretive sign was recently installed on top of Haeckel Hill-Thay T'äw. It narrates the site's traditional history and the "Golden Eagle Nest" story, and provides information about the new wind turbines and the legacy of wind power on Haeckel Hill-Thay T'äw. Along with the children's book, this sign was developed in collaboration with KDFN and features Dänk'e or Southern Tutchone translations. The metal frame of the sign was designed in part by KDFN artist Terrence "Cory" Shorty, and is made from Corten Steel, which will develop a dark orange protective coating over time.

YukonU scholarship: At the event, Eagle Hill Energy LP Director Malek Tawashy presented Yukon University with a \$20,000 annual scholarship. This recurring annual scholarship broadens access to land-based learning, fostering a future rich in opportunities for all students.



Everyday is an opportunity to move towards harmony and balance.



MANAGER: Lynda Silverfox

Lynda comes to us with 18 years of supervisory experience along with her Bachelor of Social Work. She brings with her a wealth of knowledge and community connection. Lynda has worked with the Health & Wellness team, the government of Yukon's with Healthy Families, and the Child and Youth Advocate office for the Yukon. She brings experience in policy and procedure development, advocacy, program evaluation, leadership and deep knowledge of KDFN values and needs. Lynda leads both our Land-Based Healing team and our in-residence clinical counselling and cultural support staff.

Lynda's maternal family originates from around Big Salmon, Yukon. Her paternal family originates around Little Salmon, Yukon. She is of the Crow Clan, Northern Tutchone, and a Citizen of Kwanlin Dün First Nation.

Many First Nation families had traumatic experiences in residential school; her family is no different. Inter-generational trauma and the sixties scoop shaped who she's become. Lynda is a natural helper and an empathic person who strives to understand. She wants to contribute to meaningful change, to address colonial practices that disseminated First Nations way of life and our very existence.

Lynda embraces living a healthy lifestyle, acknowledging there is always room for further growth. She yearns to speak her language and return to cultural ways of being, knowing and doing. When she's not working, she's out walking, spending time with family, playing softball or reading a good book. She enjoys being beside the water and exploring our beautiful Yukon. Her journey is to leave a legacy that will encourage others to address life's challenges and to become all that they can be.



CULTURAL CONNECTIONS WORKER: Charles Waugh

Charles is a KDFN Citizen and beneficiary. He's lived in the community since the late 80's.

His parents were Allan and Lin Waugh. Charles and his wife have four children and three grandchildren. They have been together for 32 years and are still going strong. Charles is excited to start a new chapter in his life as a Cultural Connections Worker.

He's been very busy taking multiple workshops and courses over the past few months. He completed training in wilderness first aid, bear safety, conflict resolution, difficult conversations, food safe, HIPMA, emotion focused therapy, buffalo riders, grief & loss, Indigenous YFN history, duty to report, traditional parenting, compassion fatigue & vicarious trauma, essential workplace skills, pharmacology, trauma informed approaches and WHMIS.

Charles is available to take individuals out on the land to talk and explore our beautiful Yukon. This could be through hiking, snowshoeing, fishing, berry picking, setting gopher traps, rabbit snares, or grouse hunting. He is also available to take individuals for a drive, go for coffee and connection, visit fish camp or host a campfire. Charles can offer to smudge individuals or their homes. Charles works out of 7 O'Brien. Stop by and say hello.

The Spiritual and Mental Wellness Team provide counselling and land-based healing



COUNSELLOR: *Jeane Lassen*

Jeane is excited to be one of the Spiritual and Mental Wellness Team's counsellors. She will complete her Master's in Counselling Psychology in December. Her previous work was in transitional support for children and youth, high performance and community sport and elementary and high school teaching. She grew up in the Yukon and was fortunate to represent the territory and country at multiple national and international sport events including the Olympic Games. These days she gets most of her activity from walking her dogs and playing recreational hockey. Jeane works out of Natsékhi Kù Health Centre. She looks forward to supporting the community.



COUNSELLOR: *Evann Lacosse*

Evann Lacosse is one of the clinical counsellors at Natsékhi Kù. She has been living and working in the Yukon since 1983, when she came up from Alberta for a temporary summer job and to get to know the man she eventually married. After years during young adulthood of working in bars and participating in the lifestyle that can go along with that, she chose to go to university and get a social work degree. She worked as an outreach worker/social worker and counsellor since 1980. Over time, she's heard, and learned a lot from the people she helped. She worked at Natsékhi Kù Health Centre from 2011 until she retired in 2018, then was asked to work out at the Jackson Lake camps which she was very pleased to do. She returned to part-time work here in September 2022. She's glad to be back and looks forward to seeing you.



COUNSELLOR: *Cheryl Maguire*

Cheryl is a Certified Canadian Counsellor and Art Therapist. She was born and raised in the Yukon and is a proud Citizen of Tr'ondëk Hwëchin. Her spirit name is Nanh Vigii, which means Her child of the land. Cheryl has experience working with children, youth, adults, older adults, and families dealing with various social issues and life transitions. She takes a trauma-informed, person-centred, positive psychotherapy and holistic approach to help people reach their goals. She recognizes the importance of exploring and honouring an individual's interconnection with family, community, and the world as fundamental to personal well-being. Along with counselling, Cheryl also facilitates Art Therapy based Recovery Circles out of 7 O'Brien. Watch for posters and social media postings.



COUNSELLOR: *Maisie Smith*

Maisie is from southeast Alaska and Yukon. She is of Tlingit and Northern Tutchone descent. She is a Citizen of Champagne and Aishihik First Nations. Maisie has 18 years of experience working in the helping field and in 2017, she received her master's in Counselling Psychology. She works with people from a holistic, interconnected and culturally competent approach including both traditional Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing in collaboration with western counselling practices that include cognitive, behavioural, and psychodynamic client-centred approaches. Maisie truly believes that culture is healing. Along with counselling, Maisie facilitates workshops monthly at Natsékhi Kù Health Centre. Watch for posters and social media postings.



Chu Nìikwän (Yukon River) Gyu (Salmon) Stewardship Centre

Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Heritage Lands and Resources is working on a significant project with the goal of helping to rebuild Yukon River Chinook. A feasibility study funded by Fisheries and Oceans Canada is taking place for a potential salmon stewardship centre in Whitehorse.

The Chu Nìikwän (Yukon River) Gyu (Salmon) Stewardship Centre (CNGSC) feasibility study will look at a physical building centred on the values of Care, Share, Respect and Teachings.

"Dakänut'a ich'e daghashru jichj ghats'üt'ar yè dän dänk'e kenūdän"

Care, Share, Respect and Teachings.

The CNGSC may feature Gathering and Teaching Places, a Restoration and Research Hub, and a Centre for Chinook Restoration.

The Gathering and Teaching Place could feature land and water cultural spaces and classrooms for the transfer of knowledge from Elders to youth. The Restoration and Research Hub could be a space where Citizens, researchers, academics, and professionals interact around traditional knowledge and western science related to salmon. The Centre for Chinook Restoration could include a small conservation hatchery, habitat restoration (e.g., spawning channels) and/or projects involving salmon egg releases.

A potential location for the CNGSC is under discussion and a part of the Whitehorse Water-Use Relicensing with Yukon Energy. What is critically important is connecting the broken salmon trail by bringing Kwanlin Dün Citizens back to the river and close to the salmon in an effort to support them in this time of crisis.

This is a longer term, bold, and ambitious project and we look forward to hearing more from Citizens. For more information or to share your perspectives please contact Brandy Mayes, Manager of Operations and Fish and Wildlife at 867-336-3316 or brandy.mayes@kdnf.net.

"You must save the salmon. If it wasn't for the salmon, there would not be one Indian left in the Yukon. We would have all starved. Now it is our turn to save them."

- Louis Smith



2023 Louise-Jackson Lake, Caribou Lake, Summer Profundal Index Netting (SPIN) Survey

In July 2023, the Government of Yukon's Fisheries unit collaborated with the Kwanlin Dün First Nation's Heritage Lands and Resources department to evaluate Lake Trout populations in Caribou Lake and Louise (Jackson) Lake.

These assessments are integral to the Yukon Lake Trout Monitoring Program, which tracks the conditions of Lake Trout and Lake Whitefish throughout the Yukon. The assessments involve deploying 2-hour gill nets at various locations and depths to gather data regarding Lake Trout abundance, size, weight, condition, and growth.

In cases where the lake populations can support it, we humanely capture a selection of Lake Trout to gather aging structures, which are then analyzed in a laboratory to determine their age and growth rate. This information aids in determining whether current regulations adequately safeguard these fish for future generations or if adjustments are necessary.

The Lake Trout inhabiting Caribou and Louise (Jackson) Lakes are categorized as small-bodied Lake Trout. They primarily feed on insects instead of other fish, resulting in smaller fish with a slower growth rate.

It's well-known that these fish do not reach the size stipulated by our existing regulations. The research conducted during the summer will be combined with data from across the Yukon to determine if further regulatory protections and monitoring are required for small-bodied Lake Trout.

While the final results of these surveys will be published in 2024, preliminary findings indicate that the Lake Trout populations in both of these lakes remain healthy and abundant.

For more information on these reports, please contact Brandy Mayes, Manager of Operations and Fish and Wildlife. Brandy.mayes@kdfn.net or (867) 336-3166

Fisheries Education and Ethics Development (FEED) course update

This summer, Heritage Lands and Resources launched a new free online course for anglers to demonstrate their stewardship towards freshwater fish. The course offered to enhance fishing skills, learn the regulations, understand fish ecology, discover more about First Nation perspectives and best practices in fish handling.

The pressure on lake trout, grayling, northern pike, whitefish, burbot and other freshwater fish within KDFN Traditional Territory is growing. There are more recreational angling (public angling) licenses being sold with many newcomers joining in to catch fish for food, family fun, and sport. It is important that KDFN takes a stewardship role and shares our perspectives on fishing for sport and catch and release.

Catch and release is controversial as it is perceived by some as “playing with food” and goes against First Nation laws. The reality is that sometimes-releasing fish is required by law if the fish is too big, too small or of the wrong species. This course shares the First

Nation perspective and teaches anglers on how to release fish with the least amount of injury and stress.

KDFN continues to build this online course and is pleased that over 60 anglers have taken it so far. Plans are to keep this course online and share it with more anglers as well as ensure that climate change is built further into the curriculum. The course was funded through the Climate Change Preparedness in the North Program and the Government of Canada.

If you would like more information or would like to take the course, please visit

www.kwanlindun.com/fishing-education or contact Brandy Mayes, Manager of Operations and Fish and Wildlife at 867-336-3316 or brandy.mayes@kdnf.net.

FREE ONLINE COURSE to Demonstrate Angler Stewardship

Enhance Your Yukon Fishing Skills:
Learn Regulations, Fish Ecology, First Nation Perspectives & Best Practices in Fish Handling.

Fish with Purpose

For more info, email info@respectforfish.com
You can also contact Brandy Mayes
at 867-336-3316 or brandy.mayes@kdnf.net





Recycling end of life vehicles

The End of Life Vehicles Project helps keep our Traditional Territory Clean

The End of Life Vehicles (ELV) Project recovers, removes and recycles abandoned vehicles in our community and in KDFN Traditional Territory in an environmentally responsible manner.

Abandoned vehicles pose environmental and safety risks. They can be fire hazards, dumping grounds for garbage, animal attractants, and are sources of soil contamination.

The project started last year with 17 vehicles recycled. This year, the project continues.

How to report an abandoned vehicle:

Contact Bruce Wilson at bruce.wilson@kdfn.net or by phone at 867-334-8990.

What is the process we follow?

We will inspect the vehicle and post a notice on it. Timeframe for removal is typically two weeks, which is far longer than Whitehorse Bylaw Services removal timeframe of 72 hours. KDFN tenants may also submit requests to have junk vehicles removed from their yards to Community Services. Requests will be accommodated as the budget allows.

Did you know?

It costs KDFN about \$800/vehicle to tow, decontaminate and recycle junk vehicles.

We send the VIN number and license plate to:

- Yukon Motor Vehicles to see if it is registered; and
- the RCMP to see if it was involved in a crime.

We will also display pictures and descriptions of ELVs at kwanlindun.com/heritage-lands-and-resources and on notice boards in the community so that Citizens are fully informed.



Meet KDFN's new Housing Manager!

KDFN Citizen and Beneficiary Vincent Smarch recently stepped into the role of Housing Manager at KDFN Community Services.

Born and raised in Whitehorse, Vincent grew up in the Old Village. He is of the Yanyèdí wolf clan.

He is a 30-year red seal journey-man carpenter. He's also worked in housing management for other First Nation organizations for many years.

Vincent says seeing the houses in the Old Village inspired him to pick up a hammer.

"I can recall back in the Old Village... you got your house built and you moved into it, but there was no pride because you didn't build it. When I started building houses, I was like 'wow I built that,'" says Vincent. "I've always believed that working for your community is an honour because you're trying to create a positive change."

When he's not at work, Vincent loves to get out on the land to hunt, fish, and go four wheeling and skidooing.



"Working for your community is an honour"

– Vincent Smarch.





'It's just been very exciting'

Fish Camp at Lake Laberge

Last July, KDFN Justice hosted a week-long Fish Camp at the Lake Laberge campground.

Youth and Elders donned their life jackets and hit the water to help pull and set nets. The groups caught Whitefish and cleaned them on the shore.

On day three of the camp, KDFN Justice staff member Gwyn Williams was feeling the positive energy.

"It's just been very exciting. We've been getting about three trips out on the boat each day," says Gwyn.

Shāw nítān, másin cho, gunat'chîsh, and thank you to everyone who helped make this camp a success!



Meet KDFN's new Culture and Heritage Steward

Rae Mombourquette joins the HLR team



Heritage, Lands and Resources would like to welcome Rae Mombourquette back to the team as the Culture and Heritage Steward. Within her role, Rae will be working to coordinate heritage activities and programming, contributing to heritage policy and planning and ensuring Chapter 13 heritage initiatives are implemented.

Here are a few words from Rae:

"Yagee kadáan, ɫdakát yeewáan. Kikchúks' yóo ɣat duwasáakw, Kqoqhittaán áyá ɣát. Aɣ t'aak has Deisleendáɣ yéi haa yatee, yáa yeedát ku.a wé Kwanlin-x' yéi ɣat yatee. Yú Dän Kí ku.oowú ka Cape Breton Acadiens dachɣánɣ ɣat sitee, ka wé Taagish K'wáan dachɣán yádix ɣat sitee. Dłeit kaa ɣéináɣ Rae yóo ɣat duwasáakw.

Good day everyone, my Łingit name is Kikchúks, I am a Kqoqhittaán/Acadian member of Kwanlin Dün First Nation. I am a grandchild of the Northern Tutchone people, and a great-grand-daughter of the Tagish Kwan. My Łingit family originated in Teslin, but were amalgamated into the Whitehorse Indian Band in the 1950s – what later became Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the Ta'an Kw'ächän Council. My other name is Rae.

I am happy to be back in the Heritage Lands and Resources Department of Kwanlin Dün First Nation. I have approximately 13 years of work history in this department working various heritage initiatives. I am so grateful to be working out of this amazing new building, and I hope to connect, share and laugh with all of you over these initial few months."

Welcome Rae and we are honoured to have you join our team.





Welcoming our salmon relatives

Ceremony greets salmon at the Whitehorse Fish Ladder

On August 1, KDFN joined Carcross/Tagish First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council for the First Salmon Welcoming Ceremony at the Whitehorse Fish Ladder.

Dozens gathered along the shores of Chu Níikwān, also known as the Yukon River, to welcome the year's first salmon.

Shāw nít'hān, māsín cho, gunat'chîsh, and thank you to everyone who came out!



Salmon surveys

Monitoring salmon spawning

As part of Kwanlin Dūn's ongoing efforts to monitor and restore salmon to the Yukon River, we are conducting surveys to find salmon carcasses.

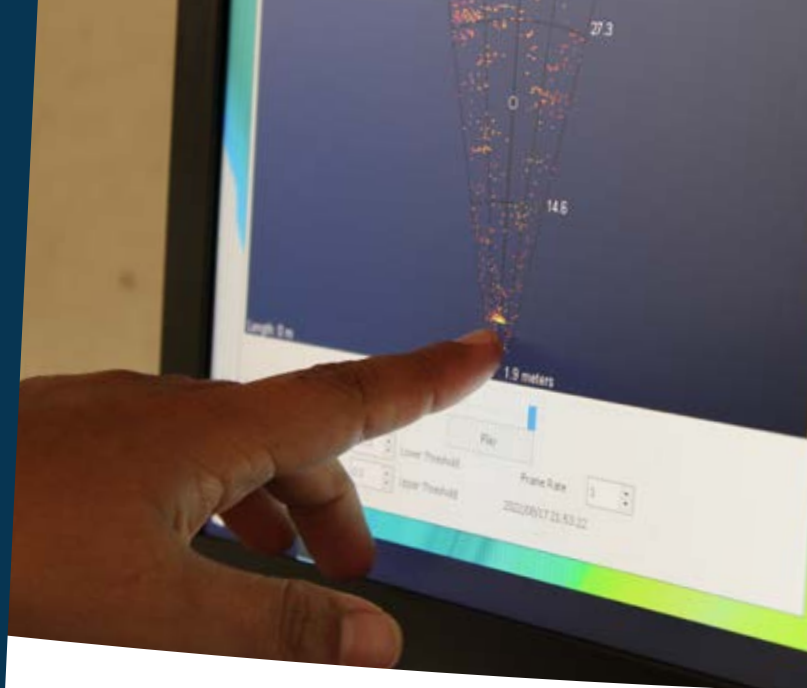
These surveys can help indicate the relative number of salmon in the river, as well as their success at spawning.

By documenting salmon that are unable to spawn, we can start to identify potential threats to the population.

Our surveys focus on the Yukon River in Whitehorse, where we are trying to understand whether the dam influences salmon spawning.

We also do these surveys on the Teslin River to see how the Yukon River salmon compare to those elsewhere.

Although the run was low this year, our crews found salmon and are learning important information to help monitor the population.



Takhini Sonar Camp 2023

Monitoring the Lifeline of Yukon Salmon

The waters of the Takhini River came alive with the return of Chinook Salmon in August 2023. On August 1, the third annual Takhini Sonar Camp began its vital mission. This year's endeavor saw the return of experienced Land Steward Officer, Cheyenne Bradley, and Land Steward Trainee, Alberta Sam. They were joined by two new members of the team, Emma Hoogland, a dedicated Fisheries Technician, and Brianna Capot-Blanc, a promising Fisheries Trainee.

The Takhini Sonar Camp is not an effort confined to a single community. In a spirit of collaboration, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations (CAFN) and Environmental Dynamics Inc. (EDI) united to support this crucial project. The collective goal: to safeguard the future of Chinook salmon in these waters.





The heart of the operation lies just five kilometers upstream from the confluence of the Takhini River and the Yukon River. A Sound Navigation and Ranging (Sonar) device is positioned in the stream, facing away from the bank. A weir is constructed to guide the Chinook salmon in front of the sonar. The remarkable device records data 24/7, with hourly uploads to the camp's computer.

Here at camp, a dedicated team of two, takes on the crucial responsibility of maintaining the sonar and camp computers while deciphering the data within the sonar files. They search for signs of salmon and meticulously record their findings. Each file undergoes quality assurance and quality control processes.

Joining the ranks at the Takhini Sonar Camp is no small feat. Workers undergo a fair bit of training, including a Sonar training course taught by Elizabeth MacDonald and Marina Milligan from the Yukon First Nation Salmon Stewardship Alliance (YFNSSA). The program also includes essential wilderness first aid, bear awareness, swift water rescue training, and boating licenses, ensuring the team is well-prepared for their tasks.

The sonar camp operated in shifts, with each shift spanning four days. The 2023 Takhini Sonar Camp ran from August 1st to September 5th, to capture the full salmon run.

The hard work and dedication of the team paid off, yielding a final count of 319 salmon for the year. While these numbers represent another year of low abundance, they serve as a stark reminder of the urgent need to protect and conserve these precious salmon populations.

The Takhini Sonar Camp is not merely a scientific endeavor; it is a testament to the dedication of the KDFN team and their partners in safeguarding the environment and the invaluable salmon that call these waters home. Together, they remind us of the importance of preserving this natural wonder for future generations. The Kwanlin Dün Heritage, Lands, and Resources team would like to extend a huge thank you to those at YFNSSA, EDI, and CAFN for all their hard work and help with this year's sonar camp.

This project is funded by the Yukon River Panel – Pacific Salmon Commission & equipment on loan from Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO).

If you would like more information on this project, please contact Emma Hoogland by email: emma.hoogland@kdfn.net.





CELEBRATING SALMON

KDFN Salmon Day honours salmon

In August, the community gathered at Nàkwät'à Kų Potlatch House for KDFN Salmon Day.

Salmon was given out to Citizens. There was also trivia, prizes, a fish cutting demonstration, and a ceremony to pray for salmon.

KDFN Salmon Day celebrated the completion of the Southern Lakes Salmon Plan, "Connecting the Broken Salmon Trail."

This plan aims to restore and prioritize the critical role of salmon in the cultures, languages, landscapes, and laws of the three self-governing First Nations.

Shăw nít'hăn, másin cho, gunatch'ish, thank you to everyone who took part.





Whitehorse Water-Use Relicensing Project

KDFN Community Advisory Committee Update

The KDFN Community Advisory Committee (CAC) for the Whitehorse Water-Use Relicensing Project is made up of five council-appointed Citizens and Beneficiaries. This includes Larry Smarch, Rae Mombourquette, Rick Gingell, Carissa Waugh and Mikah Fox.

Over the past year, they have been working to support the development of a KDFN Community Values Report to the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board (YESAB) for the relicensing of the dams. The CAC has been hosting meetings, conducting surveys and reviewing relevant materials from Elders, Citizens and Beneficiaries.

They have come up with the following four themes that are beginning to help shape the report:

1. **"We are River People"** – Rosie Charlie
2. **"Water is a Big Spirit"** – Nakhela (Hazel) Bunbury / Cory Holoway
3. **"Break Trail"** – Charlie Burns
4. **"Bring Back Voice / Power to Our People"** – Larry Smarch

These four themes, with the stories and words behind them, were shared at the August 24, 2023 Community Engagement event at the KDCC called *Dátsuq kú yù dánā kwändür "Our Grandma's House, There She Tells Us Story."* The meeting brought together over 50 participants from KDFN, C/TFN, TKC, Yukon Energy and the Yukon government. Below are some comments shared from event participants:

"We need to work with Yukon Energy, Governments and the FNs because it is important for us to sustain all waterways for future generations. We can share our outlook on water and how we can take care of it because it is so important for us and the fish and other animals that live in this water and land."

"Teach and involve the youth and children in the connection. Keep talking about it. Respect all water bodies. Respect all fish and wildlife. Respect all plants and bugs. Everything is connected."



The event opened with a prayer from Elder Margaret Mackay and song from KDFN Chief Sean Smith. A salmon dinner was provided. Participants had the opportunity to visit engagement stations based on the four themes, and the film *Gēs Tū'è King Salmon River T'ahini* was screened from an Elders Gathering in 2002 and 2003. The video included voices of Elders, many who are no longer with us, who brought forward the importance of the Michie / M'Clintock area to salmon spawning and First Nations people. In the film, Elders recounted the significance of the area as a place to gather and fish. The negative impacts of the dam to salmon and traditional waterways were also shared by Elders.

An Elder's Panel discussion was facilitated by Rae Mombourquette with words of wisdom shared from KDFN Elders Pat Joe, Dr. Norma Shorty and Joan Viksten. Their perspectives provided insight into the impacts from colonization and the dams to Yukon First Nations people. Their insight and lived experiences shared about the connection to land and water, the importance of stories, language and culture provided hope and a path ahead for the future.

The CAC and the Community Values Report is still in progress, so please reach out if you have any questions, comments or suggestions.

Contact:

Emily McDougall

HLR Sustainability Planner & Project Manager

Phone: 867-334-2115 | Email: emily.mcdougall@kdfn.net

1. "WE ARE RIVER PEOPLE"



2. "WATER IS A BIG SPIRIT"



3. "BREAK TRAIL"



4. "BRING BACK VOICE / POWER TO OUR PEOPLE"

Above art by Yukon Graphic Recording.



Michie Creek Habitat Monitoring Project 2023

On August 31, 2023, Nic DeGraff, KDFN Fish Biologist, took his last walk on Michie Creek to count the Chinook salmon. These salmon have made the 3,000 km journey from the Bering Sea up the Yukon River, M'Clintoch River, and Michie Creek. For more than 20 years, Nic has been monitoring and recording the salmon population in the creek. Now in his 70's, he's retiring from field work.

The Michie Monitoring Project is a 16km round trip from Michie Lake down Michie Creek, then a grueling bush whack to the trail that leads back to the boat. Nic has been making the trek three times a year, sometimes more, since 2003. Over the years, Elders, Citizens, Chiefs, Land Stewards and observers have joined him on the trip. Nic has witnessed this life-giving stream go from a thriving salmon population to seeing no salmon at all. Heartbreaking, but he kept coming back year after year.

Lars Jessup, KDFN Fish and Wildlife advisor, joined Nic on the final Michie Creek walk of the year. As they walked, through the creek, they heard the splashing and mating dance of the salmon. The Chinook had returned. Giddy, Nic picked up his pace, practically running towards the salmon, navigating the creek as if he's walking on water. Everyone is smiling from ear-to-ear. What a sight.

SALMON CYCLE

These salmon were born here, planted by the ones before them. They made the journey back to the ocean, adapting from freshwater to saltwater. They spend up to seven years in the sea, feeding and turning their flesh pink. They feed and grow. When it's time, they are called home. When the salmon meet the river's mouth, they are at their fittest and their flesh, the fattiest. From here they stop eating, and start their 3,000 km journey home. They face predators, both human and animal, warming waters, rapids, dams, and other environmental factors. With their ocean silver tarnished and their last meal long ago, their bodies begin to break down and rot. Yet, they keep moving forward, swimming many miles home. How they know this, has scientists and salmon people alike, stumped.

As the river narrows and gets faster, they make the winding journey to this high elevation stream marked by cobble, boulders and gravel. The female begins her dance and makes her nest called a REDD. Here she will lay her eggs. The male thrashes, bites and tears to muster whatever spark he has left to make his claim. The female releases her eggs; he fertilizes them. A final act. Within days they will be dead. Their bodies will feed the animals, water, land, and air with rich nutrients and the cycle begins again.



Another salmon season has come and gone and we are grateful to these life-giving salmon.

MICHIE CREEK HABITAT MONITORING PROJECT

The Michie Creek Habitat Monitoring Project ensures that adult salmon are not obstructed during their upstream migration to key spawning areas in upper Michie Creek. The project includes removing barriers before the salmon arrive, as well as monitoring the flow and stream temperatures in the upper Michie Creek spawning area.

In mid-May, the team travelled to upper Michie Creek by helicopter and installed instruments to monitor water levels and stream temperature. At the time, Michie Creek was experiencing high flows from snow melt which made it harder to install the instruments. An estimate of discharge was also completed during this visit. A few days later another temperature monitoring instrument was installed in the Whitehorse Rapids Fish Ladder.


In early August, a barrier survey was completed in the primary spawning area between Michie Lake and Byng Creek. No beaver dams, and very few willow cuttings were observed along the stream banks. In early September, KDFN technicians walked the area and counted a total of 24 live salmon, 2 spent carcasses and 10 REDDs. While these numbers are low compared to historical counts, this year's count was significantly more than have been observed in the previous four years.

On September 6, the team used a helicopter to survey for spawners, carcasses and REDDs below a waterfall barrier on the M'Clintock River. Salmon have been observed spawning at this location many years ago. Like last year, no evidence of any spawning activity was found. The flight also included a survey of a mudslide that was discovered in 2022. The mudslide appeared to have blocked the mainstem of Michie Creek making it difficult for the upstream movement of salmon. In 2023, seasonal flows had cut a channel through this obstruction, allowing for easier passage of salmon to upstream spawning areas.

On behalf of KDFN, we would like to say shāw níthān, másin cho, gunatchísh, and thank you to Nic DeGraff for his many years of trusted service. We wish him well in his retirement. Nic's contribution and dedication to the salmon world is priceless. Salmon people and the salmon will miss him dearly.

For more information on this project, contact Brandy Mayes. Brandy.mayes@kdfn.net or 867-336-3316

Whitehorse South Moose Surveys

<div>AREA</div> <div>  </div>	TOTAL MOOSE (RANGE)	MOOSE DENSITY (MOOSE/ 1000 KM ² OF MOOSE HABITAT)	BULLS /100 COWS	CALVES /100 COWS	YEARLINGS /100 COWS
FISH LAKE AREA	626 (580-686)	273	82	30	36
MT. LORNE AREA	719 (682-777)	340	70	22	25
WHEATON AREA	375 (319-439)	177	73	21	13



The Yukon Fish and Wildlife Branch completed moose surveys in three moose management units south of Whitehorse in 2021, with the assistance of Kwanlin Dün and other First Nation partners. The results have been finalized and the final report should be released soon. The Fish Lake and Mount Lorne moose populations both increased since the previous surveys in 2010. Both populations have more moose than average for other areas of Yukon, with high numbers of bulls and good calf and yearling recruitment. The numbers of moose are higher than at any other time in the past 30 years. The Wheaton moose management unit had fewer moose and lower calf and yearling recruitment than the other areas, but with high bull numbers. Kwanlin Dün will be working with the community and management partners in the coming months to determine if any actions, such as adjusting hunting effort or access or supporting community trapping programs, should be taken in response to the updated population data.

Realizing a father's dream

Processing one of KDFN's Historical Submissions

Lee Spice, KDFN Beneficiary and Citizen, remembers her parents talking about land selection, while looking at maps on the kitchen table many years ago. At the time, selections weren't being made, but they heard that someday there would be. Lee's father died in 1978, before he could put his name on a piece of land.

In 1987, her brother chose a piece of land at Kookatsoon, near Mt. Lorne. Later he learned the selection had been lost and the land had been set aside for non-KDFN residences and a territorial park. So he made another selection on Marsh Lake.

Lee called the Lands team in the fall of 2020 when she heard KDFN was working on Historical Submissions. Working with Jimmy Kennedy and Neil McGrath, Lee found her family's submission and learned it was only accessible by boat. She plans to build a small retirement cabin on the land, so she decided to move her selection closer to the highway. She found a new lot with road access and sent in her forms to YESAB.

Working through the YESAB process and consulting with the Marsh Lake Community Association and Carcross/Tagish First Nation, Lee learned that her selection was in the middle of caribou migration territory and the team suggested she move the selection. She chose another lot away from the caribou, nearer to the Judas Creek subdivision.

Lee says she's very happy with the cozy piece of land that she eventually chose.

"This has been a long time coming – a dream come true," says Lee. "Resolving these submissions reconnects us to our land. It lets us walk on the same land as our ancestors and feel them with us. It is a way to be on a part of the Yukon with family and strengthen family ties."



Lee's Historical Submission was one of the first selections the Lands team processed.

"My hat is off to the team," she says. "They had to pioneer the path through the process and work through unexpected speed bumps along the way. The team handled every new surprise with professionalism and courtesy, gathering people as necessary to visit the land at various times."

To other Beneficiaries and Citizens going through the process, Lee says it's important to be patient and flexible.

"Patience is necessary, but it is also helpful to keep inquiring – don't let it sit too long before asking where it is in the process," she says.

Lee plans to start simple at first – bring a tiny house to the lot, dig an outhouse and haul in water. She wants to prepare a space where she can spend part of the year and invite family to visit. A place like the one her parents talked about, many years ago around the kitchen table.





Youth hunters get out on the land

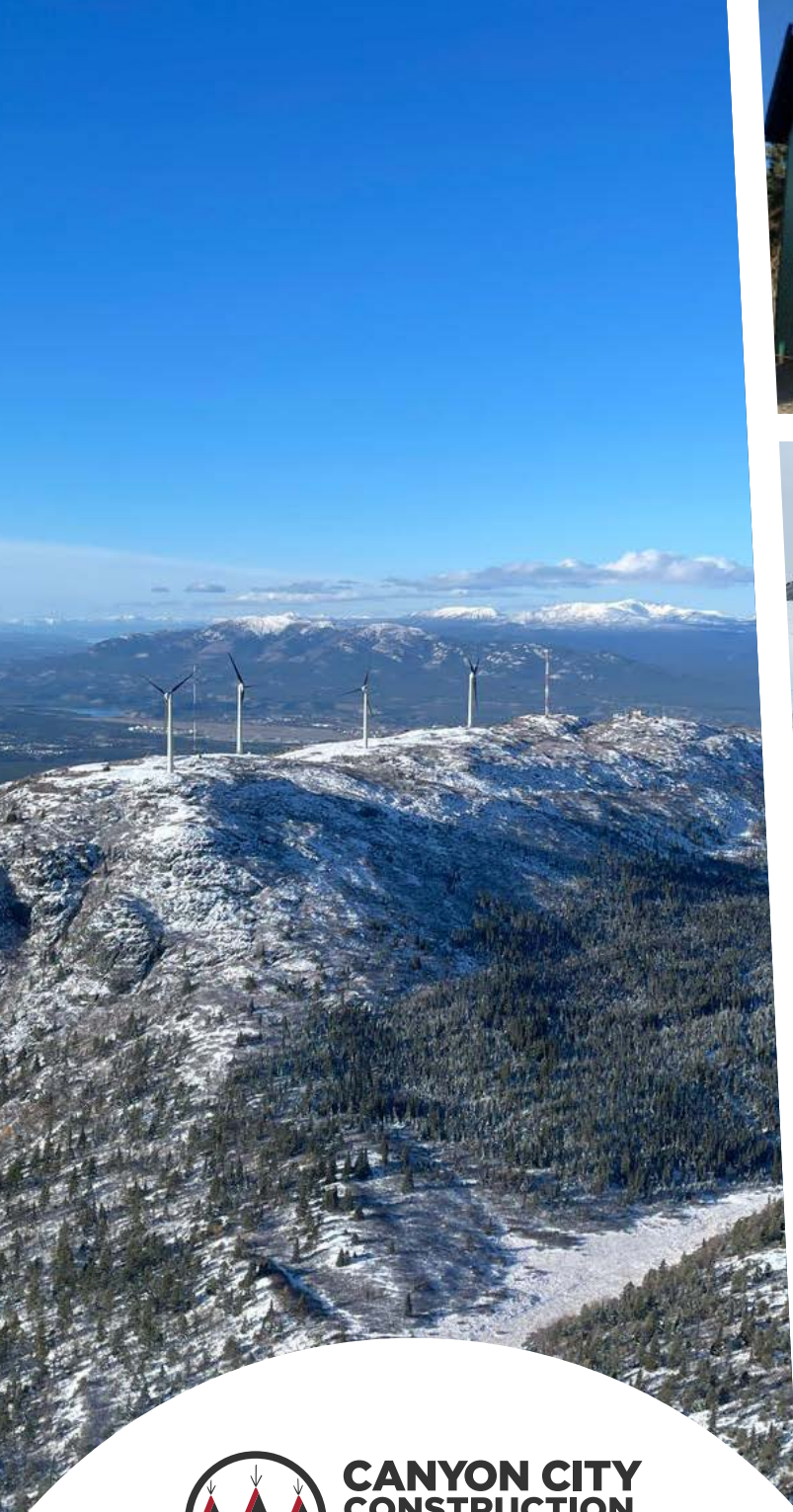
KDFN Justice hosted two hunts this fall

Check out these photos from recent youth hunts hosted by the KDFN Justice team.

Meat harvested was given to the youth hunters to share with their families. Some of the meat has been set aside for a community feast KDFN Justice is planning. Stay tuned for details!

Shăw níthăn, másín cho, gunatchîsh, and thank you to KDFN knowledge keepers for guiding the youth and to all who took part and helped make these hunts happen.





**CANYON CITY
CONSTRUCTION
LIMITED PARTNERSHIP**

CNDC GROUP OF COMPANIES

WE ARE HIRING

JOIN OUR TEAM

Chu Níikwän LP Update



KDFN HOUSING PROGRAM

We've been working with our partners at NGC Builders and KDFN Community services to bring seven brand new two-bedroom homes to McIntyre.

You may have seen our crews around Murphy Road and Hanna Street over the last few months. These houses are set to be completed and welcome their new families by Christmas 2023.

OTHER KDFN WORK

We will be completing some retrofits and repairs to a few houses in McIntyre over the next few months. Check out what our crews have been up to.

We may have a few more projects in the works and are open to applications toward these positions:

- Journeyman Carpenters – Lead Hand Position
- Carpenter's Apprentice's / Carpenter's Helper

For more info, visit www.cnlp.ca

GRAVEL AND EQUIPMENT

We weren't as busy as we planned to be this summer with our gravel supply on the Airport Project. That only means next year we will be looking to build our team to keep up with the gravel supply during the Spring, Summer and Fall of 2024. We will be looking to fill the following positions with the right people:

- Equipment Operators (loader, excavator, skid steer)
- Fueling & Service Technician
- Heavy Duty Mechanic

We've increased our KDFN gravel discount to include some special pricing for our Elders.

If you need assistance with your gravel needs, please give us a call and we can discuss your options.

GAS BAR - ART WALL

If you still have fish to hand in, please contact Katelyn Dawson at KDFN's Justice Department: katelyn.dawson@kdfn.net

CHU NIIKWAN PLACE

You may have seen some development on our piece of land by Walmart. There is a three-story commercial building being built by Wildstone. We are anticipating a completion date of March 2024.

WIND

Eagle Hill Energy Limited Partnership is 100% owned by Chu Níikwän LP.

This project includes 4 megawatt wind turbines that will be constructed on Haeckel Hill.

Please check out the EHELP updates on our website at www.cnlp.ca



CHU NÍIKWÄN
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



WHITEHORSE
PROPERTIES
LIMITED PARTNERSHIP

CNDC GROUP OF COMPANIES





National Day for Truth and Reconciliation 2023

Honouring those impacted by residential schools

On September 30, 2023, Yukoners gathered at the Healing Totem Pole in Whitehorse and walked to the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre.

The community beat their drums as the Warrior Walkers completed their walk from Dawson to the capital city.

Shăw nítshān, māsín cho, gunatshish, and thank you for joining together to honour those impacted by residential schools.





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