



## INFO BULLETIN - MARCH/APRIL 2024

# Thaidene Nënë badı xá (Working with Thaidene Nënë) Thaidene Nënë Relationship Plan, the management plan for Thaidene Nënë



Photos: (1) Hooké, (2) Alietum Ltd., (3-5) Pat Kane

## We want to hear from you!

*Thaidene Nënë badı xá* is the first relationship plan for Thaidene Nënë. The plan is foundational, setting out what is needed to ensure that countless generations to come will be able to care for and benefit from Thaidene Nënë. This 10-year plan includes a set of guiding principles, a long-term vision for Thaidene Nënë, and a series of goals and objectives that will help us make progress towards achieving the vision.

Thaidene Nënë xá dá yáłtı (the operational management board), Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation, Northwest Territory Métis Nation, Parks Canada, and the Government of Northwest Territories invite you to share your ideas on the draft management plan.

Your feedback plays an important role in the development of this first management plan for Thaidene Nënë.

This info bulletin provides an overview of the draft plan. To view the full draft and read more about planning visit:

<https://www.landoftheancestors.ca/relationshipplan.html>  
<https://parks.canada.ca/pn-np/nt/thaidene-nene/info/plan>

**What is Thaidene Nënë?**  
Thaidene Nënë Indigenous Protected Area is 26,376 km<sup>2</sup> and includes a national park reserve, a territorial protected area, and a territorial wildlife conservation area.

**Help shape the future of Thaidene Nënë**  
We invite your ideas, comments, and suggestions on the draft plan.

# What is a relationship plan?

Protected areas such as Thaidene Nënë are often guided by management plans. These plans set out a long-term vision, specific objectives, and provide strategic direction. However, the term ‘management’ implies control and ownership over the land, as well as a level of separation between land and people that does not exist within Indigenous worldviews. We have chosen to name this management plan a relationship plan. This designation highlights the importance of the relationships between the descendants of Thaidene Nënë ancestors, the land, water, and animals.

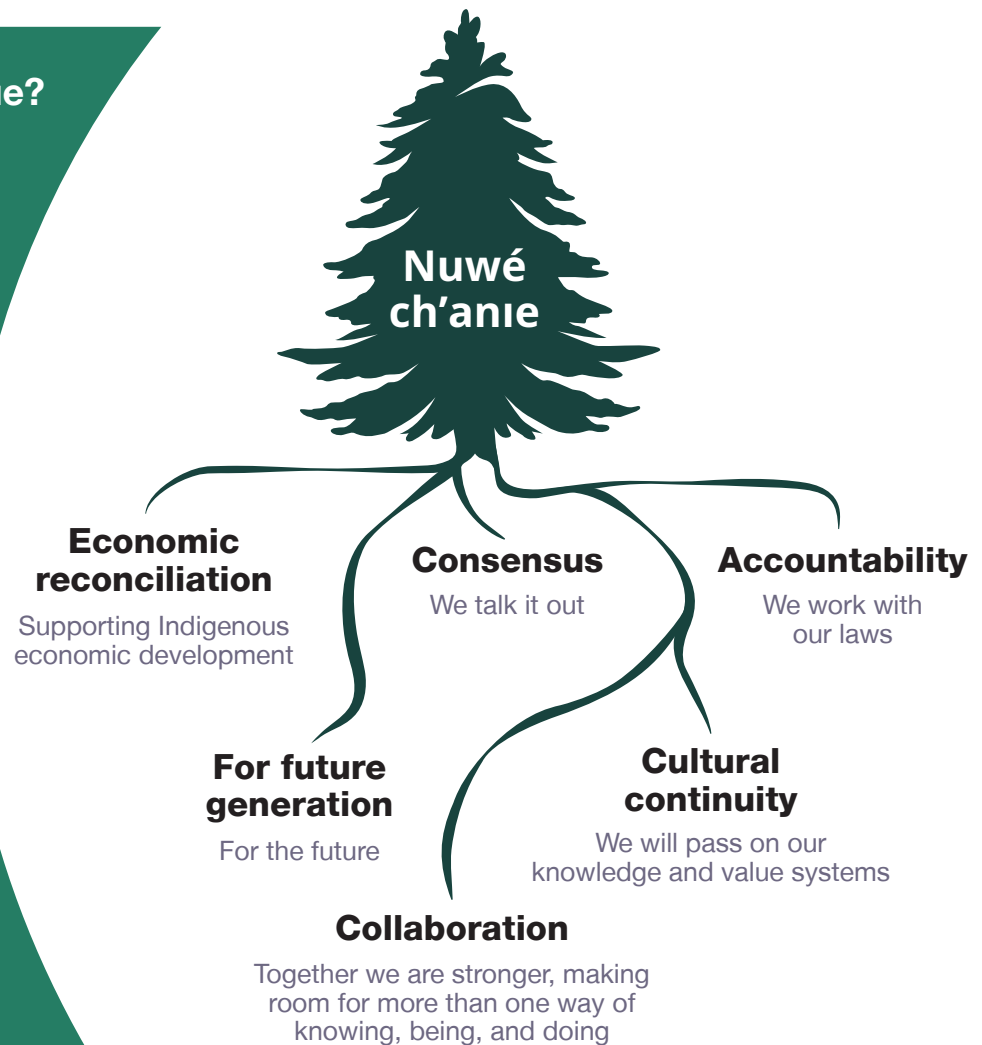
*Thaidene Nënë badı xá* is built on the foundation of nuwé ch’anie that has conserved Thaidene Nënë for millennia. The plan draws on the strength of nuwé ch’anie and provides direction on how we will continue to steward Thaidene Nënë for generations to come.

## Guiding principles

Flowing from nuwé ch’anie are six additional principles that will guide the work and ensure it is being done in the right way and with respect. Each principle is important for good relationships and planning.

### What is nuwé ch’anie?

Nuwé ch’anie is the principle that describes Dene values and knowledge systems, with responsibilities to care for the land, water, and wildlife. Nuwé ch’anie encompasses cultural, linguistic, political, and ecological understandings of the relationship the original Indigenous peoples of the area have with Thaidene Nënë. Ensuring nuwé ch’anie is practiced, nurtured, and passed on is vital for the well-being of people and ensuring cultural continuity.



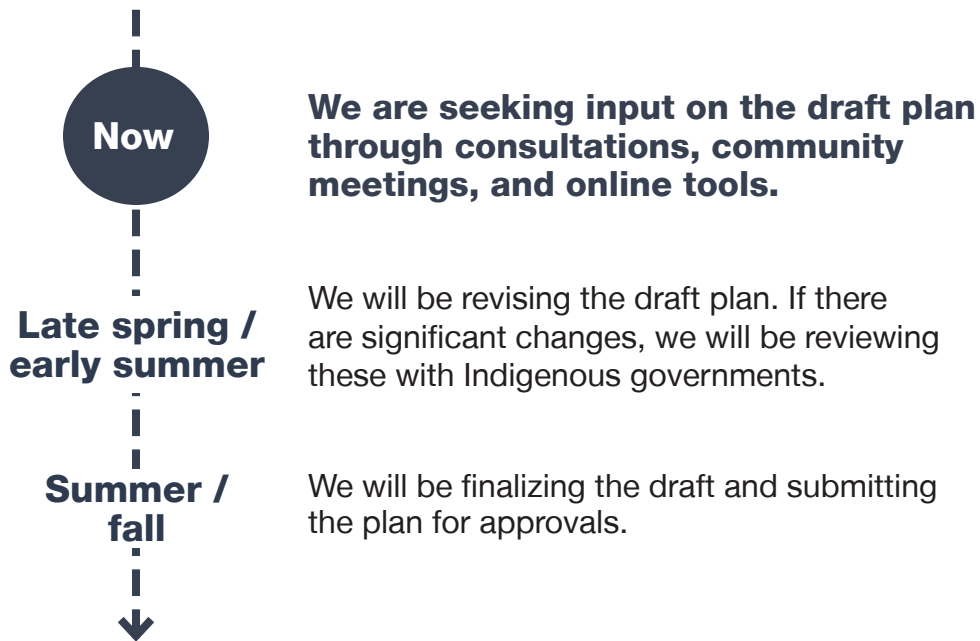
# What hide tanning can teach us about planning

Throughout the process of developing *Thaidene Nënë bidl xá*, Thaidene Nënë xá dá yálti took inspiration from the practice of hide tanning, which is integral to Indigenous communities with connections to Thaidene Nënë. Hide tanning offers an appropriate cultural metaphor to demonstrate the steps of adaptive planning.



Photos: (1, 3-6) H.Catholique / Parks Canada (2) T.Abel-Desjarlais / Parks Canada

# Planning process – timeline



## Draft vision

*Thaidene Nënë is the homeland of the people whose ancestors laid down the sacred, ethical, and practical foundations of their way of life. This land has nurtured and inspired countless generations whose prosperity continues to be ensured by a deep intimacy between the people and the land. For the wellbeing of future generations, this way of life needs to be exercised, nurtured, and passed on.*

*The living connection between land and people, between water and land, between forest and tundra makes Thaidene Nënë a national treasure. Carrying these connections into the future, the ecological integrity and the Indigenous ways of life of Thaidene Nënë will be a living legacy for all, where we will welcome the world.*

Photos: (1) Pat Kane, (2) Aletum Ltd., (3) Pat Kane, (4-5) L.Uunila / Parks Canada

# Goals

Indigenous knowledge holders, community members, and key partners were engaged to identify broad goals for the stewardship of Thaidene Nënë. The following goals have emerged as foundational to the plan:

## 1. Promote nuwé ch’anie

Ensuring nuwé ch’anie is practiced, nurtured, and passed on is vital for the wellbeing of people and the land. Nuwé ch’anie is strong. However, as Elders pass on, their knowledge of language and culture is at risk. Sacred places within Thaidene Nënë must be protected, and the stories that are told about them must be shared; Aboriginal and treaty rights must be upheld; Dene Yatı must be protected and revitalized; and youth must be mentored.

## 2. Sustain the ecological integrity of Thaidene Nënë

Together, the water, soil, rocks, plants, animals, migrations, wildfires, freezing, thawing, and all other parts and processes in the ecosystems of Thaidene Nënë have created a landscape that, for countless generations, has supported nuwé ch’anie. If Thaidene Nënë remains healthy, it will continue to offer this prosperity. However, Thaidene Nënë cannot speak for itself. We have a responsibility to pay attention to what is happening on the land and to take action to protect it.

## 3. Maintain healthy relationships

Relationships in Thaidene Nënë – within and between Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáıtı (the operational management board), the Partners (Łutsël K’é Dene First Nation, Northwest Territory Métis Nation, Parks Canada, and Government of Northwest Territories), and other signatory Indigenous governments (Deninu Kųę First Nation, Yellowknives Dene First Nation) – are complex and, in the past, have often been challenging. Today, these relationships are evolving and at different stages. Thaidene Nënë is being implemented in a time of reconciliation. There is a shared understanding that Thaidene Nënë is going to be different.

## 4. Create good visitor knowledge and experiences

The ancestors walked the trails that their descendants now share with visitors. Sharing Thaidene Nënë means offering meaningful and authentic experiences for visitors, while also contributing to the vitality of ongoing local Indigenous use. The descendants of the ancestors have knowledge and stories to share with visitors that will enrich their experience when they come to Thaidene Nënë.

## 5. Support opportunities that strengthen Indigenous prosperity and well-being

The establishment and impact and benefit agreements prioritize training and employment for members of signatory Indigenous governments (Łutsël K’é Dene First Nation, Northwest Territory Métis Nation, Deninu Kųę First Nation, Yellowknives Dene First Nation, as applicable). Future policy will aim to reduce barriers to employment for members of signatory Indigenous governments, and support Indigenous businesses, while maintaining the cultural continuity and ecological integrity of Thaidene Nënë, promoting consistency and fairness, and ensuring safe and quality visitor experiences.

Do the goals provide a good strategic direction for Thaidene Nënë?

Read the draft plan for more goal content. Are we missing anything?

# Zoning for visitor activities

Zoning is an important tool for encouraging good relationships with the land, ensuring visitors are directed to appropriate areas and sensitive ecological or cultural areas are protected. Zoning does not impact Aboriginal or treaty rights.

Three zones are used in Thaidene Nënë: Zone I, II, and III. In addition to zoning, two other designations are used to guide visitor use: culturally/ecologically sensitive areas in the national park reserve and sites of cultural importance within Thaidene Nënë.

For further information on zoning, including areas being considered for zoning, please read the full draft plan.

After looking at the proposed zoning, do you have suggestions? Are there additional areas that should be considered for zoning?



Photos: (1, 3 & 5) L.Uunila / Parks Canada, (2) Tom McLennan, (4) Pat Kane

## How do I provide input?

Send comments to:  
thaidene.nene@pc.gc.ca

Comment online (available starting March 21):  
Have Your Say: <https://haveyoursay.nwt-tno.ca/>

Attend an evening community engagement session:

- |                      |                          |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| March 25 Yellowknife | April 9 Fort Smith       |
| March 26 Łutsël K'é  | April 10 Fort Resolution |
|                      | April 11 Hay River       |

Check the shared management partner websites for updated event information:  
<https://www.landoftheancestors.ca/relationshipplan.html>  
<https://parks.canada.ca/pn-np/nt/thaidene-nene/info/plan>

## Please submit comments by April 28, 2024

Feedback, minus personal information, will be considered by Thaidene Nënë xá dá yáłtı and the shared management partners in the development of the final draft plan.