



**Yellowknives Dene First Nation**

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Delivered by Email

Mark Cliffe-Phillips  
Executive Director  
Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board  
200 Scotia Centre  
Box 938, 5102-50th Ave  
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2N7

Dear Sirs/Mesdames:

**Re: YKDFN Thaidene Nene Park and GNWT Protected Area**

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As you are aware the Yellowknives First Nation and other members of Akaitcho have been engaged in discussions with both the federal and Territorial governments respecting the planned creation of both Thaidene Nene National Park Reserve and Thaidene Nene Territorial Protected Area. While we are pleased to advise that we are close to an Agreement in principal with Parks Canada on the National Park reserve along with the Regional Management Board we remain steadfast in our opposition to the Territorial Protected Area.

Over the last several months we have made it clear in our negotiations that while we are fully supportive of the creation of that Protected Area as regards the portions that lie within the Traditional Territory of Lutsel K'e, our elders and our community have expressed concerns regarding the inclusion of the North Shore of McLeod Bay in that Protected Area. The North shore area within the proposed Boundaries Lies within Chief Drygeese Territory. As such we are strongly opposed to any agreement or other measure that see that area designated as a protected Area without our consent or that attempts to circumvent our Akaitcho Land Claims process.

We have over the last several weeks sought to find a compromise that would satisfy our desire to not deal with those lands excepting than through the Akaitcho process and only after the YKDFN have had an opportunity to complete our Land Use Planning process as regards those Lands. While we are as we indicated supportive of the balance of the protected Area as it lies with Lutsel K'e's Traditional Territory we believe the only way forward is to remove the area proposed North of McLeod Bay from further consideration as a portion of the Protected area at this time. We would propose that other measures be explored that would see a form of interim protection for that area pending the completion of our Akaitcho process.

In our view the protection of our Section 35 rights as are guaranteed in the process establishment agreements do not adequately deal with the issues. A decision to either Withdraw the Lands as Dene Title Lands or leave it as a part of the Protected area do not deal with all of the possible Land use possibilities. YKDFN traditional harvesting rights include minerals. Minerals such as native copper and flint were extracted and traded by our Copper Knives people centuries before large scale gold and diamond mining came to the North.

It is clearly in the broader public interest to give TDN further consideration in terms of its socio-economic impacts on future potential employment, training, contracting and royalty revenue streams from natural resource extraction for Indigenous government, development corporations and community members. While the end result may very well be the same, we are of the view that the process must be followed before we can deal with those lands.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you wish further clarification or additional information please do not hesitate to contact Jason Snaggs Chief Executive Officer of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation at [jasons@ykdene.com](mailto:jasons@ykdene.com).

Sincerely,

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Jason Snaggs  
CEO  
Yellowknives Dene First Nation

cc: Edward Sangris  
Chief of Dettah

Ernest Betsina  
Chief of N'Dilo

Johanne Black  
Director, Department of Lands & Environment  
Yellowknives Dene First Nation