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Erica Janes (on maternity leave)  
Jennifer Morin  
Karley Ziegler

NEWSLETTER LAYOUT

Jennifer Luckay  
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MAIL OUTS

The Cash Family

CPAWS-NWT

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## Join the Board!

Contact Leslie Wakelyn  
(wakelyn@theedge.ca)  
of the Board Recruiting  
Committee for more  
information about a one  
or two year term.

## Comings and Goings

We bid a sad farewell in September to Mike Phelan, who made a premature departure from the CPAWS-NWT Board. Mike was a board member for the past year but a new engineering job in Calgary prompted a move to nearby Didsbury. We wish Mike and Ginger all the best in their new ventures, and congratulations on a new baby girl!

We are also bidding farewell to Karley Ziegler, who has been working with CPAWS-NWT as Conservation Coordinator for the last year and a half. We look forward to having Karley visit the office with a new baby next year, and to having Erica Janes return from her maternity leave in January.

The CPAWS-NWT Board of Directors held an all-day retreat at Prelude Lake (35 kms east of Yellowknife) in October to revisit and update the Strategic Plan. Great 'potluck' food helped fuel the discussion and a productive day was the outcome.



OCTOBER BOARD RETREAT L-R SANDRA STIRLING, LESLIE WAKELYN, ERICA JANES, CHRISTA DOMCHEK, JOYCE BOURNE, TRACEY WILLIAMS, AND JENNIFER MORIN

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# NAHENDEH notes

CANADIAN PARKS AND WILDERNESS SOCIETY-NWT CHAPTER

WINTER 2007, NEWSLETTER #22



## Wishing a happy holiday season for all of our members and friends!



L-R ENVIRONMENT MINISTER JOHN BAIRD, PRIME MINISTER STEPHEN HARPER, DECHO FIRST NATIONS GRAND CHIEF HERB NORWEIGIAN AND NAHANNI NATIONAL PARK RESERVE SUPERINTENDENT CHUCK BLYTH. PHOTO BY PARKS CANADA.

## Nahanni Breakthrough!

CPAWS' Nahanni campaign has taken a giant leap forward. On August 8th 2007, Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Environment Minister John Baird flew to Fort Simpson to announce the interim protection of 28,800 km<sup>2</sup> of land specifically for the purpose of expanding Nahanni National Park Reserve...

(Article continues on pg 4 and 5)



The Northwest Territories Chapter of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS-NWT) is part of a national non-profit conservation organization dedicated to protecting Canada's wilderness.

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

By Jennifer Morin, Interim Executive Director

This past year has been a great one for wilderness conservation in the Northwest Territories. Coming back to CPAWS from maternity leave has given me a new excitement, energy and perspective to our work. Below is my condensed Top 10 list for environmental and conservation highlights this past year:

**10.** New documentation on karst in Sahtu was undertaken by Dr. Derek Ford - likely worthy of UNESCO World Heritage Site designation.

**8.** First Nation land and consultation rights have been reasserted in both the decision by the minister to reject the UR Energy (uranium exploration) project based on cultural significance of the upper Thelon area and a court victory on consultation by the Ka'a'Gee Tu First Nation (Kakisa) for oil and gas development in the Cameron Hills by Paramount Resources.

**6.** CPAWS-NWT undertook an innovative voter education survey where all 55 MLA candidates were asked for their support on six key environmental and conservation issues.

**4.** The federal government announces the largest ever land withdrawal: Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta (Ramparts) until 2011, the East Arm Area of Interest until 2012, and Akaitcho Lands, also until 2012 (total 103,000 km<sup>2</sup>). This temporary protection will allow for further study and work towards permanent protection.

**2.** Signing of a historic agreement between Parks Canada and the community of Déline to permanently protect Sahoyúé - ?ehdacho in March 2007.

**9.** Nahanni bat education posters are completed which describe the exciting news that at least four new bat species were found in the watershed, making it the most diverse habitat for bats north of 60°.

**7.** River corridors and lakes within the Pehdzeh Ki Ndeh Protected Areas Strategy Area of Interest have been temporarily protected until October 2008. The community of Wrigley (Pehdzeh Ki First Nation) has been waiting since the 2003 Pipeline Settlement Agreement (more info in this newsletter).

**5.** Important or environmental issues, concerns and recommendations are presented by various groups (including CPAWS-NWT), at a number of Joint Review Panel hearings for the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project. Hearings officially closed in November 2007.

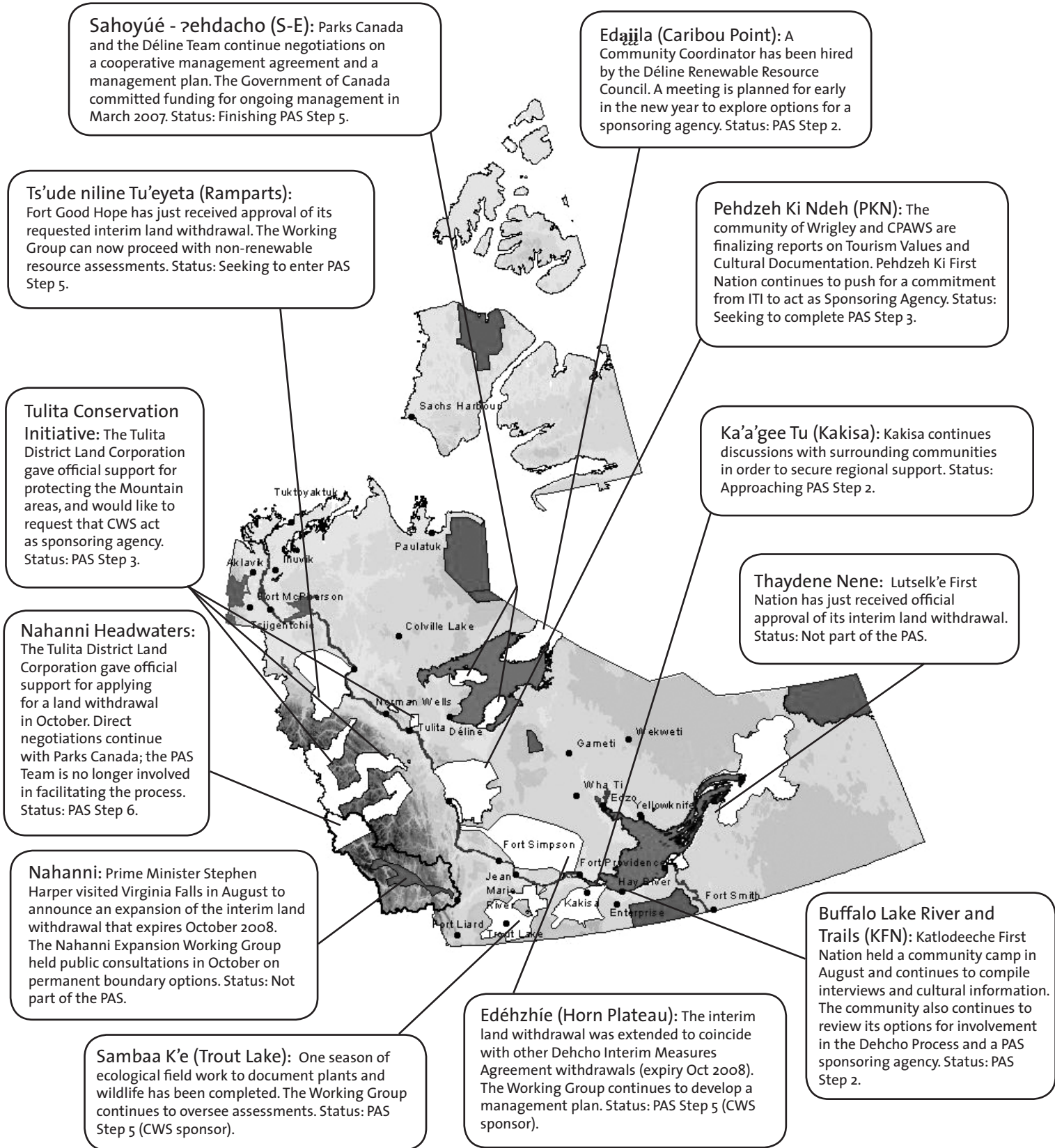
**3.** Prime Minister announces an additional land withdrawal (5,400 km<sup>2</sup>) for Nahanni and identifies the Dehcho portion of the Watershed for park expansion August 2007 (more info in this newsletter).

**1.** Poll of NWT Residents confirms environmental and conservation issues are the #1 priority in September 2007.

# PROTECTED AREA BRIEFS

By Karley Ziegler, Conservation Coordinator

PAS = NWT Protected Areas Strategy  
CWS = Canadian Wildlife Service  
ITI = GNWT Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment



# THE CASH FAMILY : Volunteer Profile

By Joyce Bourne, CPAWS-NWT Board member

L-R FELICIA, ALANA, ALAN, JANINE AND DOG CARMEN



Every issue of the CPAWS-NWT newsletter involves the Cash family. They are the behind the scenes crew who spend some 'quality family time' stuffing and labeling envelopes for the membership mail out twice a year. This family of four includes parents Alan and Felicia and daughters Alana and Janine. Carmen the dog arrived just over a year ago from the SPCA in Fort Smith and Molly the cat looks very young and spry considering she is 19 years old.

Both Felicia and Alan work for the Government of the NWT. Felicia has been working for just over a year at the Directorate of Aboriginal Affairs & Intergovernmental Relations as the Records and ATIP Coordinator. Alan has been at the Executive Cabinet Secretariat for 9 years as Deputy Secretary to Cabinet. Felicia (originally from Saskatoon) and Alan (a Cape Bretoner) met in Halifax prior to coming to

Yellowknife 20 years ago - for a 2-year stint in the North. Both are involved in the community as board members; Felicia just finished 6 years with the YWCA and Alan presently sits on the boards of the Yellowknife Food Bank and Abe Miller Centre.

Daughters Alana and Janine are very busy gals. Alana is 12 years old and in Grade 7 attending Ecole St. Joseph School. Currently, much of her recreational time involves horses as she is regularly out at the North Country Stables taking English riding lessons, cleaning stalls and grooming horses. Janine is 9 years old and in Grade 4 attending Ecole J.H. Sissons School and she enjoys ballet and jazz classes at Bella Dance Studio. Janine also plays the piano. Family summertime recreation includes camping and canoeing along the Ingraham Trail and swimming at Long Lake. Tobogganing is a favorite activity at Parker Park in the winter.

The Cash family got involved with CPAWS many years ago through good friends, Ron and Liz Seale. The conservation focus was the initial attraction but they also appreciate the balanced approach of CPAWS that aims towards achievable, realistic outcomes through partnerships and the community development process. They feel CPAWS seeks workable solutions, which may mean a compromise but they believe it is better to gain something rather than nothing at all as in the case of protected areas. They also noted the wide variety in the CPAWS membership and consider it a strength of the organization.

**MANY THANKS TO FELICIA, ALAN, ALANA AND JANINE.**

## Helicopter Pilot Makes Rare Plant Discovery

By Jennifer Morin, Interim Executive Director

Surprisingly, it was a helicopter pilot, David Depooter, and not a biologist that first found the rare pitcher plants in the Ka'a'gee Tu Area of Interest.

Ka'a'gee Tu in the Dehcho Region has been identified for protection by the community of Kakisa; biologists were conducting ecological assessment field studies there this summer in support of the Protected Areas Strategy initiative.

The new discovery was made when David was flying with the team of biologists and mentioned seeing a pitcher plant. Initially the biologists thought the pilot was pulling their leg, but eventually they flew back to the



location and were able to confirm that indeed he was telling the truth.

Rare plants are an important factor in maintaining species diversity. As biologist (and CPAWS member) Steve Moore says, "We have lost so much sensitive habitat in southern Canada, and we have learned from that. We need to protect sensitive areas in the NWT before it is too late." He continued to say that, "as species become extinct, it can cause changes in ecosystems and that is not necessarily a good thing." Steve noted the example of how depleting a key fish species, the cod, off the east coast of Canada caused

an eco-systematic collapse of other marine ecosystem components.

There is very limited information about rare plants in the NWT. Most are found at the extreme edges of our boundaries. Climate change will also play an important role in the life cycle and distribution of rare plant species, and distributions will likely change. As it becomes drier and hotter, rare plant distributions will shift.

The initial ecological assessment report for Ka'a'gee Tu is anticipated to be completed in early 2008. The study was funded by the NWT PAS Secretariat and Ducks Unlimited Canada.

## Pipeline Hearings End

By Jennifer Morin, Interim Executive Director

The end of November marked the last Mackenzie Gas Project (MGP) Joint Review Panel (JRP) hearing. The seven member panel heard from hundreds of people on environmental and socio-economic issues over a 22 month period. CPAWS-NWT participated and gave presentations in a number of hearings from the start of the process. The last four hearings were critical components of the process as they included evaluation of project cumulative effects, project contributions towards sustainability, final recommendations and final closing remarks.

In late August at the cumulative effects hearing, a number of interveners were surprised at the limited depth of the discussion on induced development and cumulative effects by the proponents and governments. Major gaps, including funding and political will, were identified in both properly assessing and managing cumulative effects in the NWT.

In September at the sustainability hearing, all parties were challenged to determine if there were overall net benefits of the proposed MGP. High level overviews of major projects by proponents and governments often identify positive social and economic benefits as well as negative effects on the environment, but they assume that these effects can be mitigated. 'Old school' environmental assessment is where impacts are identified and solutions are found to eliminate or mitigate them. More recent environmental assessment practice (which is included in the Panel's mandate) is to look at the project as a whole and determine whether the project actually makes contributions towards sustainability.

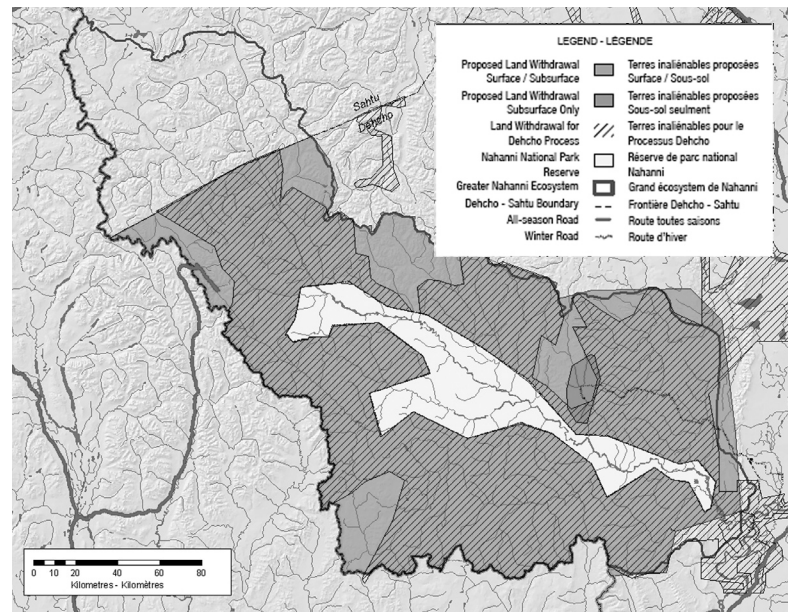
In November, CPAWS-NWT made submissions and gave presentations at the final recommendations and final closing remarks in Inuvik. The major news story of the last hearing was how environmental organizations were pitted against Nellie Cournoyea (Inuvialuit Regional Corporation) and Fred Carmichael (Gwich'in Tribal Council). What the media missed was that although Nellie and Fred have loud voices, they do not represent all community members, First Nations and other northerners. Strong presentations in support of protecting land, water and wildlife have been made by a majority of northern presenters throughout the process, notably at the community hearings.

The feeling in Inuvik on the last day of hearings was of excitement and elation. Although the hearings are over, the Panel will be spending the next several months preparing its report, which is anticipated in the summer of 2008.

(from front cover)

# Nahanni Breakthrough!

By Alison Woodley, CPAWS Northern Conservation Specialist



MAP COURTESY OF PARKS CANADA. SEE THE MAP ON PAGE 11 TO LOCATE THE NAHANNI WATERSHED WITHIN THE NWT.



When added to the lands protected in the current 4766 km<sup>2</sup> park, almost 85% of the South Nahanni Watershed and Nahanni karstlands – an area larger than Vancouver Island – is now temporarily protected. Once the park boundaries are permanently expanded by an act of Parliament, Nahanni will become one of Canada's three biggest national parks.

CPAWS' Alison Woodley from Ottawa, and Darha Philpott from our NWT Chapter, joined colleagues from Ducks Unlimited and the Canadian Boreal Initiative at this exciting announcement, which was set on a bluff overlooking the magnificent Mackenzie River. After the speeches the Prime Minister and Environment Minister joined Dehcho Grand Chief Herb Norwegian to fly over this magnificent wilderness and to visit Virginia Falls at the heart of the current national park.

The Nahanni watershed straddles the Dehcho and Sahtu regions of the NWT. The Prime Minister's announcement effectively protects the watershed and karstlands in the Dehcho region until October 2008 while the formal park expansion process is completed. Protecting the Nahanni watershed is a goal CPAWS shares with the Dehcho First Nations, who have also been working to achieve this for many years. In the Sahtu region discussions to protect the remaining 15% of the watershed are proceeding with the Sahtu Dene and Metis of Tulita through a separate process. The Tulita District Land Corporation recently passed a resolution supporting an interim land withdrawal of the Nahanni Headwaters area, and they will continue direct negotiations with Parks Canada.

This fall, public meetings to consult on park boundaries were held in Dehcho communities, Yellowknife and Ottawa, and in all these places strong public support was expressed for protecting the Nahanni watershed. Even in far away Ottawa over 100 people showed up at the meeting to urge the federal government not to compromise and leave areas open to mineral development.

With the end goal in site, CPAWS has renewed its efforts this fall to permanently protect the entire Nahanni watershed. And once again, Canadians have been letting the federal government know loud and clear that they share this goal.

For more details on how you can get involved, please visit: [www.cpaws.org/nahanni/](http://www.cpaws.org/nahanni/)

## NOTES FROM THE NATIONAL BOARD

Leslie Wakelyn, former NWT Chapter Representative, and Tracey Williams, CPAWS National Board of Trustees

The 2007 CPAWS Annual General Meeting was held in Ottawa on the afternoon of November 25th, following the national board meeting. In addition to receiving the Annual Report and Audited Financial Statements of 2006-07, members in attendance ratified (a) a Board resolution to amend the Board structure and the associated by-laws and (b) a slate of new trustees. The Annual Report, changes to the Board structure and by-laws, and the slate of trustee nominees and their biographies are available on the CPAWS website [www.cpaws.org/agm](http://www.cpaws.org/agm).

These actions put in place a new governance structure and a new Board for the national organization. Effective as of the 2007 AGM, the CPAWS National Board consists of a maximum of 16 trustees, all elected by CPAWS members or appointed by the national board (to fill vacancies that arise between AGMs). National Trustees will no longer be appointed by or "represent" Chapters. Trustees nominated by the Board will have the skills and backgrounds necessary to meet the national organization's objectives, with at least one Trustee resident in each of six geographical regions of Canada (Northern Canada, British Columbia, the prairies, Ontario, Quebec, and Atlantic Canada). Each Trustee will serve on the Board for a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms.

We are pleased to report that Tracey Williams was elected to a one-year term as a Trustee of the National Board of CPAWS, with an option to continue for a further 3-year term. The NWT Chapter nominated Tracey for this position, and we are confident that she will be an asset to the National Board. She will contribute a northern perspective and considerable experience on northern conservation, land use planning, protected areas and resource management issues.

Tracey lives with her husband and young son in Lutsel K'e, NWT.

The fall 2007 meeting of the National Board of Trustees was held near Ottawa November 23-25. During this Board Meeting several inter-related issues were looked at, including finances, chapter jurisdiction, conservation marquis initiatives and organizational structure. Along with a new board structure, other key areas of the overall governance structure are being considered. The over-arching legal structure of the organization is being changed. In June 2007 all unincorporated chapters were asked to incorporate, new structural models were reviewed at the fall 2007 meeting, and a decision awaits further scrutiny next spring. The new organizational structure will include a strong executive director's committee for cross-Canada chapter coordination on national campaigns and possibly a National conference or a Council-type structure for chapter boards and members to connect on a yearly basis.

A ceremony was held November 21st in Ottawa to present the Harkin Conservation Award to Dr. Jim Thorsell. Dr. Thorsell's work around the globe has contributed to over one million km<sup>2</sup> of protected land brought under the World Heritage Convention. He was instrumental in establishing Nahanni National Park Reserve as UNESCO's first World Heritage Site, as well as designating four other World Heritage Sites in the country. CPAWS periodically presents this award to honour individuals who have made a significant contribution to the conservation of Canada's parks and wilderness. Dr. Thorsell received the 2007 J.B. Harkin Award because of his significant and ongoing contribution over 45 years to parks and protected areas in Canada and across the globe.

## Minister Rejects Uranium Exploration Project

By Jennifer Morin, Interim Executive Director

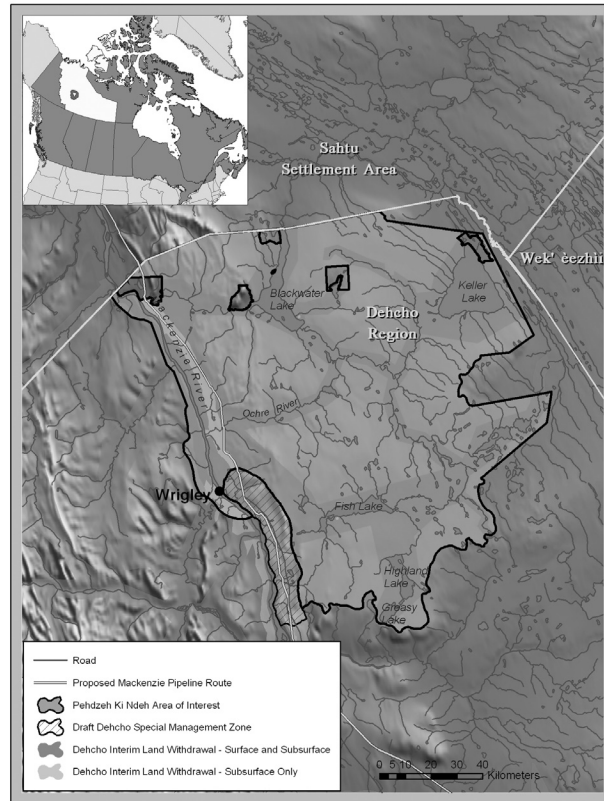
In October 2007, the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Chuck Strahl accepted a recommendation to reject an industrial exploration project. The recommendation was submitted in the Report of Environmental Assessment by the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board, and referred to the proposed uranium exploration program by UR Energy in the eastern NWT.

Strong, passionate and detailed testimony by the Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation highlighted the cultural and spiritual significance of the Upper Thelon Basin, and the project was rejected on the basis of significant impact to cultural and ecological values.

Rejecting projects is never an easy task, but the Review Board couldn't have done it without good participation and information, dedicated staff, and by taking the time to carefully review and consider the information and implications of their decision. After the Review Board released its report, letters were flying in all directions to the Minister from the company, mining associations, First Nations and environmental organizations, including CPAWS.

CPAWS-NWT congratulates the Review Board for their work, and the Minister for his decision. We were also pleased with the Minister's action on the Akaitcho land withdrawals a few weeks later. The land withdrawals were an important step in the Akaitcho Process and will allow proper negotiations to continue without additional conflict between development and conservation values.

This is the second time in the history of the Review Board's existence that a project has been recommended for rejection.



## Movement on PKN

By Karley Ziegler, Conservation Coordinator

Pehdzeh Ki Ndeh (pehd-zeh-keen-day) is an Area of Interest in the NWT Protected Areas Strategy (PAS) put forward by Pehdzeh Ki First Nation (PKFN) in Wrigley. CPAWS-NWT has been working with the community for seven years to advance the area through the eight steps of the PAS. For several years, progress was slow because the area included sections in both the Dehcho and Sahtu Regions. In early 2006, PKFN decided to move forward without the Sahtu section, and significant advancements have been made since that time.

In addition to Step 1 (local support), Step 2 (regional support) was immediately achieved, because Dehcho First Nations had already passed a resolution of support. Step 3 was also achieved when the community submitted an official request to the GNWT Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI) to act as sponsoring agency. ITI has the capacity to create a Cultural Conservation Area through its Territorial Parks Act. If and when they agree to sponsor Pehdzeh Ki Ndeh (PKN), the area will be in Step 4.

Step 5 typically involves gathering the best available knowledge of the area's cultural, ecological, renewable and non-renewable resource, and socio-economic values. PKN already has a head start on that requirement; a preliminary ecological assessment has been completed, as well as a draft renewable resource assessment. Cultural Documentation and a Tourism Values Assessment are in the final stages of completion.

PKN received another boost in June when temporary protection was approved for the lake areas and river corridors within the area. Through the Pipeline Settlement Agreement in 2003 between Dehcho First Nations and the Government of Canada, about 35% of Pehdzeh Ki Ndeh was to be added to the Dehcho land withdrawals – in June of this year it finally made its way through all the levels of government to become official.

This temporary protection will either expire or be renewed with the other Dehcho land withdrawals in October 2008. PKFN will continue to work with CPAWS and the PAS Team towards permanent protection of the entire Pehdzeh Ki Ndeh area.

## I've Been Hollyhock-ed!

By Karley Ziegler, Conservation Coordinator

You may have heard of Hollyhock. Anyone who goes to this idyllic retreat on Cortes Island comes back raving about the peace, beauty, and great food (gourmet, organic, vegetarian cuisine, with a lot of ingredients coming from the impressive Hollyhock garden.) Those who are lucky enough to take the week-long Canadian Environmental Leadership Program offered by the Center's sister organization, the Hollyhock Leadership Institute, will also rave about the creative inspiration, skills training, and friendships formed.

I was one of the lucky participants in that program this year, from the 24th to the

31st of October. And the phrase "I've been Hollyhock-ed" really does sum it up. The Hollyhock Leadership Institute did an amazing job of organizing a program that was relevant in ways that I didn't even imagine (who knew that singing would be one of the best parts of the program?). And the Hollyhock Center, a collection of cozy oceanfront buildings nestled under tall cedars, provided an ideal setting for letting the inspiration flow.

The program covered such topics as bringing creativity into the workplace, government relations, communications, leadership styles and skills, strategic

planning, and coalition building - all skills that are immediately applicable to every day work at CPAWS. Also, an important piece on "personal ecology" highlighted techniques to recognize "urgency addiction" and signs of burnout, as well as methods to maintain a healthy work/ life balance. Many who work in the non-profit sector have a tendency to work themselves to exhaustion, so this section was particularly relevant.

My gratitude goes to Jen Morin and CPAWS-NWT for providing the opportunity to attend this fantastic program, and I encourage anyone else to take advantage of a similar opportunity to be Hollyhock-ed.

## Nahanni by the numbers:

Total size of South Nahanni watershed and adjacent karstlands	Approx 40,000 sq km
Current Nahanni National Park Reserve (permanent protection):	4766 sq km
Aug 8 announcement (lands set aside for national park expansion until October 2008)	28,800 sq km
Lands still to be protected in the watershed (Nahanni Headwaters in Sahtu region)	6,500 sq km



HAPPY FACES AT THE NAHANNI ANNOUNCEMENT IN AUGUST L-R SHANNON HASZARD (DUCKS UNLIMITED), PRIME MINISTER STEPHEN HARPER, DARHA PHILPOTT (CPAWS-NWT), AND ALISON WOODLEY (CPAWS NORTHERN CONSERVATION SPECIALIST)

**AGM 2007** This year's Annual General Meeting was held on September 26. It was an intimate affair, with just enough attendees to make quorum. In addition to updates on the CPAWS-NWT Board of Directors, the National Board, and staff activities, we voted to approve the minutes from last year's AGM, last year's financial statements, and members of the Board of Directors. Also, an auditor was appointed for the coming fiscal year.

Thanks go to both staff and board for organizing the event.

# The Indomitable Netta Pringle



AKLAVIK, 1956

*A huge thank you to the Friends of Netta Pringle for funding this newsletter in her memory.*

*"Many things in a small place."*

It's the essence of Yellowknife, summed up in Latin on its City Crest: "MULTUM IN PARVO." To the Crest's designer, the late Netta Pringle of Edinburgh, Scotland, tiny Yellowknife was that and more when she spent some of the happiest days of her long life there between 1954 and 1956 – camping, canoeing and soaking up the powerful solitude of Northern Canada's wilderness.

Netta, a freelance illustrator who had studied illustration and graphic design at the Edinburgh College of Art, won a 1956 contest and \$25 to create Yellowknife's City Crest. Netta was later commissioned to carve the Crest, which she did so from scrap items culled from the abandoned Negus gold mine in Yellowknife. The carving still hangs in Yellowknife's City Council chambers.

She lived a full century, always remaining a woman ahead of her time. She wore pants before it was customary, shot rapids in a canoe and stared down at least one black bear. She survived two World Wars and served in the British army from 1941 to 1946. She never married, but loved traveling, cycling and camping with friends and relatives, exploring much of Europe, and parts of India, Singapore, Canada and the United States.

But Netta found what she said was paradise when she crossed an ocean to visit friends in Yellowknife. They lived without electricity or running water in a miner's cabin on the edge of Great Slave Lake, and later took an unforgettable canoe trip across the lake and down the Mackenzie River to the Arctic Ocean. This foray was one of many they made by canoe around Great Slave Lake and surrounding area.

Netta's curiosity, love of nature and eagerness to tackle challenges mirrored the spirit of Canada's North. With her death on Jan. 6, 2007, the Northwest Territories bid farewell to one of its feisty pioneers.



NETTA ON HER 100TH BIRTHDAY IN EDINBURGH.  
PHOTO COURTESY OF PRINGLE ARCHIVES.