

Traditional Knowledge Policy

Statement of Policy

The Deh Cho Land Use Planning Committee recognizes that the aboriginal peoples of the Northwest Territories have acquired a vast store of traditional knowledge through their experience of centuries of living in close harmony with the land. The Committee recognizes that aboriginal traditional knowledge is a valid and essential source of information about the traditional environment and its resources, the use of natural resources, and the relationship of people to the land and to each other, and will incorporate traditional knowledge into planning decisions and actions where appropriate.

Definitions

TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE is defined as knowledge and values which have been acquired through experience, observation, from the land or from spiritual teachings, and handed down from one generation to another.

THE COMMITTEE is the Deh Cho Land Use Planning Committee.

DCFN is the Deh Cho First Nations.

Purpose

The Deh Cho Land Use Planning Committee has established this policy to address the issue of ownership of traditional knowledge, and to establish procedures for the use, management and incorporation of traditional knowledge in its planning process. It will apply equally to information collected as part of the traditional land use and occupancy mapping project and to new information that will be collected as part of the land use planning process.

Ownership and Confidentiality

The Committee respects and understands that full rights and ownership of traditional knowledge rest with the Deh Cho First Nations communities. It is understood that the traditional land use and occupancy knowledge is provided by the Deh Cho Dene to the Committee for its confidential use in the planning process. It is understood by the Committee and its representatives that this information is governed by intellectual property rights and will be treated with strict confidentiality and will not be released to any other party other than DCFN or the owners of the information. Any violation of this policy or misuse of the information will result in serious consequences.

Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Mapping Data

Traditional land use and occupancy mapping information has been collected and assembled by the Deh Cho First Nations for use in negotiations of the Deh Cho Process. The Committee recognizes the confidential nature of this information and therefore only requests access to the results of the density analysis that has been performed, for use in its planning process. For clarity, the density analysis information will indicate areas of low, medium, high and very high land use and occupancy within the Deh Cho territory. The Committee will use this information for the purposes of analysis and consideration during the development of a land use plan for the Deh Cho territory.

The provision of this information does not negate the Committee's duty to consult with the communities on a regular basis throughout this planning process in any way. Nor does it preclude further discussion or changes in the land use zones resulting from the inclusion of this information.

In some cases, detailed site specific information may be required to make appropriate decisions in the planning process. In some situations, the Committee may only need to view the original information (raw data) to understand the results. In this case, the Committee will provide a written request to the owner of the information (individual or community), to make arrangements to view the raw data captured by the traditional land use and occupancy mapping project and discuss any questions the Committee has. In this letter, the Committee will outline the nature of the information it is requesting, explaining the reason for its request, and detailing how the information will be used. The confidentiality of the information will be strictly maintained. The owner of the information has the right to grant or deny such access.

In other cases, the Committee may need to use the information as part of a more detailed analysis process. Where that is the case, the Committee will make a formal written request to the owner of the information (individual or community) to access a copy of the raw data. The Committee will explain the reason for its request, outline the nature of the information it is requesting, and detail how the information will be used. The Committee will maintain strict confidentiality and will not share the information with any other individuals or organizations, unless the owner specifically grants permission to do so. Any detailed information used in the planning process will not be printed on any final maps or reports unless the owner of the information specifically grants permission to do so. The owner of the information has the right to grant or deny access to all information to the Committee.

Collection of New Traditional Knowledge

The Committee expects to collect some traditional knowledge as part of its planning process. This knowledge will be more general than that collected in the traditional land use and occupancy mapping project but will still be treated with the same degree of respect and confidentiality as that information is given. Any new information collected may be referred to in a general way in text but never shown or illustrated on maps unless the owner has specifically granted permission to the Committee to do so. It is understood that any new traditional

knowledge is held in trust by the Committee and will be given to DCFN upon completion of the Land Use Plan.

Incorporation of Traditional Knowledge in the Deh Cho Land Use Planning Process

The Committee recognizes the validity of traditional knowledge and will incorporate it into the land use plan wherever possible. The Committee will use both western science and traditional knowledge in delineating the extent and use of natural resources in the Deh Cho territory. Traditional knowledge will be especially important for “filling in the gaps”, providing information where western science is not known. The Committee will also use traditional knowledge to develop an understanding of the ecology and cultural significance of the resources and land of the Deh Cho territory..

The Committee will gather traditional knowledge through its consultation process with communities, through elder’s workshops on specific topics and through participation in any traditional knowledge working groups that may develop. Elders and Chiefs will be paid at a rate of \$300 per day for participation in workshops and working groups. Other invited participants will be paid \$100 per day for their input in workshops and working groups.