



Intergovernmental Meeting between Gwich'in Tribal Council and Government of the Northwest Territories

YELLOWKNIFE, NT (May 2, 2022) – Premier Caroline Cochrane, Minister Diane Archie, Minister R.J. Simpson, Minister Shane Thompson, Minister Caroline Wawzonek and son Finnegan, Minister Paulie Chinna, and Minister Julie Green met with the Gwich'in Tribal Council Grand Chief Ken Kyikavichik, Elders Ernest Vittrekwa and Alice Vittrekwa, youth delegate Kimberley Campbell, Nihtat Gwich'in Council President Kelly McLeod and Directors Chris Smith and Barry Greenland; Tetlit Gwich'in Council President Abe Wilson and Director Grace Martin; Gwichya Gwich'in Council Acting President Mavis Clark and Director Angela Koe; and Ehdiitat Gwich'in Council President Michael Greenland. The meeting was held in-person in Yellowknife on April 29, 2022.



The meeting focused on areas of mutual interest, including:

- continuing to work together to respond to COVID-19 as we transition from pandemic to endemic. It was agreed that the weekly Indigenous leadership meetings during the pandemic phase were a leading practice to remember for future public health emergencies.
- exploring ways to collaborate and work in partnership to address housing needs in the Gwich'in Settlement Area, including the importance of collaboration related to

training, building and maintenance, strengthening boards and authorities, and improving client service;

- continuing to share information and programming available on mental health, well-being, and addictions for those experiencing challenges, including the use of the Gwich'in Wellness Camp;
- maximizing economic opportunities in the Gwich'in Settlement Area in accordance with Chapter 10 of the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement;
- continuing discussions on wildlife and forestry through education and preventative measures regarding lands, animals, and local knowledge in accordance with [Gwich'in values](#); and
- the importance of United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples implementation resulting in a more harmonious relationship between the GNWT and the Gwich'in.

Elders Alice Vittrekwa and Ernest Vittrekwa spoke to the importance that the meetings were done in a good way, respectful, with careful listening, and without anger.

At the meeting, the Gwich'in Tribal Council and the Government of the Northwest Territories renewed their intergovernmental memorandum of understanding for another four-year term, confirming their commitment to work together to continue to build a strong government-to-government relationship.

Quick Facts

- The Intergovernmental Memorandum of Understanding recognizes the importance of the government-to-government relationship between the Gwich'in Tribal Council and the Government of the Northwest Territories.
- The agreement commits both governments to meet once per year.
- The *Gwich'in Tribal Council and GNWT Intergovernmental Agreement regarding Intergovernmental Cooperation and Coordination* was initially signed in October 2012, renewed in May 2017, and updated in April 2022.

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