



**DEVELOPMENT TITLE:** *Nahanni River of Forgiveness - Moose Skin Boat Documentary*

**PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT DATE(S):** June 2 - June 30, 2018

**PROPONENTS:**

*Geoff Bowie*  
Elan Film Productions  
98 St. Clarens Avenue  
Toronto, Ontario  
Canada M6K 2S5  
(416) 531-8213  
fax: (416) 531-3295  
gbowie@rogers.com

*Gordon Hendersson*  
90<sup>th</sup> Parallel Productions  
203 Gerrard Street East  
Toronto, Ontario  
Canada M5A2E7  
(416) 364-9090  
fax: (416) 364-0580  
info@90thparallel.ca

**DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION:**

*Nahanni River of Forgiveness* will be an educational documentary film about Dene culture as revealed through a traditional moose skin boat journey down the Nahʔą Dehé (South Nahanni River); a recreation of an historic annual journey undertaken by Dene ancestors. In June 2018, members of the Dehcho First Nations, with members of the Shúhtaot'ine First Nation, will build a 40-foot moose skin boat on the shores of the Nahʔą Dehé at Bunny Bar, Nahanni National Park Reserve (Nahanni). Accompanied by a film crew and supported by Parks Canada staff and eco-tourism outfitters licenced to operate in Nahanni, Dene participants will navigate the boat down the Nahʔą Dehé, stopping at Gahnjtháh (Rabbit Kettle), and Nájłjcho (Virginia Falls) where the boat will be portaged by helicopter to below the Falls. The team will continue to Nahanni Butte, then along the Nácháh Dehé (Liard River) and the Deh Cho (Mackenzie River) to Łíídlıı Kúę (Fort Simpson); aiming to complete the journey by June 30, 2018 (Figure 1). The trip aims to build hope, vision, and strength to strive for a better future and to create awareness about the values of the people of the Denendeh.

Herb Norwegian, Grand Chief of the Dehcho First Nations explains the goals of the film: *This is a trip to honour our ancestors. It is our ancestors making the trip once again through their descendants. It is a chance to reaffirm our identity, to nourish our collective memory, to build pride in our young people about who they are and build hope in the communities. It will make a statement to the world that the Dene is a people of bravery and survival.*

NOTE: The preliminary screening will apply only to the components of the development related to commercial filming (i.e.: fuel caching, generator operation, drone operation, motorized boat operations in support of filming) and outfitter support (i.e.: camp operations), not to Dene traditional harvesting, which is authorized under the *Canada National Parks Act*. Traditional harvesting activities conducted by Dene related to this development will include the cutting of approximately 10 spruce trees for construction of the moose skin boat, motorized boat operation to support traditional activities, and may include hunting/fishing and cooking fires.



Schedule: (Note: maximum team members = 35)

Date	Location	Activities
June 2-10	Bunny Bar, Nahanni	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Boat construction and camping:</i> Approximately 10 spruce trees will be harvested, using chainsaws, and used to build the boat frame. Two inflatable motorized boats will be used for traditional activities at the site. Team members will camp either on Bunny Bar or nearby in the forest; an old outfitter campsite on Bunny Bar may be used.</li> <li>• <i>Aircraft access:</i> Crew and materials (e.g.: moose hides, tools, camping gear and food/supplies) will be transported to and from Bunny Bar using fixed or rotary wing aircraft.</li> </ul>
June 11-18	Bunny Bar to Nájłıcho, Nahanni	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Bunny Bar to Gahnjtháh:</i> Moose skin boat will be accompanied by the film crew and other team members in the escort boats (two inflatable motorized boats, two rafts, and two canoes). The team will camp at Gahnjtháh for two nights; film crew will access the tufa mounds under guidance of Parks Canada and Dene participants will undertake traditional ceremonies at the tufa mounds.</li> <li>• <i>Gahnjtháh to Nájłıcho:</i> Also accompanied by the escort boats. This will be a resting spot (June 15-18); Dene participants will undertake traditional ceremonies and outfitters will replenish food and other necessary supplies. The moose skin boat will be portaged by helicopter to below the Falls.</li> </ul>
June 18-30	Nájłıcho to ı́ı́dlıı Kúé, Nahanni and outside of the park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Nájłıcho to Nahanni Butte:</i> The team will stop, and hike if applicable, at locations important to the Dene that may include Third Canyon, Tthetaehtluah (the Gate), Second Canyon, Dahtaehtth' (Deadmen Valley), Ala The Zihgoi?a (First Canyon), Tu Kádeegai (Whitespray), Tuletsee (Kraus Hot Springs), and Nintsi Daheda (the sand blowouts).</li> <li>• Expected arrival in Nahanni Butte on June 27<sup>th</sup> where the team will camp one night.</li> <li>• The moose skin boat will be towed down the Nácháh Dehé as far as the ferry crossing (June 27-30). It will be paddled from the ferry crossing to Fort Simpson, with expected arrival on June 30<sup>th</sup>.</li> </ul>



#### Logistical/equipment details:

- Dene participants will be supported by eco-tourism outfitters licenced to operate in Nahanni (Black Feather, Canadian River Expeditions, and Nahanni Wilderness Adventures). These operators will be responsible for camp location and management, food storage, preparing meals, cleaning up, waste management, moving camp, river travel consultation, and safety. Outfitters will adhere to the mitigations described in the *Parks Canada Best Management Practice for Commercially Guided Eco-tourism Activities in Nahanni and Nááts'j'ch'oh National Park Reserves of Canada*; additional mitigations will be developed through this preliminary screening process to address additional environmental pressures related to the large group size.
- Other than the campsites noted in the table above, campsite and lunch stop locations will depend on water levels and group speed. Sites will be selected to ensure sufficient space for team gear and tents and to ensure minimal impact to the environment.
- Some team members (Dene, film crew, Parks Canada staff) may visit the Cirque of the Unclimbables and Brintnell Glacier in the Ragged Range. This will be scheduled either during the stay at Bunny Bar or at Gahnjtháh; flight will be via helicopter.
- Equipment: chainsaw(s), two inflatable powerboats (above Nájljcho), multiple types of handheld/tripod mounted and go-pro cameras, two drones (use subject to Transport Canada regulations), two 2000 watt Honda generators, and may include motorized vessels below Nájljcho.
- Fuel for the escort boats and film-related equipment will be cached at Nájljcho and Gahnjtháh using the existing Parks Canada fuel caches.
- All access flights will be via fixed or rotary winged aircraft by operators licenced for Nahanni National Park. Aircraft operators will adhere to the mitigations described in the *Parks Canada Best Management Practice for Aircraft Landings and Operations in Nahanni and Nááts'j'ch'oh National Park Reserves of Canada*.



Figure 1: Trip map

