

A photograph of a traditional wooden tepee structure, constructed from several long poles meeting at the top, set against a bright yellow background.

# K'àgòò ṭlì Deè

**Traditional Knowledge Study**  
for the Proposed All-Season Road to  
Whatì



**Ṭchò Government**

Ṭchò Research and  
Training Institute

2014



K'àgòò ṭḷḷi Deè

Traditional Knowledge Study for the Proposed All-Season Road to Whatì

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Cover Photo: Petter Jacobsen. Whatì hunter takes aim at barren-ground caribou, by Whatì.

Photos inside report: Petter Jacobsen

## Executive Summary

This traditional knowledge study is part of the Tl̥ch̥q Government's strategy to gather information about the potential benefits and concerns that might arise from a proposed all-season road from Highway 3 to the Tl̥ch̥q community of Whatì. The purpose of the study is to inform decision-makers and developers about the areas of importance for the practice of cultural activities on the land surrounding the proposed road route, and to identify what impacts the proposed road will have on harvesters, and on the land and animals.

The study documents the cultural importance of specific sites and natural features, such as Tsotìdeè, Nàl̥l̥, and Ewaashì, and of travel routes, burial sites, and land use practices, as hunting, fishing, and trapping. The main concerns of the elders include the predicted impacts of (1) noise and dust pollution from construction and traffic, (2) the introduction of new animal species, and (3) the influx of outsiders and resulting increased pressure on harvesting of furbearing and ungulate animal populations in the proposed development area. These predicted impacts will pose difficulties to the maintenance of the Tl̥cho hunting and trapping economy and way of life. Several mitigations measures are identified to deal with some of these concerns. More information is needed in regards to the concerns and impacts, and priorities are identified, highlighting further research needs.

The study is based on the traditional knowledge of 16 elders and harvesters in Whatì and Behchokò, each of whom has personal experience and knowledge of the proposed development area. The researchers applied a qualitative research method based on workshops and individual interviews with each elder and harvester.

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## Tłìchǫ Place Names

Tsotìdeè - Lac la Martre River

Nàlǫ - the waterfalls on Tsotìdeè

Nàlǫtì – Falls Lake

Whatì – Lac la Martre

ʔebòts'itì - Boyer Lake

ʔeht'ètì - James Lake

ʔeht'ètideè – James Lake River

ʔhdak'ètì - Marian Lake

K'àgòò tǫlì – Old Airport Road

T'ooheeteè – Portage on Tsotideè, where K'àgòò tǫlì crosses the river

K'ishitì - Lac Levis

ʔedèezhì - Horn Plateau

ǫdahti - Hornell Lake

K'isietì - Wind Flower Lake

Xanaàtì - Clive Lake

K'àyetideè - Horn River

Ts'htsoodee - Willow Lake River

## 1.0 Introduction

An all-season road is proposed from Highway 3 to the Tłıchq community of Whatì, Northwest Territories. To make informed decisions and development plans for the proposed road, the Tłıchq Government initiated a traditional knowledge study and a socio-economic scoping study. The two studies have been conducted to assess the current conditions for the people in Whatì, and to identify potential benefits of the all-season road as well as concerns arising from its construction.

The purpose of documenting Tłıchq traditional knowledge is to provide the Tłıchq Government access to, and use of, traditional knowledge in the decision-making process and for further research about the proposed all-season road to Whatì. A traditional knowledge study provides information the developers can use in preparing plans for the proposed development. This study will allow the Tłıchq and the public to be aware of the cultural and environmental importance of the area proposed for development. In terms of decision-making and development planning, this study has focused on the proposed road's positive and negative potential impacts on wildlife in the study area, their habitat, and the harvesting economy and way of life.

The Tłıchq have always travelled extensive distances over their territory to acquire various resources in each season of the year. Their travel routes over land and water and their camp sites connect with one another throughout the study area and into adjacent regions. The proposed development area has been a hunting and trapping area for the Tłıchq since time immemorial. This study recognizes numerous valuable harvesting locations due to a variety of wildlife habitat in the area. Parts of the study area are reliable trapping areas for beaver and muskrat in spring and summer, and for furbearing animals in the winter. Several locations are important hunting sites for moose, woodland caribou, and barren-ground caribou.

This report outlines the traditional knowledge of elders and harvesters who have personal experience and knowledge of the area proposed for development. The study was conducted in the Tłıchq communities of Whatì and Behchokò between November 2013 and August 2014.

### 1.1 Background Information about the All-Season Road

Currently a winter road is constructed from Highway 3 to Whatì every winter, providing road access to Whatì for two or three months of the year (see Appendix D for winter road-opening dates). The Department of Transportation (DOT) states that the warming temperatures in recent winters have led to difficulties in construction and maintenance of the winter road, which has led to unpredictable and shortened winter road seasons. From 2008, the Tłıchq Government (TG) and Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) initiated several studies (Nichols Applied Management 2006, Kavik AXYS 2008b, Arthur Anderson 1999, Kavik AXYS 2008a, FSC 1999) to examine the possibility of improving the community access by realigning the winter road. These studies proved that a realignment of the winter road to an overland route was feasible and practical.

The proposed road route follows the Old Airport Road. The Tłıchq term for this road- or the tractor-trail, as it is described- is K'àgòò t̬lìi. The Tłıchq name for the trail, K'àgòò t̬lìi, is used in this report. The road route starts at kilometre 196 on Highway 3, approximately 40 km south of Edzo, and goes in a northwest direction towards Whatì (see Map: 1). The road route is 113 km long and has 5 major river crossings.



## 1.2 Outline of the Report

This report describes the process of and results from the traditional knowledge study for the proposed all-season road to Whatì. The report consists of 5 sections:

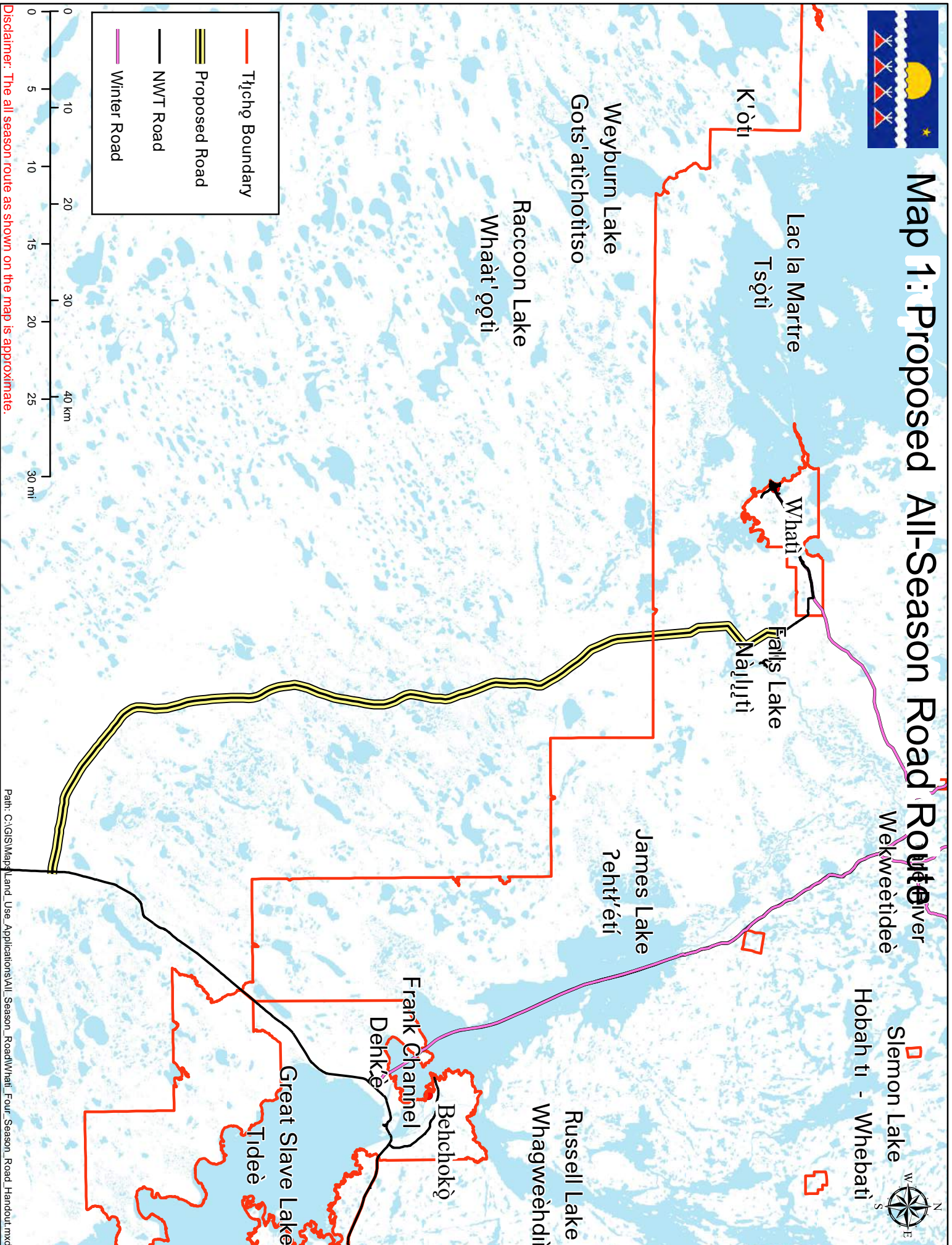
- Section 2 outlines the research methods, activities, and processes used to conduct the traditional knowledge study. This section describes how we at the Tłjchq Research and Training Institute work and do collaborative research with our communities, harvesters, and elders.
- Section 3 provides the results from the research. The results are divided into two main parts. The first part provides a description of sensitive cultural sites, focusing on the history of, value of, and peoples' use and interaction with places and associated events. The second part gives a description of what people do on the land, focusing on hunting and trapping, and the people's knowledge of the animals they interact with. Details of the potential impacts of the proposed road follow the description of each activity and culturally sensitive place.
- Section 4 provides a list of mitigation measures, focusing on environmental monitoring, regulations, response plans, cultural programs, and compensation.
- Section 5 lays out a list of additional research priorities, identifying areas we need to understand and know more about. The research priorities are mainly in relation to the predicted impacts.

## 1.3 Traditional Knowledge Studies

A traditional knowledge study focuses on peoples' knowledge of cultural values, activities, and animals and environment in a defined area. Many, but not all, traditional knowledge studies are conducted in relation to proposed development projects. The purpose of identifying traditional knowledge relative to a specific area is to inform decision-makers and development planners of existing locations, histories, or possible spirit beings dwelling in a place that only the local people have knowledge of. Once identified, various measures can be put in place to make specific designs to avoid or protect the locations that the local people value. As such, traditional knowledge studies can help promote understanding of potential impacts on an area and its inhabitants from proposed developments. These studies are conducted with elders, men and women, and/or harvesters who have knowledge and personal experience of the issue under study.



# Map 1: Proposed All-Season Road Route



Over the last decades, there has been much debate over the different interpretations of the concept of traditional knowledge (TK) that exist. Traditional knowledge is claimed by some to be specific knowledge of animals, the environment, and their interactions. Traditional knowledge has been defined as “the systems of knowledge gained by experience, observation and analysis of natural events that is transmitted among members of a community” (Huntington 1998). This definition depicts traditional knowledge as a system of knowledge parallel to that of field biology. Others define traditional knowledge as a knowledge system based on a worldview that focuses on the complex whole, and includes more than the physical, technical view of the environment (Freeman 1992). Spak (2005) provides an alternative definition: “the culturally and spiritually based way in which Indigenous people relate to their ecosystems.” This interpretation highlights the interrelationship between culture, nature, and spirituality and emphasizes the importance of respectful relationships between people and the land.

Traditional knowledge is taught orally between community members. This method of learning makes the knowledge adaptive to new situations and observations and is thus not static. Knowledge is shared personally and often communicated by an elder when s/he thinks the receiving person is ready to learn. Orally transmitted knowledge is based on cultural ways of behaving and relating, together with the specific information. Traditional knowledge is thus a process of learning based on personal experience that then becomes one’s perspective, rather than something universally true. As traditional knowledge is personal, a focus on who is right or wrong or what is true becomes insignificant, while a focus on whose perspective is presented is often more useful (Castellano 2004).

The elders interviewed for this study place high value on the method of seeing and personally experiencing a place or situation in their evaluation of what is true. They are clear that the knowledge they shared in this study is not hearsay heard or read somewhere, but is true, as they have seen it with their own eyes and experienced it personally.

### **1.4 Limitations of the Report**

This study involved a small selection of people living in Whatì and Behchokò. After identifying the harvesters and elders who are most active in and knowledgeable about the proposed development area, the purpose of the study was to document their traditional knowledge and their understanding of the potential impacts from the proposed developments. The study did not include any representatives of the communities other than these 16 harvesters and elders. The study applied a specific selection method to identify the participants. All of the knowledgeable participants identified were men. The study is based on workshops and interviews conducted in Whatì and Behchokò. We did not conduct research in the field. The locations on the maps have not been ground-truthed and are based on the participants' memories.

The study did not focus on or ask about the participants' support for or opinion of the proposed road. Even so, the participants often started discussions on this topic, and their opinions are intertwined with the potential impacts they predict from the proposed road. This is consistent with the principle that traditional knowledge is not simply a set of data, but knowledge connected to a way of life, and thus infused with feelings and beliefs. A written TK report should not be seen as a collection of the community's knowledge as whole but rather a reflection of community members knowledge and concerns shared in a research process. When TK is taken out of its original, oral, cultural context, some elements of its significance may become altered. As these persons were chosen for this study, therefore the reports express their knowledge and concerns and not the concerns of the whole community of Whatì.



## 1.5 Tłıchq Research and Training Institute

The project was conducted by the Tłıchq Research and Training Institute (TRTI). The newly established Institute has the intention to bring together academic, government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and corporate and local Tłıchq organizations to collaborate on research in social, cultural, environmental, health, and wellness concerns for the Tłıchq. The mandate of TRTI is to advance the study of Tłıchq lands, language, culture, and way of life through the promotion of research and its use for education, training, planning, and monitoring purposes.

TRTI will pursue its mandate by promoting research projects and activities involving elders and youth; developing and training Tłıchq researchers; developing and using indigenous research design and appropriate community methodologies; publishing work in a variety of media including online at [www.Tlcho.ca](http://www.Tlcho.ca); developing the Tłıchq digital database of oral history, maps, photographs, video, and other documentary resources; reviewing proposed research submitted for licensing through the Aurora Research Institute; and providing support and assistance to approved research while promoting collaboration with academic and corporate partners.

## 1.6 The Tłıchq

On August 4, 2005, the Tłıchq Agreement, the first land, resource, and self-government agreement in the NWT came into effect. This Agreement was signed by the Tłıchq, the Government of Canada, and the Government of the NWT, and established the Tłıchq Government's full powers and jurisdiction over 39,000 square kilometers of Tłıchq lands, wildlife, and resources. The Tłıchq Agreement not only created the Tłıchq Government, but also set its mandate to preserve, protect and promote Aboriginal and Treaty rights, and way of life – including culture, language, heritage, lands, economy and resources – for all Tłıchq today and for future generations to come.

The significance of the Agreement is that the Tłıchq has ownership of 39,000 square kilometres of land surrounding the four Tłıchq communities, including surface and subsurface rights. The Agreement guarantees participation in the Wek'eezhii Renewable Resource Board and the Wek'eezhii Land and Water Board, the co-management boards governing the resources within Tłıchq traditional lands. The Tłıchq have their own lawmaking power over all Tłıchq citizens, including aspects of education, child and family services, income support, social housing, and other services (Government of the Northwest Territories 2008, Tłıchq Government 2014).

Historically the Tłıchq people have been referred to as the Dogrib, but after signing the Agreement, Tłıchq became their official name. The four Tłıchq communities, Behchokò, Whatì, Gamètì and Wekweètì, are located in the boreal forest, but their traditional land stretches north of the tree line into the tundra, where many of their fall hunting grounds for caribou are located. The traditional land use areas of the Tłıchq lie within the boundary known as 'Mowhi Gogha De Niitlee,' of which the boundary was drawn by chief Mowhi during the negotiations of Treaty 11 in 1921 (Helm 1994). The traditional land consists of the area between Great Slave Lake and Great Bear Lake, from the Horn Plateau in the southwest, and as far north as the Coppermine River and Contwoyto Lake (see Map 2: Tłıchq Regional Boundaries and Study Area).

## 2.0 Methodology and Research Process

Following the methodological standards of the TRTI this study applied a qualitative research methodology. This approach was based on workshops and individual in-depth interviews, and focused on working closely with the elders and harvesters who have personal experience and knowledge of the proposed development area.

### 2.1 Research Process and Activities

The research process involved several activities carried out in 2013 and 2014 (see Appendix C). In November 2013, the Department of Culture and Lands Protection of the Tl̥chq̓ Government organized a community meeting in Whatì. The purpose was to inform the community members of the proposed all-season road, and about the two studies that would take place in the community: (1) a socio-economic study and (2) a traditional knowledge study. During the meeting, the purpose and process of the traditional knowledge study were explained to the community members. Initial conversations were started at the meeting with some of the elders in the community.

In February, the researchers went back to Whatì and gathered the elders for an all-day focus group regarding the proposed all-season road. Following the focus group, we conducted individual interviews with each participant. A similar process was conducted with elders and harvesters in Behchok̓.

During the spring and summer, the interviews were transcribed and analyzed. Once the maps were prepared and the documented knowledge was analyzed, the researchers met again with the elders and harvesters in Whatì and Behchok̓ to verify the documented knowledge. During the verification process, the elders elaborated on their stories and knowledge communicated during the focus group and interviews. This procedure expanded the level of detail of the traditional knowledge gathered about the proposed development area.

### 2.2 Research Participants

The research involved 16 elders and harvesters in Whatì and Behchok̓. The selection of participants was completed using a snowball technique (Bryman, Alan, and Teevan 2005). The respected knowledgeable elders in the community were asked to identify other knowledgeable elders and harvesters who have extensive knowledge and personal experience of the study area. These persons subsequently identified other harvesters, following the snowball technique. This sampling technique ensures the right persons with knowledge of the area are selected.

In Whatì, ten persons were involved in the following research activities (nine participants were involved in interviews and the focus group, and one additional harvester was involved during the final verification workshop):

- February 10, 2014 - One focus group with nine elders and harvesters;
- February 10-13, 2014 - Nine individual interviews; and
- August 13-14, 2014 - A two-day verification workshop with seven elders and harvesters.

In Behchok̓, six persons were involved in the following research activities:

- February 17, 2014 - One focus group with six elders and harvesters;
- February 17-19, 2014 - Six individual interviews; and



- August 15, 2014 – A one-day verification workshop with five elders and harvesters.

## 2.3 Interviews

The style of interviews conducted involved a combination of semi-directive and open-ended interview techniques. These two techniques allowed for fluidity and flexibility in the interviews, which is an essential part of research with indigenous elders (Struthers 2001), and created a comfortable space for elders to freely share their knowledge and tell their stories while continuing to follow the objectives of the research. The individual interviews lasted from one to four hours in duration. The interviews were recorded with digital recorders and qualified local translators transcribed the interviews into English. The language used for the research was Tłıchq̓ or English, depending on the preference of the participants. Sometimes a combination of both languages was used. A total of 16 interviews were conducted, nine in Whatì and six in Behchokq̓. The interview guidelines are outlined in Appendix A.

The interviews did not systematically follow the questions outlined in Appendix A. Based on professional experience working with Tłıchq̓ harvesters and elders, the interviews followed the lead of the topics the elder wanted to speak about regarding the issue. The sections in the research guidelines were then marked off as the conversation continued. Any topics not addressed by the elder were specifically asked about in a later part of the interview. This interview technique applied to both the open-ended and semi-structured methods. The differences in techniques used during the interviews were often based on the personal characteristics of each elder. Each elder had different knowledge and different ways of expressing himself. Some elders elaborated more than others and expressed themselves in long monologues. During such interviews it is better to adapt to the characteristics of the elder and sit and learn rather than interrupt with a series of questions (Jacobsen 2011). This method follows the cultural characteristics of learning among the Dene and Tłıchq̓ cultures, in which learning is mainly done by personal observation and experience and storytelling, rather than by direct questioning (Legat 2012, Goulet 1998). The open-ended/ semi-structured interviews, in which the elder took the time to explain the areas he felt were important, were usually the most successful and insightful interviews. Each interview was set for two hours, but if an elder wanted to explain further, meeting in the evenings were used to further document their knowledge.

A note should be made of the context and use of the questioning process during interviews with Tłıchq̓ elders. The interview is comprised of the two actions of teaching and learning: the elder is the teacher while the researcher is learning. The Tłıchq̓, as other Dene peoples, have similar ways of teaching and learning that are different from those of Euro-Canadians. In many ways, the elder wants the researcher to learn in the same ways as they learn, preferably through personal experience and observation (Goulet 1998, Ridington 1988, Guedon 1988). The use of direct questions yielded useful information and descriptive stories of the land, but as stated above, the most informative interviews were those in which the elders took the role of storyteller and described their experiences from the land. This method of research is more in tune with Tłıchq̓ traditional forms of teaching and thus enhanced the research process.

## 2.4 Analysis

The procedure for the content analysis of the interviews consisted of applying identifying codes and categories to all the information, starting first with the notes and transcripts from the focus groups and interviews. Broad categories quickly emerged, such as "the river Tsotìdeè" or "trapping." Once these broad categories were identified, sub-categories or codes were identified, such as "marten" and "lynx"

under the broader category of "trapping." Several categories and numerous codes were identified over the course of reviewing all the notes and interviews. The last step in the analysis was to select parts of the elders' statements to be included under each category. This part was important, as it provided each category with meaning and personal stories from the elders' lived experience with the animals on the land.

Once no further categories emerged, and the researchers were satisfied that all the cultural values and activities in the study area had been identified, the maps and a draft report were brought back to the elders and harvesters for verification. During this process, the elders verified the content in its textual and spatial form, and provided much more information.

### 2.5 Geographical Scope of the Study

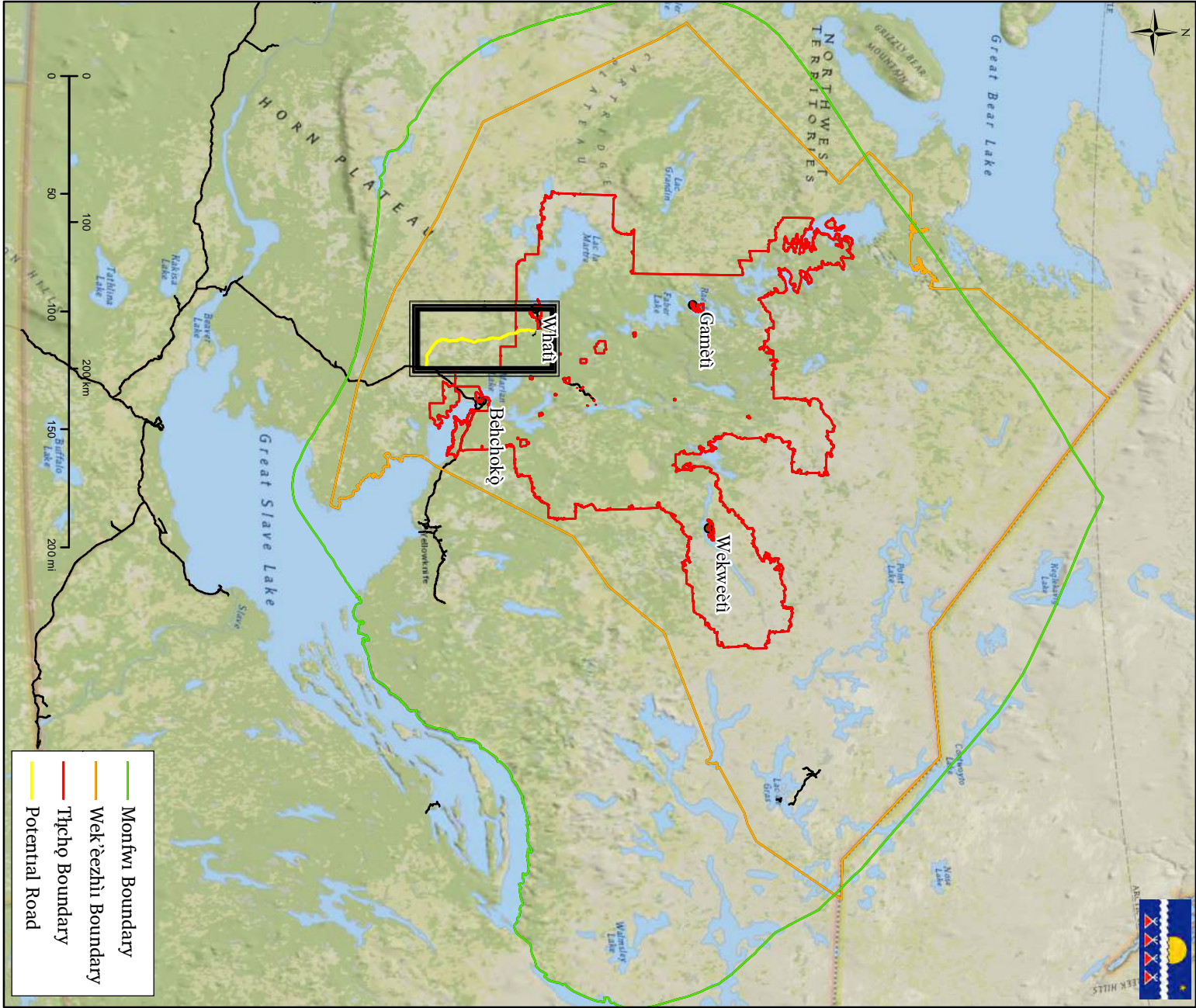
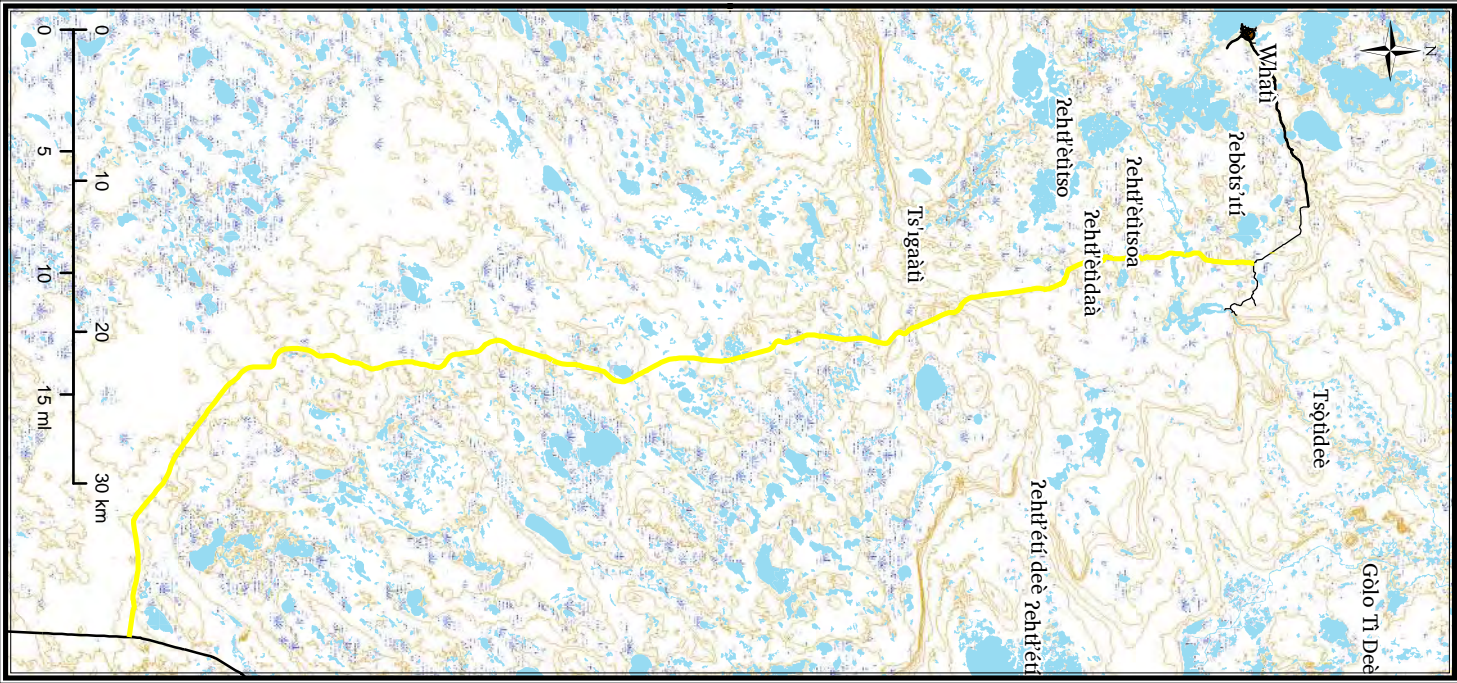
The geographical study area follows the existing trail of K'àngòò ṭḷiì. The research focused first specifically on the trail of K'àngòò ṭḷiì and the immediate surrounding area, and second, on the ties between the local study area and a larger geographic area. As the Ṭḷcḥq̣ travel long ways to harvest a variety of resources on their land, it was important to also focus on a larger geographical scale to understand the relevance of travel routes and animal migration in the study area. This dual focus allowed for an understanding of the functions of the proposed development area in Ṭḷcḥq̣ culture and harvesting economy, both locally and in a larger geographical context.

In Whatì, the elders recorded their knowledge directly onto printed maps (scale 1:85,000 for the larger region and 1:20,000 for specific area around Tsotideè and T'ooheèetèè) during the focus group, individual interviews, and the verification workshop. In Behchoḳò, printed maps were used during the focus group and the verification workshop. For the individual interviews in Behchoḳò, Google Earth was used to record elders' knowledge; where possible an eye-altitude of less than 10 km height was maintained. For the elders who were not comfortable with using Google Earth, printed maps (1:85,000 and 1:20,000) were available. The traditional knowledge documented on the maps was digitized and entered into a GIS (Geographic Information System).

The study focused on the area immediately surrounding K'àngòò ṭḷiì, and its position in a larger geographical context. Therefore, the study was not tied to a specific kilometre count around K'àngòò ṭḷiì, as such an approach would limit the understanding of the study area. By using Google Earth, the elders were able to describe their use of travel routes far from the study area in order to show how they would reach certain sections of the study area. An example of this is Robert Mackenzie's story of entering the southern section of the study area by first traveling northwest of Whatì and following rivers that can take you to Wrigley and Fort Providence (see Section 3.6.3 on beaver and muskrat trapping). Applying a dual focus gave the opportunity to focus on specific details of the road route and on its importance in a larger context.



Map 2: Tlicho Regional Boundaries and Study Area





## 3.0 Research Results

The following section describes areas of importance for the Tłıchq̓. The proposed development area contains locations of cultural value and areas of current land use activities. "Cultural values" refers to any activity, location and/or event that the Tłıchq̓ value and consider important in any way. "Land use" refers to any activity that brings resources such as meat and fur from the land to the Tłıchq̓ harvesters, their families, and communities. These activities make up part of the harvesting economy. This economy is not only about bringing resources from the land to the communities, but also includes cultural activities that reproduce the people's culture. Thus, cultural and economic importance can often be applied to the same activity and location, and are not necessarily separate.

To describe the story of K'àngòò ṯliì, the elders began by following the river Tsotìdeè downstream from Whatì. The following section follows the same travel route and describes the cultural importance and current use of the river.

### 3.1 Cultural Importance and Sacred Sites

#### 3.1.1 Tsotìdeè

The river Tsotìdeè is the main entry point to the entire area southeast of the community. Tsotìdeè starts at the southeastern end of Whatì (Lac la Martre) and runs in an eastward direction towards ʔjhdak'ètì (Marian Lake). At several locations, the river widens out into larger lakes which have specific Tłıchq̓ place names. The river is described as the lifeline to the outside world and is of central importance both in terms of cultural and sacred sites and economic activities. The elders describe the river as a good river, as it provides a secure source of food and resources, and is the main means of communication with the other communities (Map 3: T'ooheèhoteè).

The river is the main transportation route to the other Tłıchq̓ communities. During the winter months, the start of the trail to Behchok̓ follows the river. Several places along the river do not freeze, and the trail follows portages through the forest. During the summer, the boat route to Behchok̓ requires only one long portage and is described as a quick trip (see Map 3: T'ooheèhoteè). During the summer, people travel the river and set camps at various locations along the river.

The place we call Nàḻj̱tì (Falls Lake). This is Bòts'itì (Boyer Lake) and this way is Bòts'itì River and this way is called Hat'ootì. A long time ago Yana's grandfather called Bòà (Paul Little), that was before Yana' was married, they camped here a Nàḻj̱tì. There were a lot of people living in that area. We also lived at Whataàḻj̱ for a short time, but I'm not sure where the camp was. This is Nàḻj̱tì. My brother Philip, my father. At that time my mother was sent south for TB. We lived there in the spring time hunting muskrat.

There was lots of game like that. And here, and over there, we also lived in those places. We lived in tents. There was an old woman named Niza who walked with her hands supporting her on her legs, she also lived with us during spring camp. In

this area, mostly people from Behchokò come to this area. But we ourselves, we travelled to this area by canoe.

Jimmy Nitsiza, February 11, 2014

The river serves as the connection to several important land use areas. From the river, harvesters travel south towards the trapping areas around ʔeht'ètitsa and Tsigaàti for beaver and muskrat trapping in the spring and summer and for furbearing animals during the winter. From the river there is a short portage to ʔeht'ètitsa. During the winter months, harvesters follow the snowmobile route, referred to as Ma tilì, southeast to Ts'otitsa and ʔeht'ètì, for trapping and hunting. The river is thus described by the harvesters as important in itself as a means of communication with the other communities, for harvesting, and as an entry point to other land use areas.

### 3.1.2 Nàlìlì

This section describes the cultural importance and the history of the Nàlìlì waterfalls and the cultural significance of the river Tsotideè (the location of Nàlìlì is indicated as number 1 on Map 4: Culture). The river is considered a good river as it leads to the sacred place of the waterfalls. The Tlìchq word for the waterfalls is Nàlìlì.

We consider that to be a good river. If we go towards that river and make an offering, it gives us a sign with the rainbow. That is what they say. If it doesn't show the rainbow, it is a bad sign, that is what the elders say.

Jimmy Nitsiza, February 11, 2014

The waterfalls and the lake above are considered sacred and special places to be treated with great respect. Their cultural significance lies in the historical accounts of a battle at Whatì between the Chipewyan and the Tlìchq, and the ensuing pursuit ending at Nàlìlì.

You can't go near the falls. I don't know how many hundreds of years ago. My grandmother used to tell me ... my grandmother told me a story, a lot of times she told me about that area of the falls because we had to go through that area often.

There were two boats at the falls. They were trying to kill this person, one of our Tlìchq person. In those days, people knew medicine power. Two big boats full of Chipewyan men they tried to catch him, but this Tlìchq person he knew how to use a paddle. So when he put in the paddle, the boat was just like it's flying. But he always watched behind, to make sure he didn't get close to those two boats. It was a birch bark canoe. And this Tlìchq guy, he heard the rocks in the river, like this, and he knew there was lots of willows over there. So he just grabbed [a willow branch], but those two boats they didn't have a chance to grab the willow branches to stop their boat. So those two boats they went into the waterfalls. The people died, they all drowned. The canoes were all broken. That's why my grandmother told me before, we don't want to go to the falls often, because the falls foretell the future for you.

Michael Romie, February 11, 2014



Prior to the pursuit of the Tłjchq person, the Chipewyan had attacked and killed a group of Tłjchq people at Whatì. The man, who had been collecting birch bark at a location on Tsotideè, was on his way back to the Tłjchq camp when the Chipewyan attackers saw him. In immediate reaction, the man turned around and paddled his birch bark canoe downriver towards the waterfalls. The man's action killed the Chipewyan enemies and thus saved the Tłjchq people from further attacks.

In the old days, the Chipewyan people they all died there. Otherwise we wouldn't be here, they would have killed us all. The Chipewyan were taken away after they died. You can see it in the summer time, on a flat rock, you could see blood, and even now to this day it is still there, the blood.

Benny Jeremick'ca, February 11, 2014

The site where the man held on to the willow branches was on an island in front of the waterfalls. Due to the history of the place, Nàlłtì (Falls Lake) and the waterfalls themselves are considered places of healing. The Tłjchq go there to ask for help and guidance from the waterfalls. People also bring their personal problems and sick people to the waterfalls to be healed.

My father, who lived to be an old man, said that the people in the past used to be very capable with medicine power. One man was very sick, nobody could help him to get better. Do you know about the traditional character Dzèhkw'j ? They tried to heal that sick man with this mythical man, but they couldn't heal him. They also tried medicine power, but they could not heal him with that either.

So, my father told me, the elders said there is a story about the waterfalls so they said, let's bring the man to the waterfalls by the boat. There is one portage to get to the falls, so six people carried him to the falls in a canvas blanket. They spent a night at the waterfalls on the island. The next day they carried him to the waterfalls. There is a white stick there, about this big, and we used to offer something to it for the sick people.

They placed the sick man beside that stick and they pitch up a mosquito net for the sick man and they told him to lie there under it and they would make an offering to the waterfalls of cigarettes, matches and bullets which they threw in the water. The waterfalls made a sign for the person, blue and yellow and a coloured [rainbow] would go on the sick man. After that the mist and the steam of the waterfalls kept going over him while the rest of the men made camp a short distance from him. They made him stay there for about one hour. Then they carried him back and brought him [to Whatì] by boat. After they brought him back by boat he got better, there was nothing wrong with him. That is the story about the waterfalls. That is why my father said, if there is nothing wrong with us, no sickness, we should not ever disturb the waterfalls. If we have a problem we go and see it and make an offering to it. Only go there and pay respect for help, otherwise don't bother going there.




















Jimmy Nitisza, February 11, 2014



**Map 3: T'ooohdeèhotèe**

This map illustrates the geographical context of the study area, highlighting various land use patterns and cultural significance. Key elements include:

- Geographical Features:** Contour lines indicating elevation, water bodies, and a network of roads and trails.
- Place Names:** Labeled locations include Tsòtìdèé, Nàllyùtì, T'shìdigòlì, Tset'ootì, and T'ooohdeèhotèe.
- Inset Map:** Provides a detailed view of the area around Tset'ootì, showing its proximity to water bodies and other landmarks.
- Legend:** Defines symbols for various land use indicators:
  - Barren ground Caribou
  - Woodland Caribou
  - Fishing
  - Fish camp
  - Moose
  - Muskrat / Beaver
  - Waterfowl
  - Bear
  - Sacred Sites
  - Grave site
  - Cabin
  - Camp site
  - Berry picking
  - Boating routes
  - Portage
  - Wood harvesting
  - Winter trapping (Furbearing animals)
  - Summer/spring trapping (Beaver and muskrat)
  - Potential Road

-  Barren ground Caribou
-  Woodland Caribou
-  Fishing
-  Fish camp
-  Moose
-  Muskrat / Beaver
-  Waterfowl
-  Bear
-  Sacred Sites
-  Grave site
-  Cabin
-  Camp site
-  Berry picking
-  Boating routes
-  Portage
-  Wood harvesting
-  Winter trapping  
(Furbearing animals)
-  Summer/spring trapping  
(Beaver and muskrat)
-  Potential Road



The waterfalls are a spiritual place that can foretell peoples' futures. The waterfalls do this through the sign of a rainbow. The colours of the rainbow indicate positive or negative occurrences in one's future. The elders stated that in earlier times, the site was to be visited only on strictly necessary occasions.

Nobody went there, but now it's different. In the old days, no one was allowed to go there because it was sacred. You know the rainbow makes signs for us but now maybe you can't see it.

If you are not going to live long the black rainbow comes then you wouldn't live long. That kind of sign. If you are going to live long there will be all kinds of colours. You are going to live long. That's what you call a sacred place.

In the old days the Chipewyan people they all died there. Yup, otherwise we wouldn't be here, they would have killed us all, so they could make money from our hair.

Benny Jeremick'ca, February 11, 2014

The historical events at Nàl̥l̥ and the people's experiences of healing and foretelling demonstrate the cultural value of the waterfalls for the Tł̥ch̥. A spiritual presence makes the site a place where community members can communicate with the land. Such communication creates and maintains the cultural bond between the land's features, the people, and their history of occupation. The ability of the waterfalls to communicate with the people indicates the current personal agency of the river and the waterfalls. A waterfall, which is seen as an inanimate natural occurrence in mainstream western culture, is for the Tł̥ch̥ a social being. The waterfall is thus an example of how the land is social, holds personal power, and has the ability to communicate with people.

### 3.1.3 Harvesting along Tsot̥deè

The river Tsot̥deè and its many small lakes are of central importance for land use activities such as fishing and hunting for ducks, moose, muskrat, and beavers (Map 3: T'oo̥deèhoteè). Fishing is one of the main cultural and economic activities for people in What̥. Harvesting fish is conducted all year round. At times when meat has not been obtainable, fish has always been a secure and easily accessible food source. The people know which times of the year one can catch specific fish species at specific locations along the river. During the spring and summer, the many islands along Tsot̥deè from What̥ to Nàl̥l̥ti serve as campsites that offer protection from black bears (Map 3: T'oo̥deèhoteè). Large groups of people gather each year on the numerous islands to set fishnets and prepare dry fish for the coming season. In the past, when families had dog teams to support, fishing was a daily activity. Fishing gave the people sustenance enough to maintain the ability to travel, maintain their traplines, and secure meat for their families through hunting.

In the past when we used to travel by dog team, we used to make a cache (d̥eets̥j̥) out on an island some place. There are 365 days in a year so if we have seven or ten dogs, how many caches will we have to make? There would be many! The cache is like a little house, we used to hang fish sticks in them.

Benny Jeremick'ca, February 11, 2014

Bòts'itì (Boyer Lake), southeast of Whatì, and Tsotideè are both important fish habitats. Accordingly, these areas are historically and currently highly used for fish-netting and making dry fish.

This lake up ahead is called Bòts'itì. Boyer Lake? It's not called that. It is called Bòts'itì. Just like "meat lake." In spring, we go fishing over here and make dry-fish on the islands. We make lots of dry fish over here just before the ice melts. We just set tents on these islands. We are cautious of bears, that is why we stay on an island.

Benny Jeremick'ca, February 11, 2014

The river from Whatì to Nàlłtì is actively used for fishing. Certain areas along the river are recognized as specific sites where large populations of white fish or grayling can be caught at certain times of the year.

This is Nàlł here; that is why they call this lake Nàlłtì. There are lots of grayling and white fish here. We go all the way here to go fishing. There are lots of whitefish. There are a lot of white fish in the spring time.

Benny Jeremick'ca, February 11, 2014

We just have a tent frame in that area. I don't know how many kind of fish we net. Sometimes if we want arctic graylings we use Nàlłtì for arctic graylings... all the way to there....right up to Nàlłtì, graylings. All the way to Nàlłtì, we use that for duck hunting too. I don't know how many kinds of fish; like I said, I don't see trout down there. I see white fish, jack fish, suckers, all the way.

Michael Romie, February 11, 2014

The river is also a hunting and trapping area. Hunting for ducks and geese is conducted all along the river from Whatì to Nàlł, and certain locations are known as primary duck hunting areas (see Map 3: T'ooheèhoteè). Hunters search for moose along the shoreline of the river. Many parts of the river are habitat for water plants where moose forage. Further information about moose is given in the following section.

### 3.1.4 T'ooheèhoteè

The existing route of K'àgòò tlıì crosses Tsotideè at a location called T'ooheèhoteè (see Map 3: T'ooheèhoteè). T'ooheèhoteè is a portage site, needed due to the river's fast moving water at that location. The portage at T'ooheèhoteè is used during the winter by snowmobilers and by boaters when the river is open. People often camp at this portage when traveling on the river. An annual canoe trip between the Tłìchq communities, called the Trails of Our Ancestors, often uses this portage as the last camp site before reaching Whatì (Tłìchq Government 1998).

Both sides of the portage at T'ooheèhoteè are recognized as valuable fishing areas. People set fishnets for grayling, suckers, and whitefish at these locations, mainly from May to freeze-up. In August, people fish for grayling that gather at several locations with fast moving water, and particularly in the rapids by T'ooheèhoteè.

## 3.2 The Road Route and River Crossings

### 3.2.1 River Crossing at T'ooheehoteè

The current plan for the all-season road is for a bridge to be built to cross Tsotideè at T'ooheehoteè. The current plan is to construct the bridge west of the portage. The elders made the following points regarding the construction of a bridge:

- A bridge across the river would not have any impact on the various fish populations in the river, as long as the river itself is untouched. The timing of construction should avoid the peak migration periods of certain fish species to reduce the possibility of disturbance.
- The portage at T'ooheehoteè needs to remain intact so that summer travellers using boats and winter travellers using snowmobiles may continue to use the portage.

Predicted impacts on furbearing animals and ungulates and their habitats from the proposed road are described in sections 3.6.4 and 3.7.4.

### 3.2.2 River Crossing at ?eht'ètideè

The river ?eht'ètideè is used for trapping during the winter and summer, and for fishing, mainly for grayling (see Map 5: Harvesting). The current development plan is to build a bridge where K'agòò t̥l̥i crosses the river. The elders stated that a bridge across the river would not cause any impacts on fish populations as long as the river itself is untouched.

## 3.3 Trails

The study area has been traversed by the T̥j̥ch̥q̥ since time immemorial, and numerous overland trails and water routes extend through the study area. The elders identified four main types of travel routes that traverse the study area:

4.0 **?elà etò** is the canoe/boat route that travels east from Whatì along Tsotideè, to Marian River (marked in red on Map 4: Culture). The canoe/boat route is described above in the section regarding Tsotideè.

4.0 **Whaàhdòò etò** refers to Ancestors' trails. The elders refer to the trail from the southwest shore of Marian Lake to Joe Migwi's cabin on K'agòò t̥l̥i, and further southwest towards Ł̥ietì, as an Whaàhdòò etò (marked in green on Map 4: Culture). The elders say that as the trail is deep in the ground, it was a trails and trapline used by old-timers. Currently, the trail is mainly used by trappers from Behchok̥q̥. The route for this trail marked on Map 4 is recorded from elders' memories, and the exact route will be ground-truthed during the winter of 2015.

4.0 **Màa t̥l̥i** is a snowmobile trail from Whatì to Behchok̥q̥ (marked as a dotted red line on Map 4: Culture). This trail is a Whaàhdòò etò (Ancestor trail) and has been used since time immemorial. The trail is mainly used in winter, formerly by dog teams, and currently by snowmobile. The trail follows Tsotideè from Whatì, and from Nàl̥j̥t̥i it goes in a southeast direction to Ts'otitso, to ?eht'ètì, and further to Behchok̥q̥. The elders use the term Màa t̥l̥i to describe the trail as an insiders' trail. Màa t̥l̥i means the trail used by those who know the trails between the



communities. The route for this trail marked on Map 4 is recorded from elders' memories, and the exact route will be ground-truthed during the winter of 2015.

- 4.0 **K'àgòò ṭḷiì** means a tractor trail. There are two tractor trails in the study area: The Old Airport Road from Whatì to Highway 3 is referred to as K'àgòò ṭḷiì, as is the Campbell trail, that goes from Whatì to ʔehṭʔ'èti in an easterly direction (marked in blue on Map 4: Culture). The Campbell trail enters a bay on the south side of the lake opposite from the community of Whatì. The trail, built by a person named Campbell, was used to haul in diesel for only used one season. Today, the trail is used as a snowmobile trail during winter. The trail marked on Map 4 is recorded from elders' memory and the exact location of the route will be ground-truth during winter 2015.

### 3.3.1 Trails and the Proposed Road Route

During the summer, the ʔelà etò route on the river is highly used by the Ṭḷjcḥq who hunt and fish by boat along the river. The canoe route is used every summer for the annual Trails of Our Ancestors canoe trip. During the winter, Maa ṭḷiì is highly used as a skidoo route for travellers between Whatì and Behchoḳq, and by trappers and hunters. These trails demonstrate that the study area is used within a larger geographical context.

The proposed road development project would have a north-south orientation. The main trails, except for K'àgòò ṭḷiì itself, go through the proposed road route mainly in east-west directions. The networks of existing overland trails and water routes, and their orientation should be considered in the development plans. Special designs must allow for safe road crossings where overland skidoo trails and water routes/portages cross the proposed road route.

A potential road will likely increase the use of the existing trail network by harvesters. Pull-outs or platforms could be considered at the access points of these trails, to facilitate access and avoid dangerous situations involving trucks and equipment parked alongside the road.

## 3.4 Ewaashì

A culturally sensitive site is located by the proposed road route (marked as number 2 on Map 4: Culture). The site is sensitive as the elders and harvesters are not sure of the nature of the site, nor of what type of beings or spirits might dwell there. The common Ṭḷjcḥq way of dealing with such places or features is to leave them alone, along with any potential spirits that live there. This approach avoids upsetting and disturbing the place, and avoids the infliction of bad medicine on people who might disturb the place.

The location consists of piles of sand and clay in the shape of cones or tipis, and the surface has a black or brown colour. The area is open with no trees, and during the winter months the snow does not stay on the ground. Francis Simpson shared his experience of the area:

I have seen it. There are no trees there. It is a big round area for a long ways, along the edge of [K'àgòò ṭḷiì]. In this area it is not like that, over there seems to be hills, like ṭʔ'ohshia (small grass hill). Some are not the same, some are like small clay hills, they are round and in a cluster.

We were driving through there at night the first time. It was getting toward evening and I thought I saw something standing out there because there was no snow on them. I thought, how many animals were standing out there, so I stopped the truck to see. My children were with me, they were scared so they didn't say anything. They didn't move for a long time so I thought it was just nothing. When I went back from Behchokò [to Whatì] some days later it was those things. They seemed to be standing on the ground. That was about twenty years ago.

Francis Simpson, February 12, 2014

The location is marked as number 5 on Map 4: Culture, but it is an approximation, as the elders could not pinpoint the exact location on the map. They noted that the site is about a 45-minute drive by truck from Highway 3 on the K'agòò t̥liì towards Whatì. The place does not have a specific name, but the elders came up with the name Ewaashì, due to the occurrence of sand and clay piles. The elders described it as a strange and secret place, where something is.

I've been on that route [K'agòò t̥liì] many times, all the way to the highway... right, I've been that way a lot of times. There's one area that's kind of a secret place but I don't know where the place is from here. Every time we go by this one area, some elders they always tell us when you are driving there, don't talk. I don't know where is the location. I know it's on the mainland. From here it was about at least forty-five minutes from the highway to here, somewhere in that area. It's not a big area, but it's only in that area that you don't talk.

Michael Romie, February 11, 2014

The area consists of unusual natural features and should be respected. The appropriate protocol to follow at the site is to not talk. This protocol applies since people are unsure of the exact nature of what exists at the place.

The people think that there is some spirit there. A long time ago the people used to say, if we saw very different land forms we don't talk because maybe there is something there. If we pass through this area we don't talk.

Jimmy Nitsiza, February 11, 2014.

The elders were reluctant to describe the nature of the place, and thought it would be best to leave the place alone and undisturbed in order to avoid upsetting any potential beings or spirits that might exist at the site.

### 3.5 Burial Sites

Six gravesites have been identified. On Map 4: Culture, the gravesites are identified as follows:

- A. Laiza Jeremick'ca's grandmother. The grave is on the north side of Tsotideè at a bay on the west side of Bòts'itì.
- B. Jimmy B. Rabesca's grandmother. The grave is on the north side of Tsotideè at a bay on the west side of Bòts'itì.
- C. Zize Mantla. He was Laiza Mackenzie's father. The grave is located on west side of ʔeht'ètitsò.
- D. The father of Yame, from Whatì. This is a grave of an old-timer and the elders did not know his name. The grave is by the portage between ʔeht'ètitsò and ʔeht'ètidaà.
- E. Unidentified grave.
- F. Unidentified grave.

Burial sites are an important link for the Tłjchq to their land. The Tłjchq revisit burial sites to pray to the person who is buried there. The spirits of the buried person still dwell in the area, and the Tłjchq communicate with their family members through prayers at these places. Through this communication, the land becomes a social sphere within which one's family members and friends still live. Many features on the land are living entities where certain spirits live and watch over the land. Communication with these spirits is highly important for the Tłjchq as they travel through their land. These spirits watch over the people and are asked for help in various situations. Through communication and the performance of certain ceremonies, the land becomes alive on a social level; it is part of the people's past and future connections to being a part of the land. The significance of burial sites for the people demonstrates a level of connection between the Tłjchq and their land.

No burial sites were identified in immediate proximity to the proposed development area. Graves were most often located by open water and rivers. The proposed road route follows a trail mostly through the forest and areas not normally chosen as burial grounds.

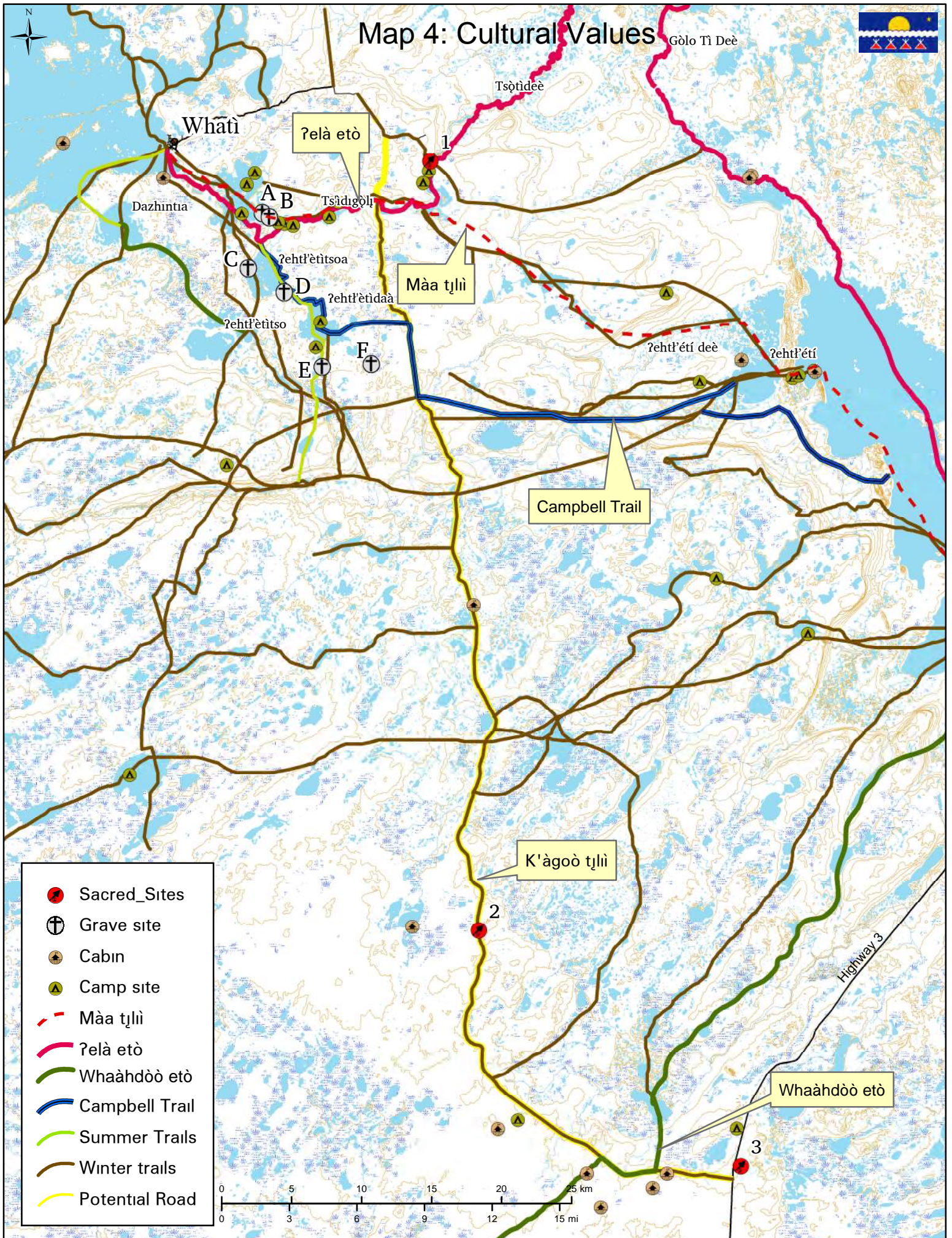
### 3.6 Kweyì igoèàà Wets'ats'idì

The elders from Behchokò described a location of cultural sensitivity about 40 km south of Edzo on Highway 3 (marked as number 3 on Map 4: Culture). On the opposite side from the turnoff to K'agòò t̥lìi on Highway 3 is a trail going east, and following the trail for about 5 minutes leads to a special rock feature. The rock feature is described as a cave with a rock bridge over it. A person can walk into and under the rock formation, as well as over it on the rock bridge. The word Kweyìgoèàà means cave or tunnel and the word Wets'ats'idì means pay respect to.

The site is spiritual in nature and people go there to pray and pay respect to the location by leaving gifts such as tobacco or coins. The elders did not recall an origin story for the area, but noted that the place is valuable and needs to be treated with respect. The elders do not want people to go there, except for the purpose of paying respect, and suggested to close off the trail to avoid sightseeing.



# Map 4: Cultural Values





## 3.7 Harvesting

The elders' knowledge of the land and each animal species derives from their intimate relationship of living with the land and more specifically their practices of hunting, trapping, and travelling to various locations to harvest different resources at each season of the year. This section describes the elders' knowledge and relationships with the animals they harvest, and the potential impacts of an all-season road on the animals and their habitat, and on Tłıchq harvesting practices and way of life.

This section describes the harvesters' modes for acquiring resources in the study area. The existing trail of K'agòò t̥lìi is a harvesting area itself, and is used by harvesters to enter other hunting and trapping regions, specifically locations south of their communities. Following the cut trail through the forest, harvesters have cleared new trails from K'agòò t̥lìi to the east and to the west.

### 3.7.1 Trapping

There are two modes of trapping conducted in the study area. First, during the spring and summer, trappers access ponds and lakes which can be navigated by boat or canoe, and set traps for muskrat and beavers, and second, during the winter, community members trap for furbearing animals such as marten, lynx, and wolverine (see Map 5: Harvesting).

### 3.7.2 Trapping for Furbearing Animals

This section describes trapping for furbearing animals during the winter. Trappers follow the numerous trails from Whatì and Behchok̥ through the forest by snowmobile, previously using dog teams. K'agòò t̥lìi is used as a snowmobile trail during the winter to access the numerous lakes on both east and west sides of the trail. Traps are set along the trail and along the shores of these lakes.

I went trapping up [K'agòò t̥lìi] two times a couple of years ago. There was not very much martin and lynx. I went trapping twice there for two years.

I started from Whatì. This is a lined area, there's another cutline going in. This is Whatì, there is a small island here, there used to be a tractor road [Old Campbell road] going all the way along the shore and I went through here. There's an old tractor trail along here...old cut-line. We used that to get to [K'agòò t̥lìi], and then along that way.

There's a little pond there, and from there we go here. There's a big lake, we go through there just to see if there were fish there but there was nothing. We trapped all the way to the lake, and from near here someplace to look at this lake. There was flat ground, not full of bushes. We looked around over there but there were no tracks on east side [K'agòò t̥lìi], nothing.

Yeah, just to look around for marten and lynx tracks. There were no tracks or anything so we didn't bother. We just caught a few maybe four or five marten, not very much. Some say we don't go all over the place, but all my life I have been trapping all over and I never stop even to this day. I still go out.

Benny Jeremick'ca, February 11, 2014



The main trapping season is from November to December, though some individuals continue throughout the later winter months. The abundance of furbearing animals fluctuates, with large populations in some years, and smaller populations in others. In discussions about trapping, trappers often joke about trapping for mice because where there are lots of mice, there will be lots of marten. Thus, trappers tend to look for signs of mice to estimate the amount of marten in an area. A major factor that influences the size of furbearing populations is forest fires. In the summer of 2014, forest fires destroyed large tracts of the study area, and left many traplines bare.

In winter, trappers often travel over water bodies on snowmobile. Trails and portages are cut between the lakes, which makes traveling in a forested landscape faster. Traplines are often set on the north side of lakes to avoid the possibility of the north wind covering the traps with snow.

Pond to pond, we don't usually go on the land that often. Mostly for martens. I go on ʔehtl'ètisoa too just around the area, all the way around this area. Mostly we go on the north side of lakes: this way if you trap you don't want to go against the north when it's blowing snow, it will cover all the traps and everything. That's how we trap.

Michael Romie, February 11, 2014

Trappers follow the K'àgòò t̥liì and run traplines on small trails they make that run for about one kilometre off each side of the K'àgòò t̥liì.

I would drive on [K'àgòò t̥liì], and when I would see marten tracks, I would set a trap for it. There was lots of lynx and marten tracks, so we trap for them there. Around this small lake, I caught a wolverine in my trap. I used to go to a lot of places. We have to walk a ways off of K'àgòò t̥liì to set our traps.

So, I have been along [K'àgòò t̥liì], many times. There were a lot of rabbits, lynx and wolverines around that area, and once with another person along I shot a woodland caribou by a small lake.

Jimmy Nitsiza, February 11, 2014

The harvesters hunt and fish for food while they are on the trapline. Fish nets are set at certain lakes, and in winter, fish nets are set under the ice. Usually the holes through the ice are made relatively soon after freeze-up, while the ice is not too thick. Fishing supplies a stable source of fresh food while the harvesters are on the traplines for weeks or months. The lakes K'ishitì (Lac Levis) and Łietì are noted as good fishing locations.

Important areas for trappers from Behchokò are those along the trails from ʔehtl'ètì (James Lake) to Tsigaàtì, to Weghalaàtq̄daàtì, and further, to K'ishitì in the southwest. This route was historically highly used by trappers travelling with dog teams. Robert Mackenzie's father Sizèh (Joseph) held a trapline along that route. Mowhi trapped along the route and Sizèh used to follow him. The area was recognized for its stable population of furbearing animals, as well as hunting other animal populations such as woodland caribou.

Fox, mink, marten, wolverine, any kind of fur bearing animals. We kill whatever we see, like wolves and even bears. In winter, if we come upon a bear while hunting it is in its den. There are many caribou there, lots of woodland caribou.

Robert Mackenzie, 18, February 2014

The interconnected trail system intersperses the entire study area. Traplines have been set from Whatì and Behchokò all the way to Edeèzhì (Horn Plateau). During the winter, trappers from Whatì generally use the following areas: (1) east from Whatì along Bòts'itì and Tsotìdèè towards ?eht'ètì (James Lake), following Maa tilì; (2) south along the water system from Bòts'itì to ?eht'ètìtsoa and to Tsigaàtì, and further south to Weghààtòqdaàtì; and (3) south along K'agòò tìlì where traplines are run on both east and west sides of the trail (Map 5: Harvesting). Harvesters from Whatì trap about halfway down K'agòò tìlì.

For many years, my friend the late Joe Romie and I went to the Bòts'itì area and inland. We were trapping at the time as far as Tsigaàtì. Sometimes we would shoot a woodland caribou. There were a lot of woodland caribou and moose. There were lots and lots of rabbit tracks and fur bearing animals. Before our time, the late Jimmy Nitsiza trapped for many years there. He used to go very far, across from Behchokò by himself. He would get seventy or eighty furs before Christmas. I don't know where he used to go but it was very far.

A long time ago people used to travel and camp out in one or two spruce huts anywhere in the bush by themselves, not always in large groups because there was always the danger of being attacked. That used to happen in these areas around this lake and it must have been the same over there. My late grandmother and grandfather used to tell me stories like that.

Francis Simpson, February 12, 2014

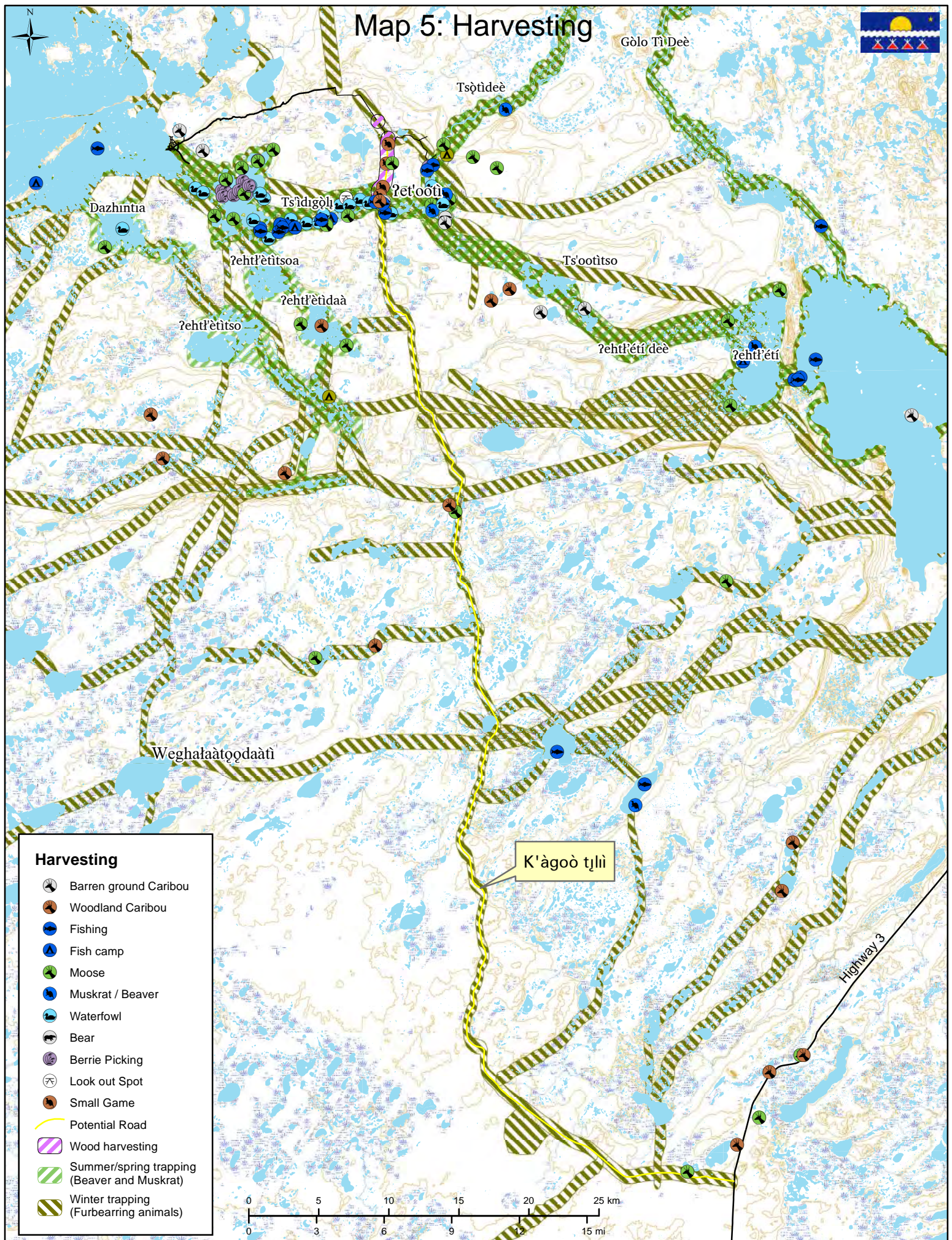
The southern part of the K'agòò tìlì, from Tsigaàtì to Highway 3, and the surrounding area are utilized mostly by trappers from Behchokò. A strategic point for the trappers is a cabin built by Joe Migwi, located along K'agòò tìlì a few kilometres west of Highway 3. The cabin serves as base and as a landmark for trappers and hunters. There are also others cabins in close proximity to Joe Migwi's cabin.

The main trapping areas (see Map 5: Harvesting) for the trappers from Behchokò generally are: (1) from ?eht'ètì (James Lake) to Tsigaàtì, to Weghààtòqdaàtì and further southwest to K'ishitì (Lac Levis); and (2) the trails from the southwest shore of ?hðak'ètì (Marian Lake) following the numerous lakes and ponds to Joe Migwi's cabin on K'agòò tìlì. From Joe Migwi's cabin the traplines follow K'agòò tìlì north to ?eht'ètìdèe. Several traplines have been made going both eastward and westward from K'agòò tìlì, to numerous smaller lakes and ponds (see Map 5: Harvesting).

Trails and traplines run west from the K'agòò tìlì to Weghààtòqdaàtì, and from the K'agòò tìlì to Łietì. These are important as the trails connect with other trails in a westward direction towards K'ayetìdèè (Horn River) and Edeèzhì (Horn Plateau). In the past, harvesters would travel through the study area to their traplines close to Edeèzhì. In those areas, they interacted with people from Dehcho.



## Map 5: Harvesting





### 3.7.3 Beaver and Muskrat Trapping

A long time ago, when old Chief Jimmy Bruneau and the Indian Agent were still alive, they asked Chief Jimmy Bruneau to let the beaver be put in the lakes. The old chief said yes, so the beaver were put in the lakes and spread into our area.

Robert Mackenzie, 18, February 2014

The elders say that historically beavers did not exist in the study area, nor in the larger Tłıchq region. The only place they knew of where beavers existed was south towards Fort Providence. After the beavers were introduced in the 1940-50s, most of the rivers, lakes, and ponds in the study area became habitat for beaver and muskrat (Map 6: Animal Habitat). The main season for trapping beaver and muskrat is spring. Harvesters usually go with smaller canoes in order to be able to portage more easily and access smaller lakes and ponds. The river Tsotideè is a popular area for beaver and muskrat trapping, along the entire length from Whatì to ʔıhdak'ètì (Marian Lake). The area from Bòts'itì to Nàłıjtì is also an important habitat for beavers and muskrat. A short portage south from Tsotideè leads trappers to ʔeht'ètisoa and ʔeht'ètidaà. Subsequent portages lead the trappers to ʔeht'ètitso and to Tsigaàti and Tsigaàtideè (see Map 5: Harvesting). The entire water system is well known as beaver and muskrat habitat and thus harvesters trap along these shores every year. From ʔeht'ètì, trappers follow the numerous small lakes and the river ʔeht'ètideè towards Tsigaàti.

We usually follow the streams and rivers. There are muskrat push-ups in all of them. This is ʔeht'ètì (James Lake), there are lots of muskrat there. Many rivers flow into it. We traveled all over here hunting muskrat. It's a big lake.

Robert Mackenzie, 18, February 2014

The area located southwest of Joe Migwi's cabin used to be an important trapping area for beaver and muskrat. The numerous lakes and ponds around Łietì have been preferable trapping locations. To reach this area by boat, the harvesters travel from Whatì to the northeast corner of Marten Lake, then to Xanaàti (Clive Lake), and then follow the river Ts'ıhtsodeè (Willow Lake River) which leads to Wrigley, and to the river K'àyetideè (Horn River) which flows south to Fort Providence.

From Whatì to that Xanaàti, my father said there are three small lakes there. From Xanaàti the river flows to Ts'ıhtsodeè (Willow Lake River) then all the way out to near Wrigley) where Joe Boots' house is. There's only one portage to there called Enakat'ò, going over the rock. That is the only portage.

Robert Mackenzie, 18, February 2014

Ts'ıhtsodeè leads harvesters to the river K'àyedeè, and from there, they are able to trap by the lakes around Kayeti and Łietì. Robert Mackenzie, who originally is from Whatì, described the trips they would take from Whatì to K'àyedeè as long and slow, as they camped for days to skin and dry the beaver and muskrat they caught. In the 1950s, trappers travelled to K'àyedeè as there was hardly any beaver in the Tłıchq region. Six people usually travelled together, using three canoes and two people in each canoe.

We just took our time hunting beaver and muskrat then in the evening we dried the skins. We would shoot twenty or thirty muskrat and skin them. There were hardly any groceries so we would prepare and smoke all the fat beaver and muskrat meat to eat and to take along on our trips. When we shot beaver we would pack lots of fat beaver meat, beaver tails. So it was good to get all that meat but then we did not travel fast.

Robert Mackenzie, 18, February 2014

On these trips they met people from Wrigley or from Fort Providence, as K'àyetideè runs out in the Mackenzie River close to Fort Providence. Historically, people from Whatì and Behchokò used to trap and hunt along the river to Fort Providence, and also often used boat routes to other communities such as Fort Simpson and Wrigley, particularly during times of scarcity. On these trips, people hunted and trapped along the way.

### **3.7.4 Predicted Impacts on Furbearing Animals and Trapping**

The elders speak passionately about their travels and experiences on the land. Their personal experiences on the land are the foundation of their knowledge, and they state that their words are true since they have seen it with their own eyes. They refer to what they have already seen, experienced, and know and subsequently predict the impacts to those experiences resulting from the proposed all-season road to Whatì.

Many of the elders worked on the construction of Highway 3, both from Behchokò to Fort Providence, and from Behchokò to Yellowknife. Before the construction of Highway 3 from Behchokò to Yellowknife, there was a sustainable population of furbearing animals and other animal populations in that area, and many families lived and earned a livelihood from trapping and hunting along that route. Comparing current observations of animals to those made in the years prior to the construction of Highway 3, the elders conclude that animal populations along the road have scattered and declined. The elders predict that similar impacts will occur to the existing animal populations along K'àgòò tìlì, stating that an all-season road will cause negative impacts on furbearing animals and their habitat along the road. Specifically, they note that noise, dust, and smells from an all-season road will scare away furbearing animals such as marten, lynx and wolverine.

In the case of the road, if the people went back to where they know there are animals they will find empty places, the animals will be gone. The noise from the road travels and carries far.

Whatì harvester, February 12, 2014

These negative impacts will indirectly affect the people, who depend on the animals; a decline in the furbearing population will have adverse effects on the maintenance of successful traplines in the area. One of the trappers asked how he would be compensated if his trapline became worthless because the animals were scared away. His concern is for the sustainability of trapping as a source of income, and for the continuance of the traditional way of life.

The young men still go hunting and trapping, and practice the traditional way of life. With a road, animals will go, then what will happen? There will be traffic day and night. Buffalo

will come in, and moose and woodland caribou are very disturbed by buffalo. The traffic will scare away the animals, and we cannot continue to trap in that area.

Whatì harvester, August 14, 2014

The elders and harvesters did not foresee any positive impacts from an all-season road on furbearing animals and their habitat, nor to trapping and its way of life.

## 3.8 Hunting

This section describes Tłıchq hunting practices for ungulates inhabiting the study area, such as moose, woodland caribou, and barren-ground caribou. To be able to successfully provide country foods for one's family, a hunter needs to acquire and maintain knowledge of each species they hunt, their habitat preference at various times of the year, and their migration routes from year to year; this information allows the hunter to be able to predict where to find animals on their next hunt. This section describes hunters' knowledge of each species and the related hunting practices, as well as the predicted impacts of an all-season road on ungulates, their habitat, and Tłıchq hunting practices.

### 3.8.1 Barren-Ground Caribou

Barren-ground caribou migrate through the study area on an annual migration route from the barren lands to their winter habitat in the forest (Map 6: Animal Habitat). They enter the study area during the winter months, from November to March, and the herds feed in the forest until they start the migration northward in March and April to the calving grounds on the barren lands. The elders stated that barren-ground caribou frequently used the area before, but during recent years hardly any barren-ground caribou have been observed.

Oh boy there were lots! In '98, '97 and '96 in [Tsotideè] it used to be packed with caribou, all over, you can see them. People just went out and shoot, shoot, shoot. They went through [Whatì] too, at one time. There used to be lots but now they're all gone.

They call that ʔeht'ètidee (James River), it goes through here. The trail is a steep slope. It is probably because it is a nqđì [plateau] that is why it is steep. At one time (15 – 20 years ago) there use to be lots of barren land caribou here. There were lots but now they don't show up.

Benny Jeremick'ca, February 11, 2014

Harvesters observed barren-ground caribou around Kàèlǵ (Marian Village) and ʔıhdak'ètì (Marian Lake). The caribou migrate west from ʔıhdak'ètì to ʔeht'ètì and further west into the study area (Map 6: Animal Habitat). Harvesters mainly hunted barren-ground caribou at Bòts'itì, and from Tsotideè along the trail past Ts'otitso to ʔeht'ètì (Map 5: Harvesting).

When I was returning to Whatì from Behchokò I saw Francis Mackenzie chasing [barren-ground] caribou around Ts'otitso. It was warm in the spring time. I think he shot about three caribou. I shot three caribou for him. There were a lot of caribou at



that time. It was around 1996, 1995, the caribou were here and the people from Rae used to go there, a one day trip.

Benny Jeremick'ca, February 11, 2014

The elders have observed fewer barren-ground caribou migrating into the study area. Several factors were mentioned as the reasons for the change of migration routes, all of which are related to development on the barren lands and on the wintering grounds: the mines on the barren land, the traffic on the winter-roads, and the construction of Snare River hydro and the connected power lines that cut through the forest and the caribou migration routes.

I shot caribou around here, near Ts'otitso. At one time the [barren ground] caribou used to spend the whole winter there. Here at Ts'otitso. There used to be caribou around this lake. I shot caribou here around 1985. The caribou used to go there, they don't go there now.

Even close to Whatì. At one time there were always lots of caribou around this place here. Today the caribou do not come to our area. They stopped coming.

Francis Simpson, February 12, 2014

The hunters say they have observed changes in the barren-ground caribou migration routes since the 1990s. Furthermore, fewer barren-ground caribou herds migrate into and forage in the forest around K'agòò t̥l̥i than before.

### 3.8.2 Woodland Caribou

Woodland caribou are smarter than any other animal, smarter than the caribou and the moose.

Michael Romie, February 11, 2014

The woodland caribou is described as an intelligent and secretive animal. The herds are usually small and hard to track and hunt. Elders explained the necessity for long hikes through deep snow to be able to hunt woodland caribou. The animals are described as intelligent because they care for their bodies.

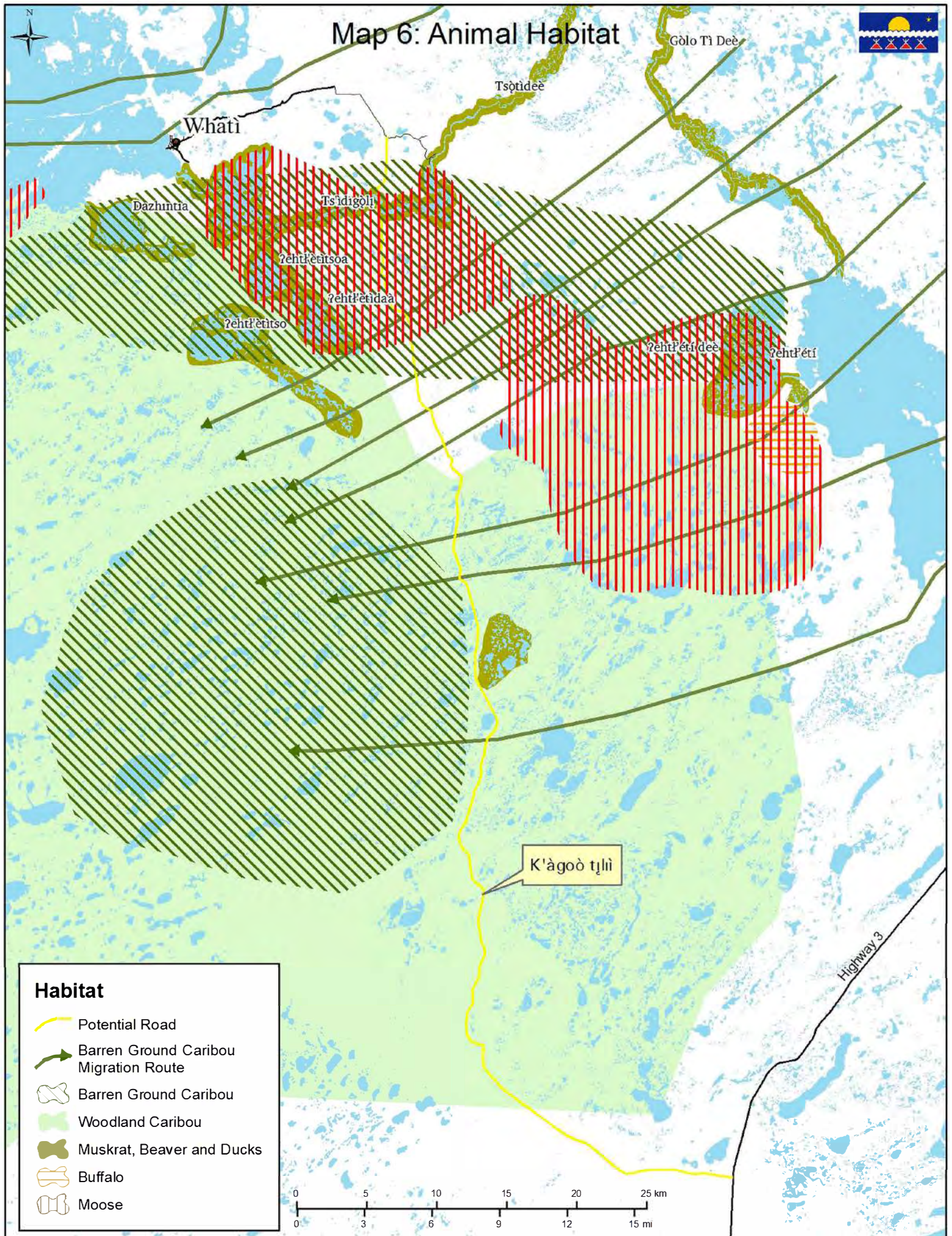
In the past the elders were talking about it in the spring time, most woodland caribou at the time when the ice and the snow is melting, they always watch their legs and both sides of their feet. How did the elders say? "They care for their leg bones."

Michael Romie, February 11, 2014

The woodland caribou are intelligent in the way they are careful about how they travel and leave tracks. Hunters have experienced walking in circles while tracking them, and at times woodland caribou will follow in the tracks made by the hunters. The hunters say that in earlier times, there was more snow which made walking in the deep snow more strenuous, and woodland caribou would follow in the footsteps of the hunters, where it was less exhausting to walk. The animals are sensitive to noise and activities, and their alert senses and intelligence makes them hard to hunt.



# Map 6: Animal Habitat





If there is a noise, they always take off from where the noise is. They are always like that. Like us people. I always hunt. I am always harvesting animals. Most woodland caribou are smarter than caribou or moose. Not many people kill those woodland caribou: they are smart, they're secretive.

Michael Romie, February 11, 2014

The elders describe woodland caribou as darker as and larger than the barren-ground caribou, and as having different hoofs: the hoofs of the woodland caribou have a pointed shape, while barren-ground caribou have a rounder shape. Woodland caribou move throughout the entire study area, but the elders locate their main habitat in the centre of the study area, and mainly west of K'agòò t̬l̬i̬ (Map 6: Animal Habitat). The areas south of Bòts'it̬i̬ around the lake Ethletitso and the smaller lakes west of Tsigat̬i̬ towards What̬i̬ are identified as key woodland caribou habitat. The hunters mainly travel to these areas to hunt woodland caribou.

### 3.8.3 Moose

Moose share many of the same habitat preferences as woodland caribou, with the exception that they prefer areas around lakes and ponds with grass and leaves to feed on. On warm days during the summer months, moose can be observed walking in the shallow sections of lakes or sitting fully immersed in water.

In the summer when we walk in the bush you could see all the ponds with green grass, that's where the moose stay.

Benny Jeremick'ca, February 11, 2014

Hunters say one can find moose anywhere on the land, but moose prefer areas along shallow lakes where they can feed on willows, sedges, and plants that grow in the shallow water. These natural features are key habitat components for moose populations. East of ʔeht'èt̬itsoa toward ʔeht'èt̬ideè is key moose habitat. Also, moose frequently use the south side of What̬i̬, sharing the same habitat as woodland caribou. Moose hunting locations exist around the shore of Bòts'it̬i̬ and along both sides of Tsoit̬ideè. Moose tend not to travel too far inland but prefer areas around open water. In the fall, hunters mainly use boats along the shoreline of lakes and rivers to search for moose.

### 3.8.4 Predicted Impacts on Ungulates and Hunting

The elders and harvesters are concerned about the potential impacts of the proposed all-season road on the animals they hunt and their habitat. Any impacts on the ungulates inhabiting the area along the proposed road route will subsequently have adverse effects on hunters' ability to hunt in the area. Consequently, impacts on animals would affect both the local hunting economy and the cultural practices related to being on the land.

As mentioned above, the elders say their words are true as they reflect what they have seen with their own eyes. The elders referred to Highway 3 from Behchok̬ to Yellowknife as an example of a development with impacts they have observed. Prior to the construction of the highway the elders often



observed and hunted animals in the area. After the construction of the road, the elders hardly ever observed animals along the highway.

The area surrounding the proposed road route maintains populations of ungulates such as moose, woodland caribou, and barren-ground caribou. These existing animal populations would be scared away by the noise, dust, smell, and pollution from the road construction and by the continuous traffic on the road.

If the road is constructed, this is what I think: if things are being transported by trucks, gravel and dust will be spread out all over the place. Hunting and trapping will disappear. Those of us who are elders don't want that to happen.

Whatì harvester, February 11, 2014

Another impact the elders experienced from Highway 3 is the introduction of new animal populations. The elders are concerned that the construction of an all-season road will develop new types of habitat along the road and open up the area for new animal populations. As they have experienced along Highway 3 from Fort Providence to Yellowknife, bison will most likely follow the proposed road route from Highway 3 towards Whatì. The main concern regarding bison is the potential conflict between bison and the woodland caribou and moose that currently inhabit the area. Moose and especially woodland caribou avoid bison, due to its smell. Elders stated that current ungulate populations inhabiting the area of the proposed road would move away due to noise, dust and pollution from an all-season road, and the introduction of new animal populations such as bison.

The changes to the abundance and the migration routes of barren-ground caribou were also a concern. Other traditional knowledge studies (Tłıchq Research and Monitoring Program 2013, Tłıchq Research and Training Institute 2013) have reported changes in the barren-ground caribou migration routes from the barren lands to the winter habitat areas since the 1990s. The conclusions from these studies are echoed in the words of the elders in Whatì: increased development on caribou habitat has critical impacts on the migration patterns and abundance of barren-ground caribou. The harvesters have personally experienced this change in the recent years, and have needed to travel further north towards Grandin Lake and Gamètì to be able to hunt barren-ground caribou (Jacobsen 2011).

The elders' concern stems from the uncertainty of the sustainability of their hunting and trapping economy and way of life that would be introduced if animal populations declined -- or in the worst case, disappeared -- from the area around K'àgòdò t̥lìi. The elders emphasized that people live off the land and that the land provides for the people in terms of food, materials, and well-being. The land is referred to as a 'store' or a 'bank' where harvesters can go and secure resources to support their families. A road could jeopardize the stability of available animals in the 'store'.

They said this water is very, very good and along the lake shore and along the rivers going inland there are many beaver, woodland caribou, moose, and bear. There is no lack of anything, also there is good fish in the lake. Thinking about it, it is like having a big hunting bag full of fish which we live on.

But if the road is constructed, what is going to happen to the wildlife. The white people are going to make cabins all along the lake and take out all the fish and we who are living here are going to be poor. The elders say we don't pay to eat fish from the lake.

We eat whatever we want from it. Even yourself if you put a hook into the lake, within fifteen minutes you will catch a fish, even in less than fifteen minutes you will catch a fish.

Even now, though there is no road going into the community, sometimes things are really bad. The youth are making each other go astray. It is really awful, so if the road comes it is going to be worse.

Whatì harvester, February 11, 2014

Concerns were expressed about cabins being built along the proposed road route. New cabins built by outsiders will involve increased use of the trails and increased pressure on local animal and fish populations. The elders emphasized the need for regulations over construction of cabins and regulations for outsiders hunting, trapping, and fishing in the area, in order to minimize impacts on local animal populations.

The elders and harvesters did not identify any positive impacts from an all-season road to the ungulates such as moose, woodland caribou, and barren-ground caribou inhabiting the area surrounding the proposed road route, nor to hunting and its way of life being on the land.

### **3.9 Predicted Impacts on Whatì Community**

The reasons for road construction and the potential impacts of an all-season road were discussed at length among the elders. There is a general opposition among the elders and harvester in this study to the all-season road, due to the potential for negative impacts on animals and the environment. One elder from Behchokò said an all-season road might be useful in the future, since the milder winters are causing unsafe ice for the winter road, and low water levels could create problems for river travel. During individual interviews, the elders and harvesters did not mention any benefits from the construction of an all-season road to Whatì. The main points of concern were the uncertainties a potential road would bring to the community and to their way of life.

We are living here, it's peaceful, we don't need to lock the door when you go to sleep or you don't have to take all your keys out of all your machines that are around your house. Once they build a road, I don't think it's ever going to be the same because the elders in the past didn't talk about an all-season road: they didn't want a road. I thought about that too, because we have gone this far without a road. People have everything that they want, all their supplies, all their dry goods, whatever they needed for their house, everything is brought through the winter road.

Whatì harvester, February 11, 2014

The elders often refer to what they have experienced. They brought up the social problems introduced in Behchokò after the road was constructed to that community. They are concerned that a similar situation will occur in Whatì if an all-season road is constructed.

Religion is getting weak and money is getting stronger. If road and mine comes, it will be worse. Then we won't continue our traditional lifestyle. We don't want it to be like Rae in our community.

Whatì harvester, August 14, 2014

The elders recalled previous discussions in Whatì regarding construction of an all-season road to the community. The previous chiefs, Louis Beaulieu and Jimmy Moosenose, decided not to build a road. One of the reasons was that there was no perceived need for it; there is only one portage between Whatì and Behchokò, this does not cause any problems for travelling between the communities.

If game doesn't come to the road maybe it's because they have all died. So when I think about the road construction I think it shouldn't be done. When I look back, when Jimmy Moosenose and Louis Beaulieu were Chiefs, both of them, there was funding two times (for the road), but they said no to it: they said no even when the funding came for the road. Of those leaders none are still alive. At that time when they refused the funding they all gathered at Louis Beaulieu's house. This is what [the old chiefs] said, "We have only one waterfall, just one portage [between Whatì and Behchokò], and we are not suffering because of it".

In the past, even though there was no winter road, we used to come to [Behchokò] with dog teams and we could always carry our gear and goods over the portage. Now the road has come to us and no game will come to our side of the road.

Whatì harvester, February 11, 2014

The elders emphasized the close proximity of Whatì to Behchokò. Throughout the discussions, the main point was repeated that the river is the road, and that only one portage to get from Whatì to Behchokò where one could purchase groceries or travel further on to Yellowknife or Edmonton.

In the summertime, you can use the river to go to Behchokò. Whatever you want to buy there is only a short portage away.

Whatì harvester, February 11, 2014

## 4.0 Overview of Concerns

1. Noise, dust, and contamination from the proposed road will scare animal populations away from the area surrounding the road route, creating a potential decline/disappearance of animal populations.
2. A decline of furbearing animal populations will negatively impact the trapping economy and way of life.
3. Compensation must be made available to trappers if furbearing animals disappear from their traplines.
4. Construction of an all-season road will introduce new animals into the area.



5. New animal populations such as bison could scare away the existing animals such as moose and woodland caribou.
6. Concerns exist over a potential decline/disappearance of woodland caribou populations.
7. It may become increasingly difficult to hunt woodland caribou and moose, and bring meat home to one's family.
8. The road may bring increased pressure from outside hunters on local animal populations such as woodland caribou, barren ground caribou, and moose.
9. Increased pressure to the various fish populations may result from an increased number of outsiders fishing in Tsotideè and Whatì.
10. The construction of new cabins along the road will mean increased traffic by ATVs and snowmobiles on existing trails.
11. Concerns exist over who has authority over the road, as most of the current road route is outside of Tłjchq private lands:
  - Who will have the authority to implement regulations and check stops on the road?
  - Will the Tłjchq Government or the Government of Northwest Territories have authority over the road outside of Tłjchq private lands?
12. Fears exist about the contamination of the environment from potential spills on the road.
13. Concerns exist over increased exploration and the possibility of discovery of new mineral or oil and gas deposits:
  - Concerns over the possibility of the establishment of new mines.
  - Concerns over the possibility of more development in wildlife habitat and preferred harvesting areas.
14. There may be an increase in the number of outsiders moving to Whatì.
15. There may be reduced safety and security in the community.
16. The road might result in increased access to drugs and alcohol in the community.
17. The road may facilitate increased out-migration of community members.
18. Whatì may experience social problems similar to those experienced in Behchokò.

## 5.0 Mitigations

The following mitigation measures focus on categories identified by the elders, including environmental monitoring, regulations, response plans, cultural programs, compensation, and trail networks. These mitigation measures are meant to deal with some of the negative impacts identified in this study.

Categories	Mitigations
<b>5.1 Environmental Monitoring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>19. Develop a systematic environmental monitoring program during construction and operation of the road.</li> <li>20. Develop an environmental monitoring database. Data from the environmental monitors should feed into existing research on effects of roads on wildlife and environment.</li> <li>21. Secure funding for the continuation and expansion of the community-based training program in Whatì for local young community members to be educated and hired as environmental monitors.</li> </ul>
<b>5.2 Regulations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>22. Develop hunting and trapping regulations that minimize outsiders' access to and harvesting pressure on local animal populations.</li> <li>23. Impose a no hunting and trapping zone in the immediate area along both sides of the road.</li> <li>24. Develop fishing restrictions to minimize outsiders' access to and pressure on fish populations, especially at important fishing locations such as Tsotideè, T'ooheèhoteè and Whatì.</li> <li>25. Develop regulations for construction of cabins, especially by non-Tłıchq persons.</li> <li>26. Develop regulations for wood harvesting along the road.</li> <li>27. Coordinate Tłıchq Government and GNWT efforts to develop land management regulations regarding hunting, fishing, trapping, cabins, and wood harvesting on the section of the road outside of Tłıchq lands.</li> <li>28. Develop strategies to mitigate impacts from increased exploration and prospecting in the region for minerals and oil and gas deposits.</li> </ul>
<b>5.3 Response Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>29. Develop a response plan in case of spills or other environmental emergencies along the road, from Whatì and from Edzo, or closest facility.</li> <li>30. Develop emergency plans in case of accidents on road, including a rest stop with a direct phone line to RCMP/ hospital/ search and rescue.</li> </ul>

<b>5.4 Cultural Programs</b>	<p>31. Implement programs to encourage and help finance trapping as a livelihood.</p> <p>32. Provide consistent funding and implement cultural programs to teach young generations about hunting, trapping, and fishing. A focus should be on elder – youth relationships and the passing of knowledge of the land and cultural practices.</p>
<b>5.5 Compensation</b>	<p>33. Appropriate compensation should be given to trappers who use the area around K’àngò ṭḷi. Some trappers have individual traplines in the area that they use every season; these trappers will have to cut new traplines in other areas.</p>
<b>5.6 Trail network</b>	<p>34. The road design needs to take into consideration the network of existing overland trails and water routes. Special designs must be in place where skidoo trails cross the road and by the river crossings so that boaters and canoeists may safely cross the road.</p>
<b>5.7 Other Mitigations</b>	<p>35. Integrate available mitigations to reduce impacts on animals and animal habitat. Specific focus on reduction of noise and dust form traffic on animal habitat surrounding animal habitat.</p>

## 6.0 Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to identify and document traditional knowledge of the proposed development area, in order for this knowledge to be used in the decision-making and planning processes for the proposed all-season road. As part of the planning process, this study worked with elders and harvesters to identify potential impacts, positive and negative, of an all-season road on the surrounding environment, the animals, and harvesting culture. This report describes traditional knowledge of elders and harvesters in Whatì and Behchokò, based on research conducted from November 2013 to August 2014.

The research results describe the significance of the history and cultural use of the area proposed for development. The current use and stories of Tsotideè and Nàìlì, indicate the people's ties to their history and the natural features on their land, and demonstrates the significance of people's relationships to the land today and for future generations. The potential impacts of the proposed all-season road identified by the elders raise concerns about further changes to their traditional way of life, that they want to pass on to future generations. The main concern is the potential for impacts on animals inhabiting the land surrounding the proposed development, and how certain predicted impacts on the animal populations and the habitat will affect the traditional harvesting economy and way of life.

The construction of an all-season road to Whatì will impact the land and the community forever. The elders say that the proposed mine by Hislop Lake will close down at some point, but the road will always be there and the changes that the road will bring will also always be there. The elders remind us that long-term thinking, beyond the next few years, is necessary in order to make the best judgements on such a serious decision for the future of Whatì.



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## **Appendix A: Research Guidelines**

The research guidelines take the form of general research questions and were developed by the researchers based on previous traditional knowledge studies with Tłjchq elders. The purpose of the research guidelines is to record the traditional knowledge regarding both cultural and environmental importance in the study area.

### **Research guidelines TK Study of the Proposed Whatì Road Route**

#### **Traditional Knowledge Study:**

1. Can you describe which areas are important for you? Why?
2. Can you describe, and outline on the map, where you hunt in the area?
  - a. What kinds of animals were hunted?
  - b. What time of year do you hunt at these locations?
  - c. Describe good hunting area for specific animals.
  - d. Tłjchq place names for these areas?
3. Can you describe, and outline on the map, where you fish in the area?
  - a. What kinds of fish were harvested at specific locations?
  - b. What time of year do you fish at these locations?
  - c. Describe good area for specific fish species
  - d. Tłjchq place names for these areas?
4. Can you describe and outline on the map where you trap in the area?
  - a. What kinds of animals were harvested?
  - b. What time of year do you trap at these locations?
  - c. Describe good trapping areas for specific animals.
  - d. Tłjchq place names for these areas?
5. Can you describe and outline on the map your berry-picking areas?
  - a. What berries can you pick?
  - b. Tłjchq place names for these areas?
6. Can you describe and outline on the map the areas you pick traditional medicine?
  - a. What medicines can you pick?
  - b. Tłjchq place names for these areas?
7. Can you describe and outline on the map the traditional travel routes?
  - a. Land and water routes?
  - b. What time of year each routes used?
  - c. Tłjchq place names for these areas?

9. Are there plants, animals, or other resources in the development area that are hard to find anywhere else?
  - Are there places in need of special protection
  - Tłjchq place names for these areas?
10. Are there any campgrounds or cabins in the area?
  - a. Historical and current
  - b. Tłjchq placenames for these locations

**Cultural Importance:**

11. Do you know any cultural stories relating to the area?
  - a. Stories of Yamooza, Mowhi, Edzo or other important cultural persons?
12. Are there burial sites in the area?
  - a. Can you place them on the map?
  - b. What is the name of the person?
13. Are there any spiritual or sacred sites in the area?
  - a. Are there special places in need of respect?
14. Do you know of places where spirit beings live?

**Potential Impacts:**

15. How will your use of the area be affected by a road?
16. How will a road affect your ability to go on the land?
17. How will a road affect your ability to hunt and trap?
18. How will a road affect your ability to acquire traditional foods?
19. How will a road affect the land and animals?
20. Anything else you want to share with us?



## **Appendix B: Research Participants**

The traditional knowledge study worked with the following elders and harvesters.

### **In Whatì:**

Francis Simpson  
Pierre Beaverho  
Benny Jeremick'ca  
Joe Champlain  
Jimmy Nitsiza  
Jonas Nitsiza  
Michael Romie  
Richard Romie  
Jimmy B. Rabesca  
Archie Beaverho

### **In Behchokò:**

Robert Mackenzie  
Francis Williah  
Harry Rabesca  
Charlie Apple  
Jonas Football  
Noel Drybones

### **Appendix C: Research Activities**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Participants</b>
November 28th 2013	Whati	Introductory Community Meeting	Community
February 10th, 2014	Whati	Focus Group	9
February 10th to 13th, 2014	Whati	Individual interviews	9
February 17th, 2014	Behchoko	Focus Group	6
February 17th to 19th, 2014	Behchoko	Individual interviews	6
August 13th and 14th	Whati	Verification workshop	7
August 15th	Behchoko	Verification workshop	5

**Appendix D: Tłjchq Winter Road Opening and Closing Dates 1983-2013**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Opening Date</b>	<b>Closing Date</b>	<b>Days of Operation</b>
1983/84	4-Jan	31-Mar	87
1984/85	18-Dec	20-Mar	92
1985/86	18-Dec	3-Apr	106
1986/87	20-Dec	31-Mar	101
1987/88	15-Jan	5-Apr	81
1988/89	23-Jan	5-Apr	72
1989/90	19-Jan	10-Apr	81
1990/91	16-Jan	8-Apr	82
1991/92	15-Jan	7-Apr	82
1992/93	27-Jan	2-Apr	66
1993/94	18-Feb	18-Apr	59
1994/95	13-Jan	29-Mar	75
1995/96	15-Jan	20-Mar	65
1996/97	20-Jan	25-Mar	64
1997/98	23-Jan	9-Apr	76
1998/99	25-Jan	7-Apr	72
1999/00	1-Feb	20-Apr	79
2000/01	20-Feb	14-Apr	54
2001/02	24-Jan	25-Apr	91
2002/03	27-Jan	17-Apr	80
2003/04	13-Feb	22-Apr	68
2004/05	14-Jan	13-Apr	90
2005/06	7-Feb	16-Apr	68
2006/07	3-Feb	12-Apr	68
2007/08	8-Feb	11-Apr	64
2008/09	23-Jan	14-Apr	82
2009/10	21-Jan	12-Apr	81
2010/11	14-Jan	8-Apr	85
2011/12	25-Jan	19-Apr	86
2012/13	22-Jan	21-Apr	90
<b>Average Days of Operation</b>			<b>78</b>





## **Tłıchǫ Government**

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## Jessica Pacunayen

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**From:** Michael Conway <Michael\_Conway@gov.nt.ca>  
**Sent:** May 16, 2016 2:02 PM  
**To:** Jessica Pacunayen  
**Cc:** Ryan Fequet; Sarah Elsasser; Bakhtiyor Mukhammadiev; Laura Duncan (lauraduncan@tlicho.com)  
**Subject:** RE: TASR Application - Traditional Knowledge Study 2014

Hello Jessica:

You are correct in all three of your assumptions.

Thanks

Michael...

**Michael Conway**  
Regional Superintendent  
Department of Transportation  
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories  
867-767-9089 Ext 31194

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**From:** Jessica Pacunayen [mailto:jpacunayen@wlwb.ca]  
**Sent:** Monday, May 16, 2016 1:22 PM  
**To:** Michael Conway  
**Cc:** Ryan Fequet; Sarah Elsasser; Bakhtiyor Mukhammadiev  
**Subject:** TASR Application - Traditional Knowledge Study 2014

Dear Mr. Conway,

Follow up to the meeting between Board staff, GNWT-DOT, and the Tlicho Government, Board staff would like to confirm that the Traditional Knowledge Report mentioned in section 5 of the Project Description Report is:

1. No longer confidential
2. Part of the GNWT-DOT's Tlicho All-season Road submission
3. Allowed to be posted on the WLWB's public registry

Thanks,

**Jessica Pacunayen, BA&Sc**

Regulatory Technician

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*All correspondence to the Board, including emails, letters, faxes and attachments are public documents and may be posted to the public registry. The way things are does not determine the way they ought to be – M. J. Sandel*