



Deninu Kųé First Nation



Fort Resolution Métis Government

Media Release

Indigenous and federal governments commit to advancing a new Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area in Northwest Territories (NWT)

Deninu Kųé First Nation with the Fort Resolution Métis Government and Environment and Climate Change Canada sign a Contribution Agreement, for the Consideration of an Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area (IPCA) near Fort Resolution, NWT

Fort Resolution, NWT, Dec 8th, 2022 — Deninu Kųé First Nation (DKFN) and the Fort Resolution Métis Government (FRMG) are excited to announce the signing of a Contribution Agreement (CA) with Environment and Climate Change Canada ([ECCC](#)) for developing an Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area ([IPCA](#)) proposal for an area of the Slave River Delta and portions of the Taltson watershed.

The agreement of \$3.1 Million builds on a [Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\) signed this past April](#) that confirmed the mutual aspirations of DKFN and FRMG to conserve portions of their traditional territory for the use and benefit of current and future generations.

For DKFN and FRMG, the signing of the CA is a timely response to the recent international discussions held at COP27 and now at COP15 regarding global efforts to reverse climate change and loss of nature and biodiversity. Don Balsillie, Akaitcho Treaty 8 Chief Negotiator explains: *“Indigenous governments including in the community of Fort Resolution have a primary role in identifying the boundaries, management plans and authority structures of protected areas that ensure self-determination, on-going harvest and cultural activity. An IPCA at the Slave River Delta and Taltson watershed will contribute to stabilizing climate change and biodiversity loss for the benefit of our people and for the benefit of all Canadians and beyond.”*

The project will consider a wealth of traditional knowledge, science and land use options to guide decisions. A range of partnerships including with governments, environmental non-governmental organizations (NGOs), philanthropic bodies and others will contribute to success.

Quotes

Chief Louis Balsillie of Deninu Kų́ę First Nation – “Our Indigenous Knowledge together with citizen science is a source of valuable environmental information to Deninu Kų́ę First Nation and plays a crucial role in shaping our own responses to climate change, conservation, negotiations, and opportunities for economic development. Fresh water is needed for life. It is vital to our cultural, social and ecological well-being of the Dene people living in the NWT. We need to protect these ecosystems.”

Arthur Beck, President of Fort Resolution Métis Government – “Water is like the blood in our veins, and the land is our body. If you pollute or cut off water, the land will die. Water is the fundamental element of who we are, and we must all work together to protect and conserve it. Many strong partnerships already exist in the NWT. We need to combine our resources. By partnering with Ducks Unlimited Canada and Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society NWT we can combine resources for a more effective conservation area.”

The Honourable Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Environment and Climate Change - “The partnership between Deninu Kų́ę First Nation and the Fort Resolution Métis Government to conserve and protect their traditional territory is the very essence of Indigenous-led area-based conservation. I am excited to see this team working toward establishing their Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area, and the important contributions it will have for conserving biodiversity for future generations and contributing to Canada’s conservation targets.”

Partner Organizations

Kris Brekke Executive Director CPAWS-NWT - “Travelling from Ft. Resolution with DKFN and FRMG community members has shown CPAWS-NWT how the Slave River Delta and Taltson River Watershed are equally important for providing the fish, plants, wildlife and water that have sustained people here for generations. Now today with increasing land and water use occurring upriver in the two watersheds, these natural resources are under pressure to the detriment of the community and all others who benefit from the area's resources. We call on NWT residents and Canadians to join us in supporting DKFN and FRMG as they lead this conservation effort.”

Kevin Smith, Ducks Unlimited Canada’s national manager of boreal programs - "The shared relationship we have cultivated with DKFN and FRMG is helping advance our collective goals for conservation. Braiding local Indigenous knowledge with science is creating an ideal foundation for long-term IPCA success, and we are pleased to support this agreement to further the establishment of an IPCA in the Slave/Taltson Delta."

For more information, please contact

Minnie Whimp lands@dkfn.ca	Amanda Mandeville secretary@frmcnwt.com	Chantelle Abma c_abma@ducks.ca	Josh Campbell josh@cpaws.org
Deninu Kue First Nation P.O. Box 1899 Fort Resolution, NWT XOE OMO 867-394-4335	Ft. Resolution Metis Gov P.O. Box 1921 Fort Resolution, NWT XOE OMO 867-394-4151	Ducks Unlimited Canada National Boreal Program Suite 300, 10525 170 St Edmonton AB T5P 4W2 780-265-4945	CPAWS - NWT 5021 49 St 2 nd floor Yellowknife NWT X1A 1P5 506-425-2694

About

Situated along the south shore of TuCho (Great Slave Lake), the land and waters of the Slave River Delta and Taltson Watershed are important habitats for moose, fish, fur bearers and the ducks and geese which are staples of food security, and local economic and cultural activity for DKFN and FRMG. The area is also important for supporting regional and international biodiversity as a hotspot for migratory birds and hosts extensive spawning areas for the fish species that populate TuCho (Great Slave Lake). Extensive peatlands and old growth forest contribute carbon storage, a critical natural solution to climate change mitigation.

[Deninu Kue First Nation](#), pronounced “Deneh-noo-kweh”, meaning Moose Island and also known as Fort Resolution is located on the south shores of Great Slave Lake in the Akaitcho Territory and was signatory to Treaty 8, July 25 1900.

[The Fort Resolution Métis Government](#) is comprised of self-governing peoples in the Fort Resolution (Deninu) area of the Northwest Territories, with a rich regional history spanning centuries, continuing to live in harmony with nature and with respect to the bounties of the land.

Supporting Partners

[Ducks Unlimited Canada](#) (DUC) has been working collaboratively with the DKFN and FRMG to establish this IPCA through consultation, community engagement, provision of wetland inventory and carbon data, and the implementation of Traditional Ecological Knowledge. DUC is the leader in wetland conservation. A registered charity, DUC partners with government, industry, non-profit organizations, Indigenous Peoples and landowners to conserve wetlands that are critical to waterfowl, wildlife and the environment.

[Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society –NWT Chapter](#) (CPAWS-NWT) works to achieve the conservation of land, water, and wildlife in the Northwest Territories. Their results-based campaigns are driven by local desire to see ecologically and culturally important places protected for current and future generations.