



Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá

Watching Over Thaidene Nënë

Thaidene Nënë Relationship Plan
(Management Plan)

2026



Lutsël K'è Dene
First Nation



Northwest Territory
Métis Nation



Parks
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(Management Plan)**

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THAIDENE NĚNĚ BADI XÁ - WATCHING OVER THAIDENE NĚNĚ: THAIDENE NĚNĚ RELATIONSHIP PLAN (MANAGEMENT PLAN), 2026.

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For more information about the relationship (management) plan or about Thaidene NĚnĚ:

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Foreword

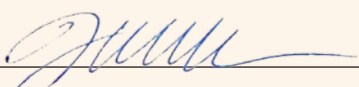
On behalf of Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation, Northwest Territory Métis Nation, Parks Canada, and the Government of the Northwest Territories (the Partners), we are honoured to present the relationship plan (management plan) for Thaidene Nënë, *Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá*, which means “watching over Thaidene Nënë” in Dene Yatı.

Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá is the first plan for Thaidene Nënë, the land of the ancestors. It has been developed, and will be implemented, in a time of national reconciliation. As such, it shines light on the building of relationships and lays down important guiding principles rooted in the Indigenous cultures that call this place home. Flowing from commitments found in the Thaidene Nënë Agreements, *Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá* supports the continued use of consensus-based and collaborative approaches to stewardship. The plan is grounded in the central principle of nuwé ch'anie, which describes all Dene values and knowledge systems along with the responsibility of caring for the land, water, and wildlife. Being guided by the principle of nuwé ch'anie means we are honouring the ancestors, the original stewards of the area.

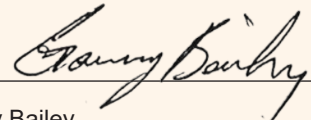
There is much work ahead to implement the vision, goals, and objectives found in *Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá*. We thank Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, and stakeholder groups, including tourism operators, researchers, leaseholders, and visitors to Thaidene Nënë for taking the time to review the draft plan and provide feedback. We look forward to meeting the objectives of the plan together.

We would also like to extend a mársı cho (big thank you) to everyone involved in the development of this first relationship plan for Thaidene Nënë, including Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yatı and the staff and representatives of the Partners. It took dedication, a sincere commitment to ongoing dialogue and consensus building, and a willingness to learn from one another to draft, revise, and finalize this plan. *Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá* marks a milestone with respect to intergovernmental collaboration and Indigenous protected areas. *Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá* provides a strong and solid foundation for yúnethé xá (for the future) of Thaidene Nënë and those that will watch over it.

Congratulations on this very important milestone!



James Marlowe
Chief, Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation



Garry Bailey
President, Northwest Territory Métis Nation



Julie Aviva Dabrusin
Minister of the Environment, Climate Change and Nature
Government of Canada



Jay Macdonald
Minister of Environment and Climate Change
Government of the Northwest Territories



Message from the Chair

Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá is a beautiful expression of how the Indigenous Peoples of the Area love the land and the commitments we will all take into the future to protect Thaidene Nënë.

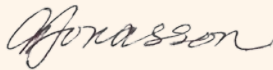
It was important for the members of Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáłtı that this first plan for Thaidene Nënë be rooted in the concept of relationship. Our first relationship is the sacred relationship that we as the Indigenous Peoples of the Area and all the ancestors have with Thaidene Nënë, which is grounded in nuwé ch'aníe. This plan also focuses on the relationships that have formed and are being built between the Partners and with Signatory Indigenous Governments. Together, we can do great things.

Rooting *Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá* in relationship is essential for yúnethé xá (for the future) – for ensuring healthy land, water, and wildlife now and for future generations, who will continue to practice nuwé ch'aníe to keep our culture, language, and traditions alive (nuwé ch'aníe bet'aít'ı xá).

If we can sustain healthy relationships, Thaidene Nënë will thrive.

We dedicate *Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá* to all our ancestors who have come before us. We are guided by the teachings from our Elders, who continue to pass this knowledge along into the future.

Mársı cho,



Adeline Jonasson
Chair



THAIDENE NĒNÉ
XÁ DÁ YÁŁTI

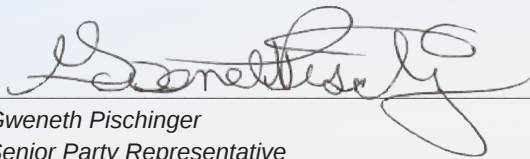


Recommendations

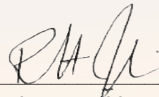
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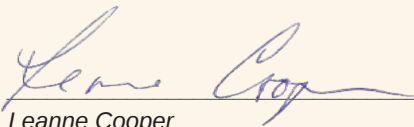
Iris Catholique
Manager, Thaidene Nënë Department
Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation



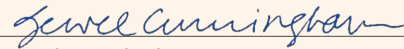
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Glossary

Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá uses Dene Yatı¹ (one of the Dene languages used in the Thaidene Nënë area) for places and names. There is variation within, as well as between, languages and dialects used in the area.

This document uses the following Dene Yatı terms:

Dene Yatı	English	Pronunciation
ʔedacho Túe / Kúe	Artillery Lake	ay-daw-cho too-way / koo
ʔedacho Tł'ázi	Timber Bay	ay-daw-cho t-aw-zee
ʔena Tué	Gagnon Lake	en-aw too
ʔidor Bekue Chëlé Tł'ázi	Christie Bay	ed-door beck-kooch ell-ell t-aw-zee
Bet'síghí	Utsingi Point	bet see-yee
Deh Cho	big river (Mackenzie River)	day-cho
Dene Yatı	the Dene language used in the Thaidene Nënë area	den-ay yaw-tea
Desnéthcheé	spiritual gathering site	dez-net-chay
Dzén Kín	Muskrat (Rat) Lodge (a sacred place on ʔedacho Tué)	dzen keen
Hachoghe	a powerful and giant man	ha-cho
Hakéth Hoʔé / Kaché Kaʔá	the place you go up to the lake (Pike's Portage)	ha-ket ho ay / kot-chay kaw-aw
Háskén Chëlaa	Fairchild Point	haws-kon chel-aw
Kaché / Taché	Charlton Bay area	kot-chay / tot-chay
Kaché Kaʔá / Hakéth Hoʔé	the place you go up to the lake (Pike's Portage)	kot-chay kaw-aw / ha-ket ho ay
Kaché Kuwé / Tacheé Tláázi	McLeod Bay	kot-chay koo-way / tot-chay claw-zee
Keldelé	open shallow water, all year around (Taltheilei Narrows)	kaw-dell-ay
Kesúchai Kuwé / Tesúchaí Tu	Siltaza Lake	kez-oo-ch-eye koo-way / tez-oo-ch-eye too

¹ These place names and terms are from Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation and may not reflect place names from other Signatory Indigenous Governments.

Dene Yatı	English	Pronunciation
Łúh Chogh Tué	big whitefish lake (Whitefish Lake)	hloo cho too
Łús Chené	Hachoghe's (the Giant's) shovel/stick handle	hloos chen-ay
Nı Hat'nı Dene	watchers of the land (Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation guardians)	nee hot-nee den-ay
Nuwé ch'anıe	principle that describes all Dene values and knowledge systems.	new-way ch awe-nee
Taché / Kaché	Charlton Bay area	tot-chay / kot-chay
Tacheé Tláázı́ / Kaché Kuwé	McLeod Bay	tot-chay claw-zee / kot-chay koo-way
Tesúchaı Tu / Kesúchaı Kuwé	Siltaza Lake	tez-oo-ch-eye too / kez-oo-ch-eye koo-way
Thaidene Nënë	Land of the Ancestors	thigh-den-ay nen-ay
Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá	watching over Thaidene Nënë (title of the relationship plan)	thigh-den-ay nen-ay bye-dee ha
Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáltı	those who speak for Thaidene Nënë	thigh-den-ay nen-ay haw daw yaw-tea
Thılo Dēzé	Thelon River	th-ee-law dez-ay
Tı'ąkēle	Thompson Landing	k eye-call-ay
Tsá Kín	Beaver Lodge (a sacred place on ʔedacho Tué)	tsaw keen
Tsąkuı Thedá	Lady of the falls (geographically, this is Parry Falls, but the Dene Yatı name has more significance)	tsaw-kwee they-daw
Tsąkuı Thedá Dezé	Tsąkuı Thedá's river (Lockhart River)	tsaw-kwee they-daw dez-ay
Tsátué	Beaver Lake, the old Dene Yatı name for ʔedacho Túe (Artillery Lake)	tsaw-too-way
Tthe Kálıka Tué	Stark Lake	they kaw-nee-kaw too-way
Tthé Chēlaa	rocky point (Maufelly Point)	tay chel-aw
Tu Nedhé	Great Slave Lake	too ned-day



Terms and Meanings

In this document the following terms have certain meanings:

Term	Meaning
Indigenous Peoples of the Area	Means the Dene and Métis descendants of Thaidene Nënë ancestors.
Partners	Means Łutsël K'è Dene First Nation, Northwest Territory Métis Nation, Parks Canada, and the Government of the Northwest Territories, as applicable.
Regional Management Board	Has the same meaning as “Regional Management Board” or “Regional Management Body” in a Thaidene Nënë Agreement.
Signatory Indigenous Governments	Means Łutsël K'è Dene First Nation, Northwest Territory Métis Nation, Deninu K'ųé First Nation, Yellowknives Dene First Nation, as applicable, that are signatories to the Thaidene Nënë Agreements.
Thaidene Nënë Agreements	Means any establishment agreement or impact benefit agreement between a Signatory Indigenous Government and Parks Canada or the Government of the Northwest Territories. ²
Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáłtı	Has the same meaning as “Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáłtı,” “Thaidene Nënë Management Board,” and “Operational Management Board” in the Thaidene Nënë Agreements.

² The Thaidene Nënë Agreements include: Agreement to Establish Thaidene Nënë Indigenous Protected Area, Territorial Protected Area, and Wildlife Conservation Area between Łutsël K'è Dene First Nation and the Government of the Northwest Territories, Agreement to Establish Thaidene Nënë Territorial Protected Area between Deninu K'ųé First Nation and the Government of the Northwest Territories, Agreement to Establish Thaidene Nënë Territorial Protected Area between Northwest Territory Métis Nation and the Government of the Northwest Territories, Agreement to Establish Thaidene Nënë Indigenous Protected Area and National Park Reserve between Łutsël K'è Dene First Nation and Parks Canada Agency, Impact and Benefit Agreement for the East Arm National Park Reserve (otherwise known as “Thaidene Nene”) between Northwest Territory Métis Nation and Parks Canada Agency, Denesolíné: An agreement between Deninu K'ųé First Nation and Parks Canada Agency regarding Thaidene Nene National Park Reserve, and Final Agreement Regarding Thaidene Nene National Park Reserve: An Agreement between Yellowknives Dene First Nation and Parks Canada Agency.



Map 1 – Where is Thaidene Nënë Indigenous Protected Area?



1 Introduction

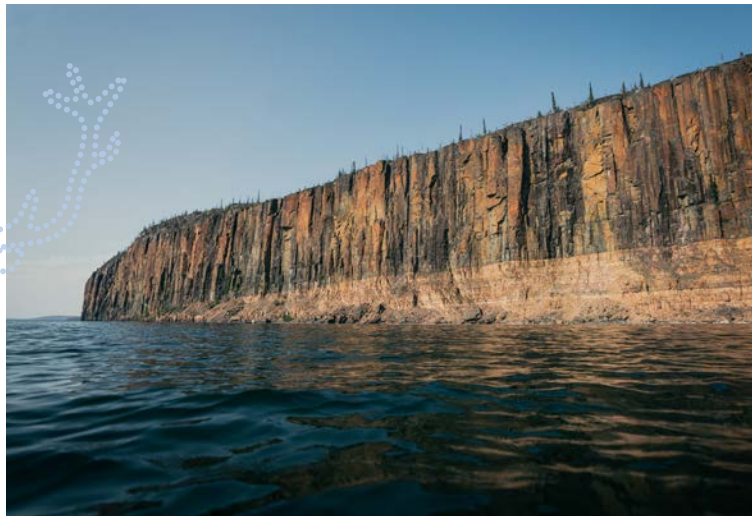
Thaidene Nënë Indigenous Protected Area (Thaidene Nënë) is located within the territories of Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation, Northwest Territory Métis Nation, Deninu Kųę First Nation, and Yellowknives Dene First Nation.

These nations are signatories to Thaidene Nënë Agreements in the Northwest Territories, Canada (see Map 1). Additionally, Mųwhi Gogha Dè Nıłłtłèè, the traditional use area of the Tıłchų, overlaps a portion of Thaidene Nënë's protected area boundary and provides for certain rights under the Tıłchų Agreement, such as harvesting rights. The North Slave Métis Alliance also has been recognized in court as having a *prima facie* right to harvest caribou in Thaidene Nënë.

Thaidene Nënë, which means "Land of the Ancestors," has sustained the Indigenous Peoples of the Area from time immemorial. Thaidene Nënë is a largely pristine and healthy landscape because of the countless generations who have cared for the land and water. Nuwé ch'aníe, the principle that describes the values and knowledge systems of the Indigenous Peoples of the Area, is inherently connected to the land and is vital to the ongoing stewardship of Thaidene Nënë.

Protected areas such as Thaidene Nënë are often guided by management plans. These plans set out a long-term vision and 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, Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáłı and the Partners, have chosen to name this management plan a relationship plan. This designation highlights the importance of the relationships between the Indigenous Peoples of the Area, the land, water, and wildlife.

Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá is built on the foundation of nuwé ch'aníe that has protected Thaidene Nënë for millennia. The plan draws on the strength of nuwé ch'aníe and provides direction on how we will continue to steward Thaidene Nënë for generations to come.



How does this plan support people?

For the Indigenous Peoples of the Area:

Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá ensures and respects the practice of Aboriginal and treaty rights. Indigenous laws and traditions are the foundation of looking after Thaidene Nënë. This plan ensures that nuwé ch'aníe, the sacred relationship between people and land, continues.

For Indigenous business owners from Signatory Indigenous Governments:

Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá helps support Indigenous economic development.

For tourism licence holders and people who hold leases in Thaidene Nënë:

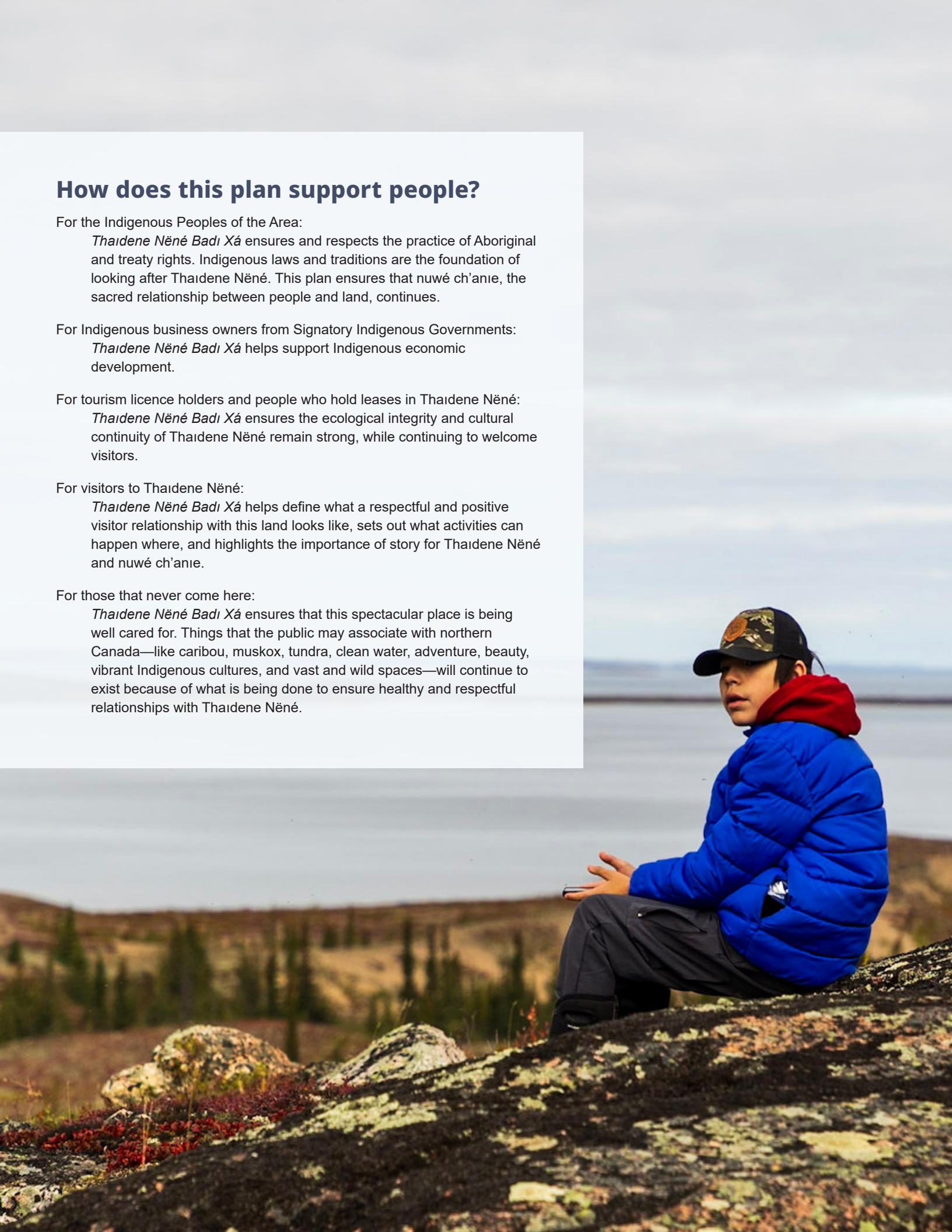
Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá ensures the ecological integrity and cultural continuity of Thaidene Nënë remain strong, while continuing to welcome visitors.

For visitors to Thaidene Nënë:

Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá helps define what a respectful and positive visitor relationship with this land looks like, sets out what activities can happen where, and highlights the importance of story for Thaidene Nënë and nuwé ch'aníe.

For those that never come here:

Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá ensures that this spectacular place is being well cared for. Things that the public may associate with northern Canada—like caribou, muskox, tundra, clean water, adventure, beauty, vibrant Indigenous cultures, and vast and wild spaces—will continue to exist because of what is being done to ensure healthy and respectful relationships with Thaidene Nënë.



2 Background

Thaidene Nënë is a land of soaring cliffs, stunning waterfalls, and giant eskers. The deepest water in North America is in ʔidor Bekue Chëlé Tł'ázı (Christie Bay) in Tu Nedhé (Great Slave Lake). Tu Nedhé is surrounded by boreal forest, which transitions to subarctic forest and eventually to tundra as you move northeast. Across these varied landscapes there are numerous lakes, rivers, and bogs.

Origins

There are different explanations for how Thaidene Nënë came to be.

The Indigenous Peoples of the Area, and throughout the Northwest Territories, have ancient stories that describe the origins of landscape features throughout Thaidene Nënë. For example, long ago, there was a giant man named Hachoghe. He was a powerful person who protected the people from giant animals, including giant beavers.

One day, Hachoghe was at Tsátué (Beaver Lake), the old name for ʔedacho Túe (Artillery Lake). He noticed a beaver lodge. Using a shovel, Hachoghe began digging out the large lodge. There were giant beavers living in the lodge, but they escaped and began making their way towards Tu Nedhé. Hachoghe threw his shovel at the beavers, but he missed and his shovel broke.

Hachoghe followed the beavers. He broke through a dam they had built at the end of ʔedacho Túe, releasing water and creating what is now known as the Tsąkui Thedá Dezé (Lockhart River). Eventually, Hachoghe caught and killed one of the beavers.

Hachoghe shared the beaver meat with the people because they were very hungry. There was an elderly woman, whose husband had passed on and who had no children. She wanted some of the beaver's blood, but there wasn't enough for her. The next day, Hachoghe and the people continued on towards Tu Nedhé.

When the group arrived at Desnéthcheé, the mouth of the river, they realized the old lady wasn't with them anymore. Two young runners were sent back to look for her. In some versions of the story, one of the runners is a man named Satl'ulé (sun beam). He turned himself into a fly and flew around the river. He eventually found the old woman at the last camp.

The old woman explained that the Creator had asked her to volunteer for eternity to sit in that spot and help those who visited her. The rocks were already forming around her legs and arms, changing the flow of the river and creating a dramatic waterfall. We know the place where the old lady sits as Tsąkui Thedá, the Lady of the Falls. Tsąkui Thedá is the heart of Thaidene Nënë, everything flows out from her.



Hachoghe continued to follow the other beavers across Tu Nedhé towards the Deh Cho (Mackenzie River). He broke through at least two more dams on the way, which are now the narrows between Tthé Chëlaa (Maufelly Point) and Háskén Chëlaa (Fairchild Point), and at Keldelé (Talthelēi Narrows).

There are other explanations for Thaidene Nënë's spectacular features. The geology and geography of this area are also attributed to the work of ancient ice sheets. The glacier that covered Thaidene Nënë melted away from the south toward the

northeast. It created vast lakes, including Lake McConnell and Lake Thelon. Over time, these large lakes drained creating Tu Nedhé and Thílo Dëzé (the Thelon River), respectively.

Many northern species rely on vast, intact areas to thrive; the lake, forest, and tundra landscapes of Thaidene Nënë are important components of their ranges. This is a landscape that both Arctic and boreal species use, such as barren-ground caribou, muskox, wolverine, grizzly bear, wolf, moose, lynx, and black bear. Fish such as lake trout, lake whitefish, and Arctic grayling are abundant. Important waterfowl staging and bird nesting areas are also found throughout Thaidene Nënë.

Today, Thaidene Nënë is a place of living connection between the land, the water, the plants, animals, and people. Indigenous ways of life are practiced, nurtured, and passed on to future generations.

Thaidene Nënë is the heart of the Łutsël K'é Dene homeland, a rich cultural landscape that contains numerous places of cultural and spiritual importance to the Indigenous Peoples of the Area.

What types of protected areas are included in Thaidene Nënë?

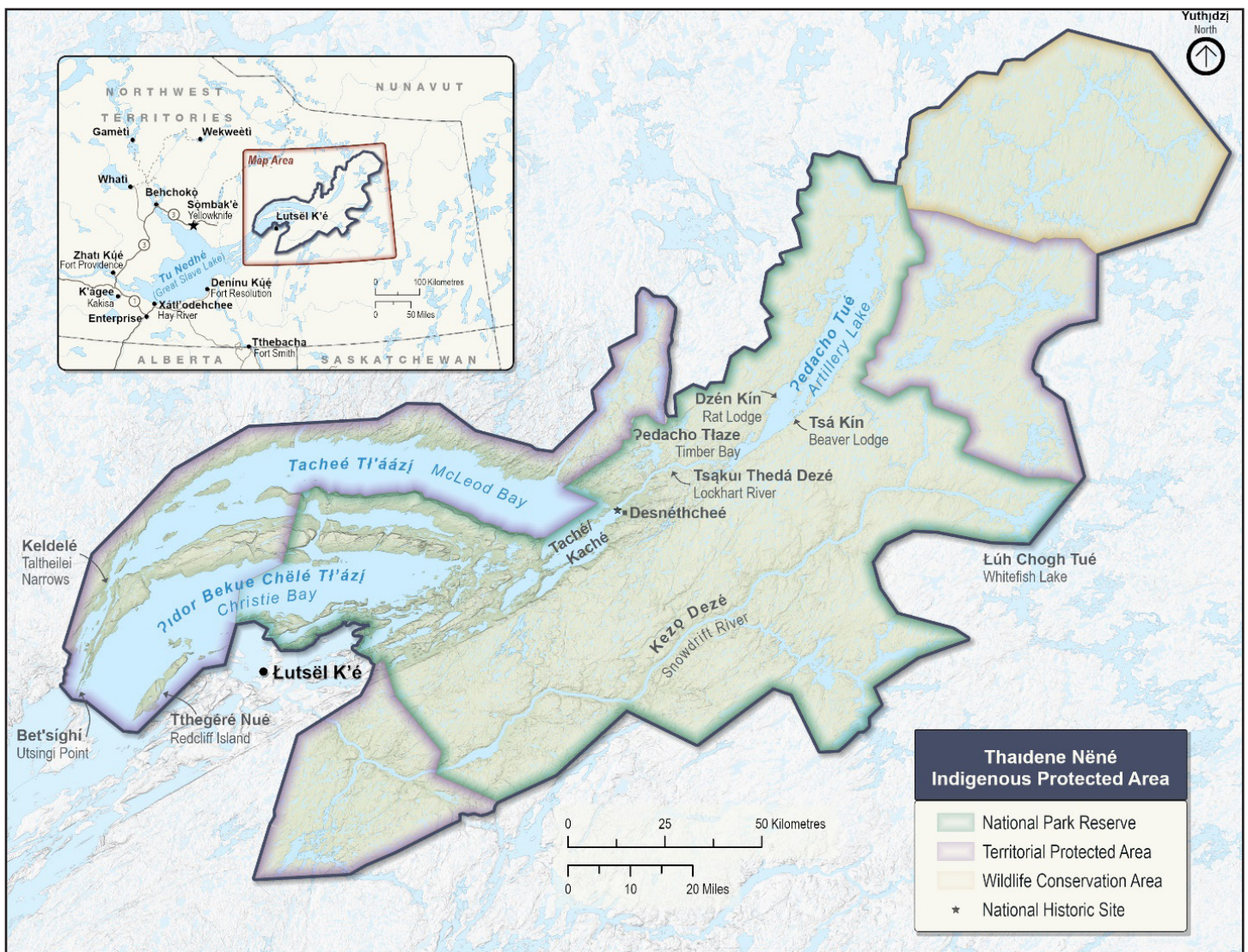
Thaidene Nënë Indigenous Protected Area is 26,376 square kilometres in size. Thaidene Nënë was established using Łutsël K'é Dene law, the Thaidene Nënë Agreements, the *Canada National Parks Act*, and the *Northwest Territories Protected Areas Act* and *Wildlife Act*. The Indigenous Protected Area designated by Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation encompasses all of Thaidene Nënë, within which are a National Park Reserve, a Territorial Protected Area, and a territorial Wildlife Conservation Area (see Map 2).

The core of Thaidene Nënë is protected as a National Park Reserve through the *Canada National Parks Act*. National parks are established to protect and present outstanding representative examples of natural landscapes that occur in each of Canada's 39 unique natural regions. Thaidene Nënë is considered an outstanding example of the Northwestern Boreal Uplands Natural Region. National parks promote understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment in a way that maintains their ecological integrity. In

Thaidene Nënë National Park Reserve of Canada with the Signatory Indigenous governments, Parks Canada has also committed to the continuation of Indigenous ways of life.

Other parts of Thaidene Nënë are protected as a Territorial Protected Area through the *Northwest Territories' Protected Areas Act*. Thaidene Nënë Territorial Protected Area was established and is cared for collaboratively by the Government of the Northwest Territories

Map 2 – Thaidene Nënë Indigenous Protected Area



and Signatory Indigenous Governments to protect the biodiversity, ecological integrity, and cultural continuity of the area.

The most northerly part of Thaidene Nënë is designated as a Wildlife Conservation Area under the *Northwest Territories Wildlife Act* for the purpose of management and protection of wildlife. The area is currently protected from development through a Land Withdrawal Order under the *Northwest Territories Lands Act*.

Fort Reliance National Historic Site of Canada is located within Thaidene Nënë National Park Reserve near Desnéthcheé (the spiritual gathering site for Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation) in the area known as Taché/Kaché. The site features four stone fireplaces and chimneys that are considered unique relics of the history of the exploration and commerce in Canada's North. Designated in 1953, the National Historic Site commemorates Captain George Back's travels along the Thílo Džé and Great Fish (now Back) River in the 1830s.

Who makes decisions and takes care of Thaidene Nënë?

Making operational decisions about and taking care of Thaidene Nënë is the shared responsibility of the Partners. The Partners are Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation, Northwest Territory Métis Nation, Parks Canada, and the Government of the Northwest Territories. Deninu Kųé First Nation and Yellowknives Dene First Nation, through their Thaidene Nënë Agreements, also play a key role in providing guidance for stewardship of Thaidene Nënë.³ The Signatory Indigenous Governments have different responsibilities and roles on two boards: Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáłtı and the Regional Management Board.

Tasked with thinking long term for the land and the people, Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáłtı provides direction on planning, operations, monitoring, and evaluation within Thaidene Nënë. Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáłtı uses consensus to make decisions.⁴ These decisions, which are referrals to the Partners, guide how operations are carried out to protect ecological integrity and cultural continuity. Members of Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáłtı are appointed by the Partners. Members do not represent the Partner that appointed them; they speak for Thaidene Nënë.

The Regional Management Board provides recommendations and guidance to Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáłtı and provides recommendations to Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation, the Government of the Northwest Territories, and Parks Canada. Recommendations are made by consensus. Members are appointed by, as applicable, the three Akaitcho Dene First Nations (Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation, Yellowknives Dene First Nation, and Deninu Kųé First Nation), the Government of the Northwest Territories, and Parks Canada.

Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáłtı, with support of the Partners, is responsible for the development of the relationship plan. The Regional Management Board reviews and provides recommendations on the plan.

The Partners are ultimately responsible for operational matters within Thaidene Nënë.

³ Work is ongoing between the Government of the Northwest Territories and Yellowknives Dene First Nation towards concluding an agreement regarding the Territorial Protected Area.

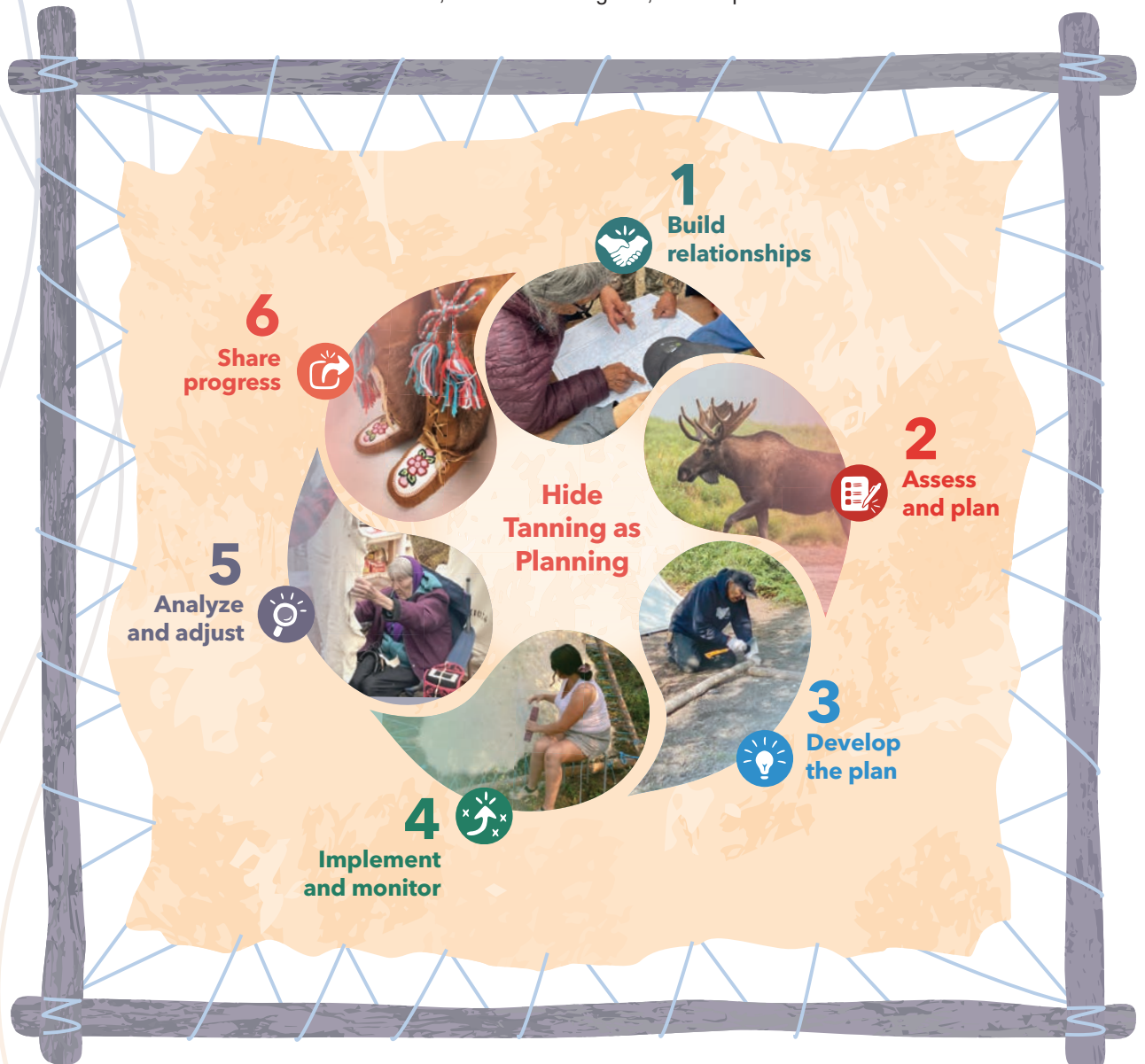
⁴ Decisions are subject to the issue resolution process set out in the applicable Thaidene Nënë Agreements if invoked by a Partner.

3 Planning Context

Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá is the first plan for Thaidene Nënë. Much of the work for this first 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.

The plan is for ten years and includes a set of guiding principles, a long-term vision for Thaidene Nënë, and a series of goals,

objectives, and targets/indicators that will help us make progress towards achieving the plan's vision.



What can hide tanning can teach us about planning?

Throughout the process of developing *Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá*, Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáłtı took inspiration from hide tanning, which is an important cultural practice for the Indigenous Peoples of the Area. Hide tanning offers a relevant metaphor to demonstrate the steps of planning (see Table 1).

Table 1 – Hide Tanning as Planning

Hide Tanning Process	Planning Process
1 Make connections with and develop respectful relationships with hunters to obtain a hide to be tanned. Thaidene Nënë provides many types of hides—moose, muskox, beaver, caribou, etc.	Establish effective connections with communities, stakeholders, local leadership to ensure a broad range of views are represented.
2 What type of hide is needed? What will it be used for, and how can we ensure the hide we start with will meet our needs? Do we need the strength of a moose hide? The warmth of caribou? Speak to Elders who carry the knowledge of many different types of hides and uses.	Determine scope. Follow a critical path using appropriate steps and methods. Work with the right people. Identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Determine what needs to be addressed.
3 There are certain steps in the hide tanning process that are followed every time. Speak to knowledge holders to ensure the right process is followed. Keep your finished product in mind so your hide tanning achieves your goals.	Identify guiding principles. Develop a vision, along with goals, objectives, and indicators. Identify annual workplans to achieve objectives and targets.
4 Elders have helped guide the project, but now the work must be done: stretching, drying, scraping, and smoking. Each step in tanning the hide prepares for the next step and helps meet the ultimate goal of creating a useful hide.	Implement and monitor progress through each reporting period of the plan. Each step should build on previous successes and lead toward the overall vision.
5 Sometimes the hide tanning process goes smoothly, but sometimes adjustments are needed to ensure we meet our goals. Do we need to dry the hide more? Has it been thoroughly scraped? Check your progress and speak with Elders to ensure your plans are still working well.	Analyze progress and adjust where necessary. Speak with local people, knowledge holders, and other experts to assess the effectiveness of the plan in achieving goals.
6 Hide tanning is a good way to pass on intergenerational teachings. The completed hide will allow people to sew for their families, to make sure they have moccasins, mitts, equipment, and clothing needed to pursue their traditional activities on the land. But as good as that hide was, there will be the need for other hides for other goals in the future. Be ready to begin the process again.	Share progress with local communities, leadership, stakeholders, and others to whom you are accountable annually. Within a ten-year cycle, review and revise the plan.

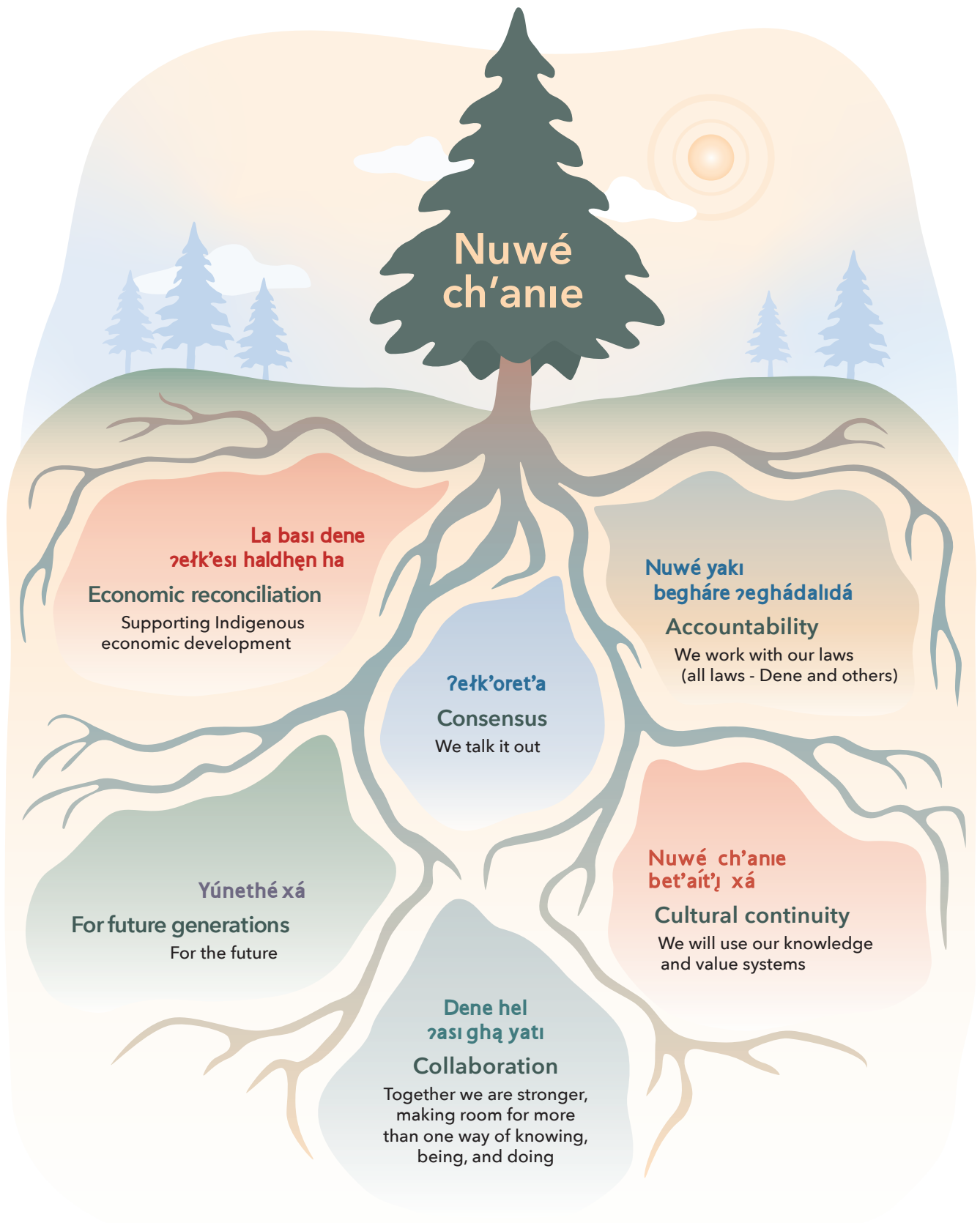


How did Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáłtı and the Partners involve others?

Thaidene Nënë Badi Xá was shaped by feedback received through consultations and engagement. In 2022 and 2023, a series of workshops engaging Indigenous knowledge holders, community members, and key partners was held to develop the concept for the plan, identify broad goals, and confirm the vision.

Once the draft plan was completed, Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáłtı and the Partners sought input on the draft to ensure Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, residents of the Northwest Territories, stakeholders, and Canadians had an opportunity to provide feedback on the future direction of Thaidene Nënë. Indigenous consultation and engagement was important to understand interests and concerns regarding the draft plan, and was run separately from and for a longer period than the public consultation and engagement process. Community engagement sessions were held in Łutsël K'é, Yellowknife, Fort Resolution, Hay River, and Fort Smith in March and April 2024. Feedback was also sought through an online survey and email submissions.

Feedback was carefully considered prior to the development of the final plan.



4 Guiding Principles

Nuwé ch'aníe is the principle that describes Dene values and knowledge systems, including responsibilities to care for the land, water, and wildlife.

Nuwé ch'aníe encompasses cultural, linguistic, political, and ecological understandings of the relationship the Indigenous Peoples of the Area have with Thaidene Nënë. Ensuring nuwé ch'aníe is practiced, nurtured, and passed on is vital for the well-being of people and for ensuring cultural continuity.

Flowing from nuwé ch'aníe 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.





5 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.⁵



⁵ The vision statement honours and is adapted from the Łutsël K'é community vision for Thaidene Nënë, which is described in Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation's establishment agreements. The plan's vision was reviewed and endorsed by Northwest Territory Métis Nation and Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation community members at an early planning workshop in June 2022.

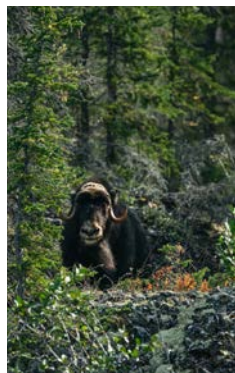
6 Goals

Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá contains five goals:

- Goal 1 – Promote nuwé ch'anie;
- Goal 2 – Sustain the ecological integrity of Thaidene Nënë;
- Goal 3 – Build and maintain healthy relationships;
- Goal 4 – Create good visitor knowledge and experiences; and
- Goal 5 – Support opportunities that strengthen Indigenous prosperity and well-being.

Each goal has several objectives and identifies targets/indicators for the Partners to implement over the next 10 years.⁶ Each Partner has different responsibilities for implementation as outlined in the Thaidene Nënë Agreements.⁷ Annual workplans will be developed by the Partners in collaboration with Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáłti.

Monitoring commitments are woven through many of the goal areas. Together, they create a comprehensive system that addresses the ecological integrity and cultural continuity components that we are seeking to sustain, support, and promote in Thaidene Nënë.



⁶ Targets/indicators must be interpreted wholly within context of their corresponding objective.

⁷ Any requirement for funding to deliver on the objectives of the relationship plan does not automatically commit any of the Partners to providing that funding.

Goal 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 and other Indigenous languages of Thaidene Nënë must be protected and revitalized; and youth must be mentored.



Objective 1.1: The Indigenous Peoples of the Area maintain their relationship with Thaidene Nënë and cultural continuity is preserved.

Targets/Indicators:

- 1.1.1 Harvesting within Thaidene Nënë by the Indigenous Peoples of the Area is a key component of cultural continuity.
- 1.1.2 Indigenous governments apply their own protocols for their members' use of Thaidene Nënë.
- 1.1.3 The Signatory Indigenous Governments have opportunities to identify place names, as outlined in the Thaidene Nënë Agreements.
- 1.1.4 Indigenous place names are used in Thaidene Nënë publications, including documents, maps, reports, presentations, brochures, and videos.

Objective 1.2: Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáłtı uses Dene Yatı in governance, planning, and community engagements.

Target/Indicator:

- 1.2.1 Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáłtı meetings, workshops, community engagement sessions, documents, presentations, advertisements, and other communications include Indigenous languages.

Objective 1.3: Young people are learning nuwé ch’anie from the Elders.

Target/Indicator:

- 1.3.1 Land-based Elder and youth programming is delivered in Thaidene Nënë. These programs include sharing language, traditional knowledge, harvesting, spiritual connections to the land, and Indigenous laws and stories of Thaidene Nënë.

Objective 1.4: Knowledge of cultural resources is recorded to share with future generations.

Target/Indicator:

- 1.4.1 Important cultural resources are identified, and their condition is documented.

Goal 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'aníe. 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. Our observations and action will be informed and guided by nuwé ch'aníe, which includes Indigenous knowledge.

Cumulative effects, or changes in the environment over time from human activities and natural processes, must be considered. Wildfires, extreme weather, and other climate-induced impacts have not been experienced before at this magnitude. Climate change creates a significant unknown with factors that are less predictable and more severe. Changing snow and ice patterns, shifting wildlife populations and habitats, increases in invasive species, increased intensity of wildfires, and a changing landscape due to permafrost thaw are just a few examples of observed differences. These rapid changes and industrial development adjacent to Thaidene Nënë are placing increased pressure on wildlife and their habitats. Increased use of Thaidene Nënë by visitors may also have the potential to negatively impact species and their habitat that Indigenous communities rely on. Waste left on the land from historical use must be addressed to ensure healthy lands.

Along with the uncertainty of the future, the current baseline condition of Thaidene Nënë is not fully understood. Monitoring the state of Thaidene Nënë's ecological integrity is important to help respond to changes in the landscape. Current conditions will be assessed in light of historic and current impacts on the landscape. Indigenous knowledge will be key to understanding past conditions.

Objective 2.1: All habitats and species are sustained.

Targets/Indicators:

- | | | | |
|-------|--|--------|---|
| 2.1.1 | Climate change trends, projections, and likely impacts on the biodiversity of Thaidene Nënë are identified and tracked over time, including identifying the presence and distribution of species. Observations of change are informed by Indigenous knowledge. | 2.1.5 | An integrated research and monitoring program is developed collaboratively. It identifies knowledge gaps and includes research priorities. |
| 2.1.2 | Key habitat within Thaidene Nënë is mapped to support good decision-making. | 2.1.6 | Climate adaptation strategies are guided by results from research and monitoring programs. |
| 2.1.3 | Wildlife stewardship and management plans are implemented as appropriate by the partners. | 2.1.7 | A water resource protection strategy is developed. It includes visitor/community education and invasive species measures. |
| 2.1.4 | Fire management planning considers climate change impacts, the protection of the community of Łutsël K'é, critical habitat, species at risk, and other key species such as caribou. | 2.1.8 | A visitor use management policy upholds ecological integrity goals. |
| | | 2.1.9 | Harvester education supports the ongoing conservation of key habitats and species in Thaidene Nënë. |
| | | 2.1.10 | Increased understanding of the carbon balance in Thaidene Nënë and high biodiversity areas is developed, including how these areas might be impacted by climate change. |





Objective 2.2: Indigenous knowledge guides how we understand ecological integrity.

Targets/Indicators:

- 2.2.1 Indigenous knowledge of Thaidene Nënë is included in all Goal 2 studies, mapping, plans, standards, strategies, programs, planning, and policies.
- 2.2.2 Indigenous knowledge is included in management decisions regarding Thaidene Nënë.

Objective 2.3: Guardians are observing the land and supporting conservation objectives.

Target/Indicator:

- 2.3.1 An Indigenous guardian program expansion strategy is developed.

Objective 2.4: Historic waste left on the land is addressed, and garbage is cleaned-up.

Targets/Indicators:

- 2.4.1 An assessment of waste sites is conducted to identify locations, and a clean-up plan is developed that includes setting standards and prioritizing sites.
- 2.4.2 A “pack it in, pack it out” policy is followed by all users of Thaidene Nënë.

Goal 3 – Build and maintain healthy relationships

Relationships in Thaidene Nënë—within and between Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáłti, the Partners, and other Signatory Indigenous Governments—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.

Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáłti has made great progress since its formation in 2021. Positive relationships have been formed, building upon the foundations set out in the agreements. Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáłti has formalized its operational procedures and has been successful in meeting its work-planning targets and indicators.

The approach to shared decision-making and operations makes room for multiple ways of knowing, being, and doing. It allows for new and innovative forms of collaboration, where everyone has a role in achieving shared outcomes. It requires a commitment to ongoing dialogue and consensus building and a willingness to learn and implement.



Objective 3.1: Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáłti's decision making is respectful and honours multiple ways of knowing.

Target/Indicator:

- 3.1.1 Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáłti's operating procedures and processes welcome different knowledges and approaches, create space for reflection and opportunities to make changes, and strengthen the use of Dene Yati.

Objective 3.2: The Partners have healthy relationships with each other and work together on implementation.

Targets/Indicators:

- 3.2.1 Joint policy, planning, and communications systems are in place that all Partners have had a voice in developing.
- 3.2.2 Operations are collaborative, and human and financial resources are effectively used.

Goal 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.

It is important that visitor experiences have a cultural connection to the ancestors' stories, and that these stories are conveyed in a culturally appropriate and authentic way. It is also important that we work to tell the whole story of Thaidene Nënë, to shine light on the existence and resilience of the ancestors. As Thaidene Nënë employees and tour operators share this knowledge with visitors, visitors will gain increased reverence for the land, and will tread lightly and with respect. The stories of Thaidene Nënë also reach beyond those who can visit, to all Canadians and to the world.

Thaidene Nënë is just beginning to welcome the world. Developing the infrastructure, protocols, and activities that contribute to meaningful experiences for visitors will take time. To guide this work and ensure visitation is sustainable, we must understand who will come to Thaidene Nënë and why, and what their impact will be. It will also be important for Thaidene Nënë staff to promote practices for all users that keep the land and water clean and ensure sites are respected.



Objective 4.1: Thaidene Nënë has diverse visitor offerings that provide opportunities to understand and appreciate local Indigenous cultures, histories, and values in an accessible, inclusive, and meaningful way.

Targets/Indicators:

- 4.1.1 A tourism strategy is developed that identifies target markets and prescribes authentic, cultural experiences that connect visitors to the land, people, and way of life. Product development for visitor markets is harmonized with the use and enjoyment of Thaidene Nënë by the Indigenous Peoples of the Area.
- 4.1.2 The history and culture of the Indigenous Peoples of the Area are shared, as appropriate, with visitors to foster appreciation and understanding.
- 4.1.3 Signatory Indigenous Governments are engaged to create a Commemorative Integrity Statement (CIS) for Fort Reliance National Historic Site and revise the Historic Sites and Monuments Board commemoration to reflect the heritage values of the site more accurately.

Objective 4.2: Visitors are welcomed, learn how to respect places of cultural and spiritual importance, and are informed of culturally appropriate behaviours if visiting important sites to ensure visitation is sustainable.

Targets/Indicators:

- 4.2.1 A visitor orientation program is developed. It includes allowable uses of Thaidene Nënë and a visitor code of conduct.
- 4.2.2 Visitors receive orientation programming and robust trip planning materials.
- 4.2.3 Guardians, staff, and tourism operators working in Thaidene Nënë are trained and supported to welcome visitors and provide them with authentic experiences.
- 4.2.4 Visitor access to and behaviour at important sites is managed through appropriate tools such as zoning and regulations.
- 4.2.5 Zoning and closures are communicated to visitors and enforced.
- 4.2.6 A site-specific plan is developed for the Taché/Kaché region, which includes guidelines for visitation.

Objective 4.3: Indigenous cultural activities and languages are central to visitor experiences, products, and promotion.

Targets/Indicators:

- 4.3.1 Interpretive programs are developed based on Indigenous cultures and ways of life and include Indigenous languages.
- 4.3.2 Thaidene Nënë products, promotions, advertisements, and visitor orientations include Indigenous cultures, ways of life, and languages.
- 4.3.3 Public appreciation for Thaidene Nënë is fostered through promotion and storytelling, even for those who may never visit.



Goal 5 – Support opportunities that strengthen Indigenous prosperity and well-being

Thaidene Nënë has created prosperity for countless generations of Indigenous peoples. Over the past 150 years, the western economy has created new industries and sources of wealth, but the Indigenous Peoples of the Area have been excluded from those benefits. As a protected area, Thaidene Nënë offers a new economy with a host of opportunities. A key priority is the prosperity of members of Signatory Indigenous Governments.

The Thaidene Nënë Agreements prioritize training and employment for members of Signatory Indigenous Governments, as applicable. The jobs and business opportunities available to members are focused on the conservation and tourism economy, including jobs with the Partners, as well as business opportunities including guiding, outfitting, catering, and hospitality.⁸

There have been positive employment gains made since Thaidene Nënë was established in 2019. Multiple jobs have been created in protected area operations, and a few local business operators now provide licensed tourism services to visitors.

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.



Objective 5.1: Business opportunities are created that support Thaidene Nënë and benefit Signatory Indigenous Governments and their members.

Targets/Indicators:

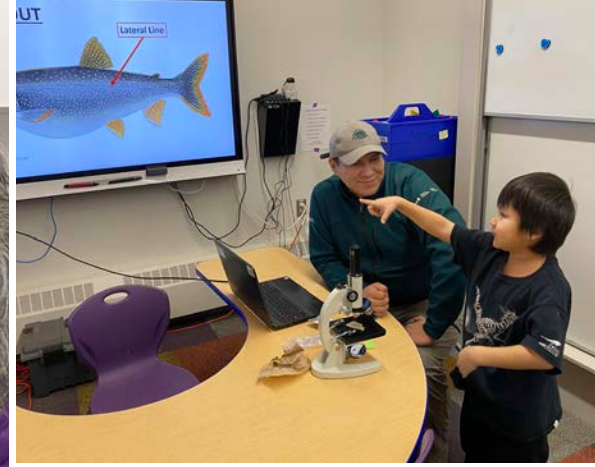
- 5.1.1 A commercial activity licensing policy and land occupancy policy are developed. These policies promote Indigenous businesses operating in Thaidene Nënë.
- 5.1.2 Non-Indigenous applicants for business licences in the National Park Reserve demonstrate how their proposed activities will support and benefit Indigenous communities.
- 5.1.3 Businesses operating within the Territorial Protected Area look to support and benefit Indigenous communities where possible (e.g., partnerships, employment, building relationships).

Objective 5.2: Maximize employment opportunities for members of Signatory Indigenous Governments for all positions within Thaidene Nënë.

Targets/Indicators:

- 5.2.1 Human resource/hiring policies support Indigenous applicants applying for and successfully attaining and retaining Thaidene Nënë jobs.
- 5.2.2 A Thaidene Nënë mentorship/leader-in-training program is developed.

⁸ Business opportunities only apply to the National Park Reserve.



Objective 5.3: Infrastructure barriers to local employment are reduced.

Targets/Indicators:

- 5.3.1 Housing units are available to support staffing of Thaidene Nënë operational positions in Łutsël K'é.⁹
- 5.3.2 An office complex and visitor centre is developed in Łutsël K'é, where staff from Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation, Parks Canada, and the Government of the Northwest Territories can work together collaboratively.

Objective 5.4: Members from Signatory Indigenous Governments, including youth, have training and education opportunities related to Thaidene Nënë.

Targets/Indicators:

- 5.4.1 Business development, tourism planning, monitoring, and other training opportunities are provided.
- 5.4.2 K-12 students learn about Thaidene Nënë through educational programming.
- 5.4.3 Scholarship opportunities are available for members of Partner Indigenous governments.

⁹ The plan does not quantify numbers; however, it is important to note that the number of housing units will not equal the number of Thaidene Nënë staff employed by Parks Canada, Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation, or the Government of the Northwest Territories.

7 Zoning for Visitor Activities

Zoning does not impact Aboriginal or treaty rights. Indigenous people exercising section 35 Aboriginal or treaty rights are not visitors.

Zoning is an important tool for encouraging good relationships with the land, ensuring visitors are directed to appropriate areas, and protecting sensitive ecological or cultural areas.

The zoning framework for Thaidene Nënë is adapted from the Parks Canada system, allowing for a unified approach for all protected areas within Thaidene Nënë.¹⁰ Cultural continuity and Indigenous ways of life are foundational to the Thaidene Nënë Agreements and the Government of the Northwest Territories' *Protected Areas Act*. As such, they are incorporated into the zoning descriptions.

Zoning for Thaidene Nënë

An overview of Thaidene Nënë zoning is presented in Map 3. Detailed zoning maps can be found throughout this section.



¹⁰ The zone descriptions are similar to, but do not completely mirror Parks Canada zoning as outlined in *Guiding Principles and Operational Policies* (1995).

Thaidene Nënë zoning framework

Zone I	Areas within Thaidene Nënë that contain unique, threatened, or endangered natural or cultural features. Preservation is the key consideration. Visitor access is not permitted in some Zone I areas. In other Zone I areas, visitor access is permitted with restrictions. Motorized access and use are not permitted.
Zone II	Extensive areas within Thaidene Nënë where ecosystem processes and Indigenous ways of life continue. Visitors have opportunities to experience the living landscape in remote areas with few to no services or facilities. Motorized access and use are allowed under specific circumstances in Zone II. For aircraft: • Aircraft take-off and landing is allowed. A permit is required in the National Park Reserve, but not in the Territorial Protected Area or Territorial Wildlife Conservation Area. For motorized boats/vessels: • Licensed guide/outfitters from Signatory Indigenous Governments may use motorized boats as part of their business on: ʔedacho Tué (Artillery Lake), Tesúchaí Tu/Kesúchaí Kuwé (Siltaza Lake), and Łúh Chogh Tué (Whitefish Lake). • Visitors may apply for a permit, which will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis for motorized boating on: - ʔedacho Tué (Artillery Lake), Tesúchaí Tu/Kesúchaí Kuwé (Siltaza Lake), and Łúh Chogh Tué (Whitefish Lake); and, - All other Zone II waterbodies with a vessel of 18' or less, powered by an electric motor of 7.5KW or less. For over-snow vehicles (e.g., snowmobiles): • Visitors may access and use Zone II by over-snow vehicle.
Zone III	Areas within Thaidene Nënë that support cultural continuity and are managed as natural environments. Visitors have opportunities to experience nature and culture through outdoor recreation activities requiring minimal services or facilities of a rustic nature. There may be commercial leases in this zone. Motorized access and use are allowed.¹¹ Visitors may use motorized boats to gain access to Zone II shoreline.

¹¹ In the National Park Reserve motorized use means aircraft with an aircraft access permit, motorized boats, and over-snow vehicles.

Map 3 – Overview of Thaidene Nënë Zoning



Zone I locations

In the National Park Reserve, 0.05 percent of the total area is protected as Zone I. There are no Zone I locations in the Territorial Protected Area. Zone I locations are shown in Map 4.

Map 4 - Zone I





No visitor access

Desnéthcheé (Spiritual Gathering Site)

The community of Łutsël K'é spends time at Desnéthcheé for a spiritual gathering every summer. There is personal and community infrastructure at the site, including a church and harbour. The gathering site of Desnéthcheé is a culturally important and sacred area closed to visitors.

Dzén Kín (Rat Lodge) and Tsá Kín (Beaver Lodge)

Dzén Kín and Tsá Kín are sacred places on ʔedacho Tué (Artillery Lake) that are closed to visitor access.

Island in ʔedacho Tl'ázi (Timber Bay)

Gahdële, a powerful medicine man, is buried on this island in ʔedacho Tl'ázi on ʔedacho Tué. Visitor access is not allowed.

Tsąkui Thedá Dezé (Lockhart River) Corridor and Islands

Tsąkui Thedá Dezé is sacred. The Zone I area extends from the south end of ʔedacho Tué to the mouth of the river, including the islands located there. Sacred sites must be respected. They are not to be played with or they lose their power. The river corridor and islands are closed to visitor access. There are two locations where visitor access is allowed when guided/accompanied (see Restricted Visitor Access section).

Restricted visitor access – guided/accompanied only

Tsąkui Thedá (Parry Falls)

Tsąkui Thedá is sacred. As per the Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation Thaidene Nënë agreement, a site-specific plan must be developed. This plan will provide guidance on how visitors may access the site.

Mouth of Tsąkui Thedá Dezé (Lockhart River)

Licensed guides from a Signatory Indigenous Government may use motorized boats for tours at the mouth of Tsąkui Thedá Dezé. Visitors may only access the mouth of Tsąkui Thedá Dezé on a tour with a licensed guide from a Signatory Indigenous Government.

Taché/Kaché Village Site

Taché/Kaché is located at the mouth of Tsąkui Thedá Dezé. Visitors must be accompanied by Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation or Parks Canada staff, or a licensed guide from a Signatory Indigenous Government.

ʔedacho Tl'ázi (Timber Bay) Village Site

This former village is very close to ʔedacho Tué. The site is also near to a Ni Hat'ni Dene operational cabin that is located at ʔedacho Tl'ázi. Visitors must be accompanied by Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation or Parks Canada staff, or a licensed guide from a Signatory Indigenous Government.

Zone II locations

All areas of Thaidene Nënë not otherwise identified as a Zone I or Zone III are Zone II. This is the majority of Thaidene Nënë (78 percent). 92 percent of the National Park Reserve and 56 percent of the Territorial Protected Area are designated Zone II. Designation of wilderness in the National Park Reserve through the *National Parks of Canada Wilderness Area Declaration Regulations* will not be pursued at this time.

Zone III locations

Tu Nedhé (Great Slave Lake)

The waters of Tu Nedhé serve as the front country of Thaidene Nënë with motorized boating a key form of access and recreation.

Waterbodies in the Territorial Protected Area

All waterbodies in the Territorial Protected Area are Zone III.

Tthe Káljka Tué (Stark Lake)

Tthe Káljka Tué waters in the National Park Reserve are Zone III to allow for the continuation of motorized boating (Map 5).

Reliance Fuel Cache and Commercial Lease

Reliance has significant infrastructure, more than other areas of the National Park Reserve, with several modern buildings and a fuel cache. The lands where this infrastructure is located are Zone III. This includes the Reliance fuel cache and the commercial lease (Map 6).

ʔena Tué (Gagnon Lake) Leases

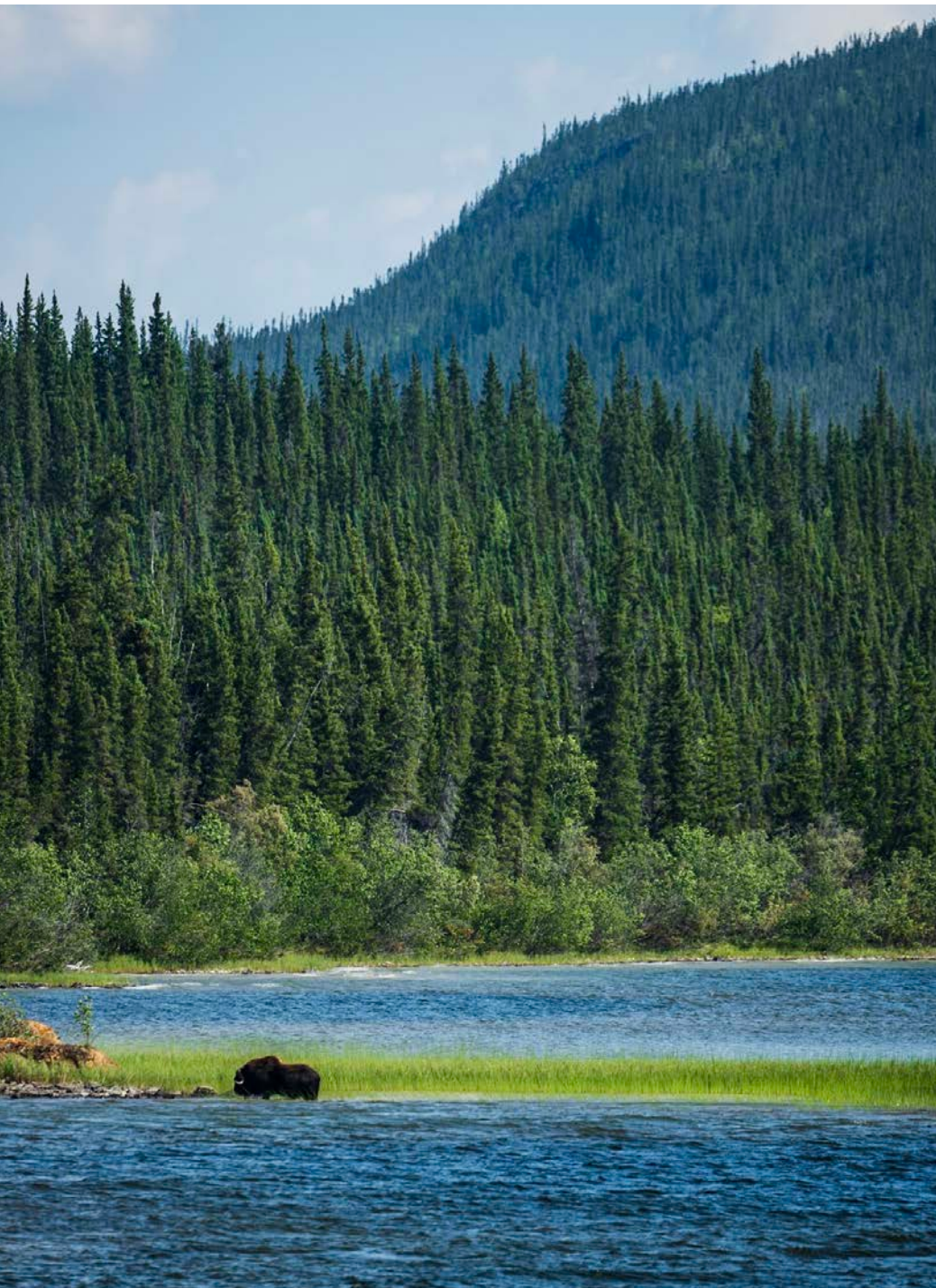
The commercial leases on Gagnon Lake in the Territorial Protected Area are Zone III (Map 7).

Kedelé (Taltheilei Narrows) Commercial Lease

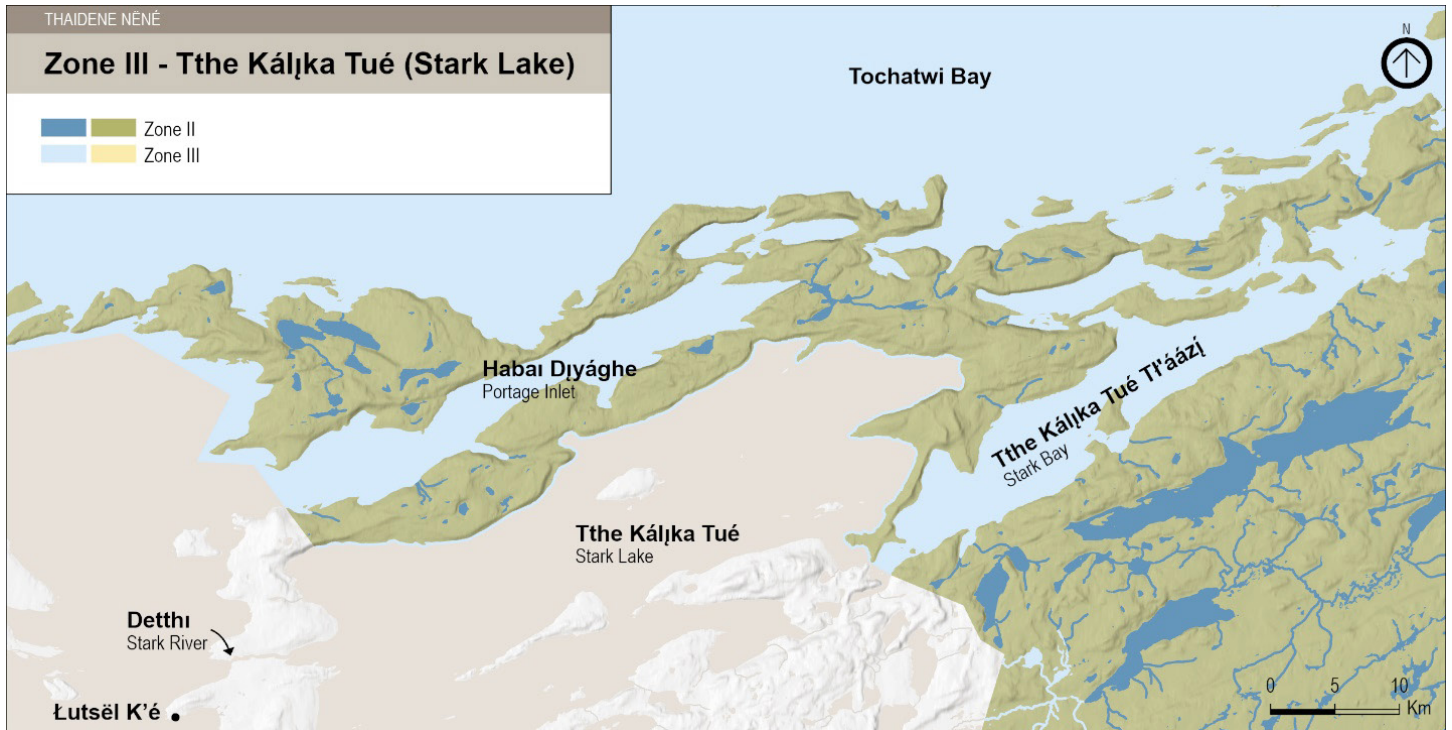
The commercial lease at Keldele in the Territorial Protected Area, which includes an airstrip, is Zone III (Map 8).

Tl'ąkěle (Thompson Landing) Commercial Lease

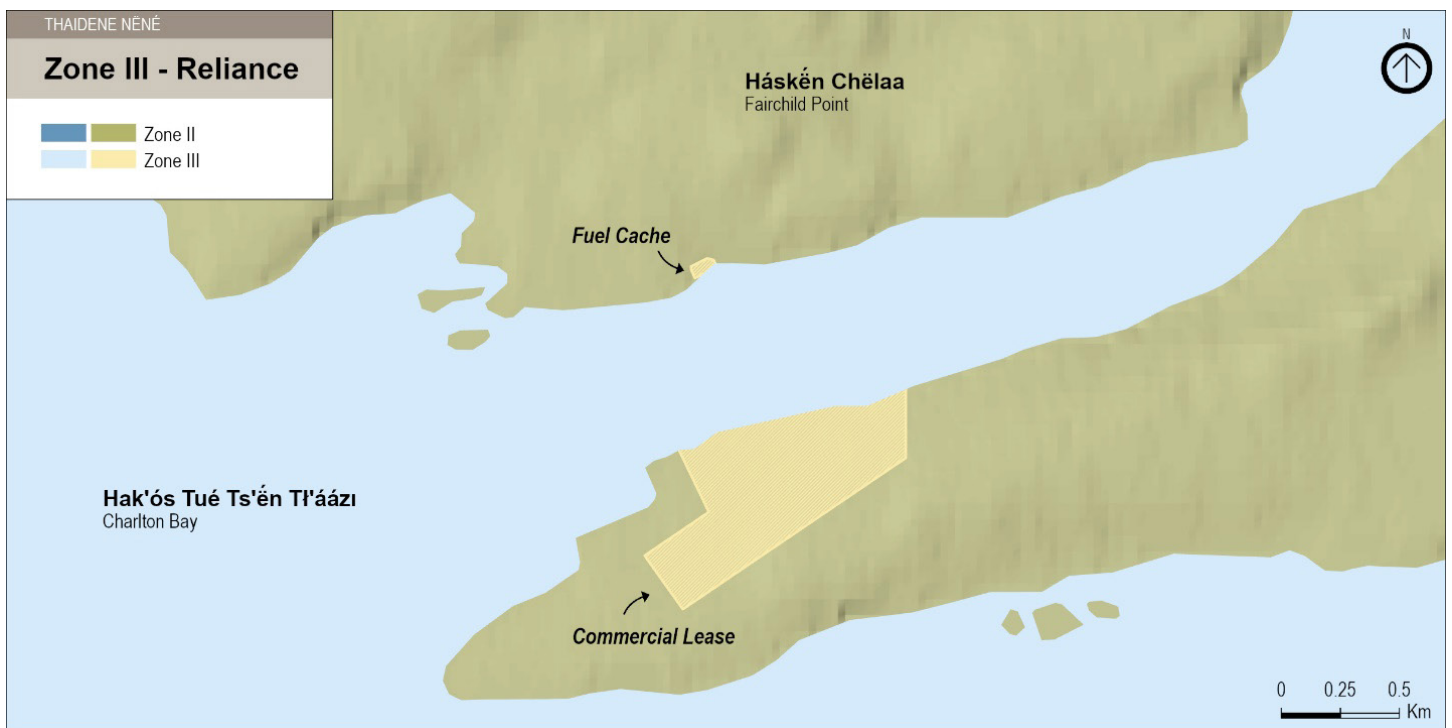
The commercial lease at Tl'ąkěle in the Territorial Protected Area is Zone III (Map 9).



Map 5 – Zone III: Tthe Káljka Tué (Stark Lake)



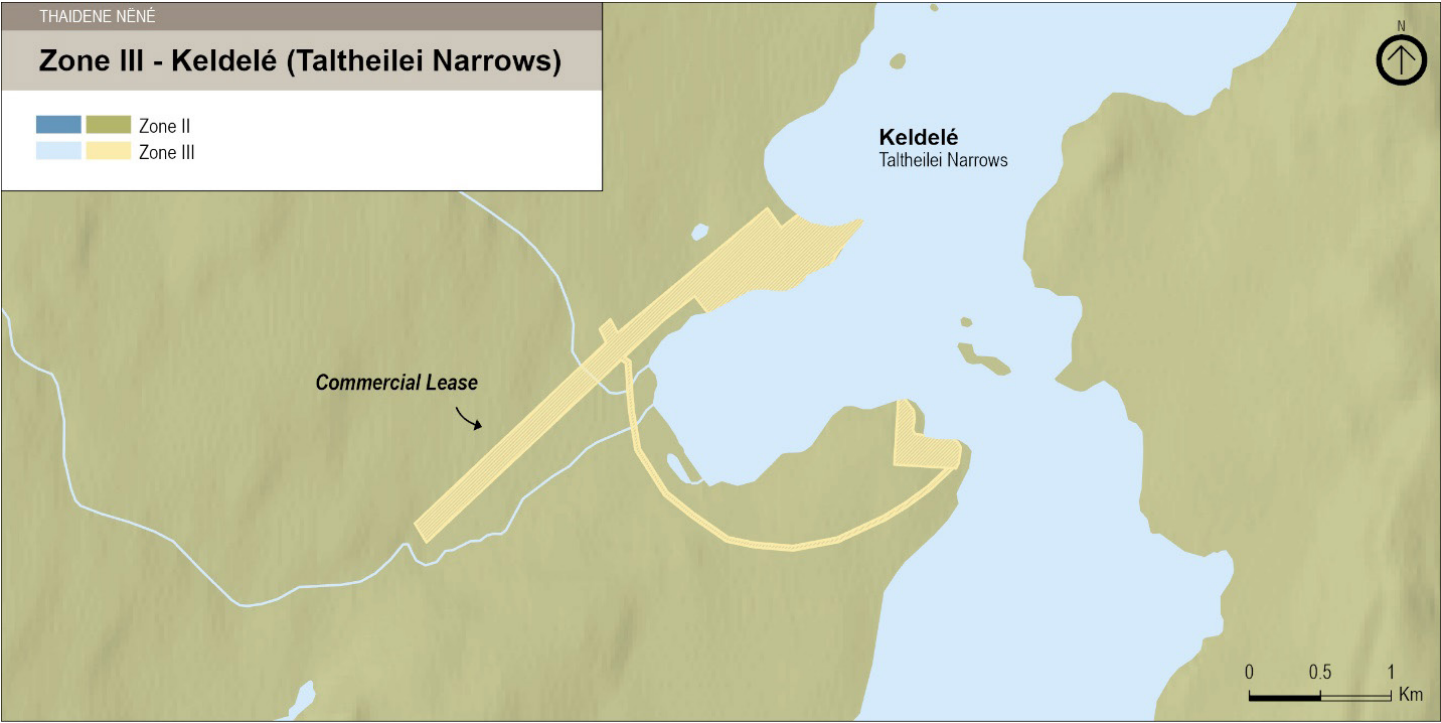
Map 6 - Zone III: Reliance Fuel Cache and Commercial Lease



Map 7 - Zone III: ʔena Tué (Gagnon Lake) Commercial Leases

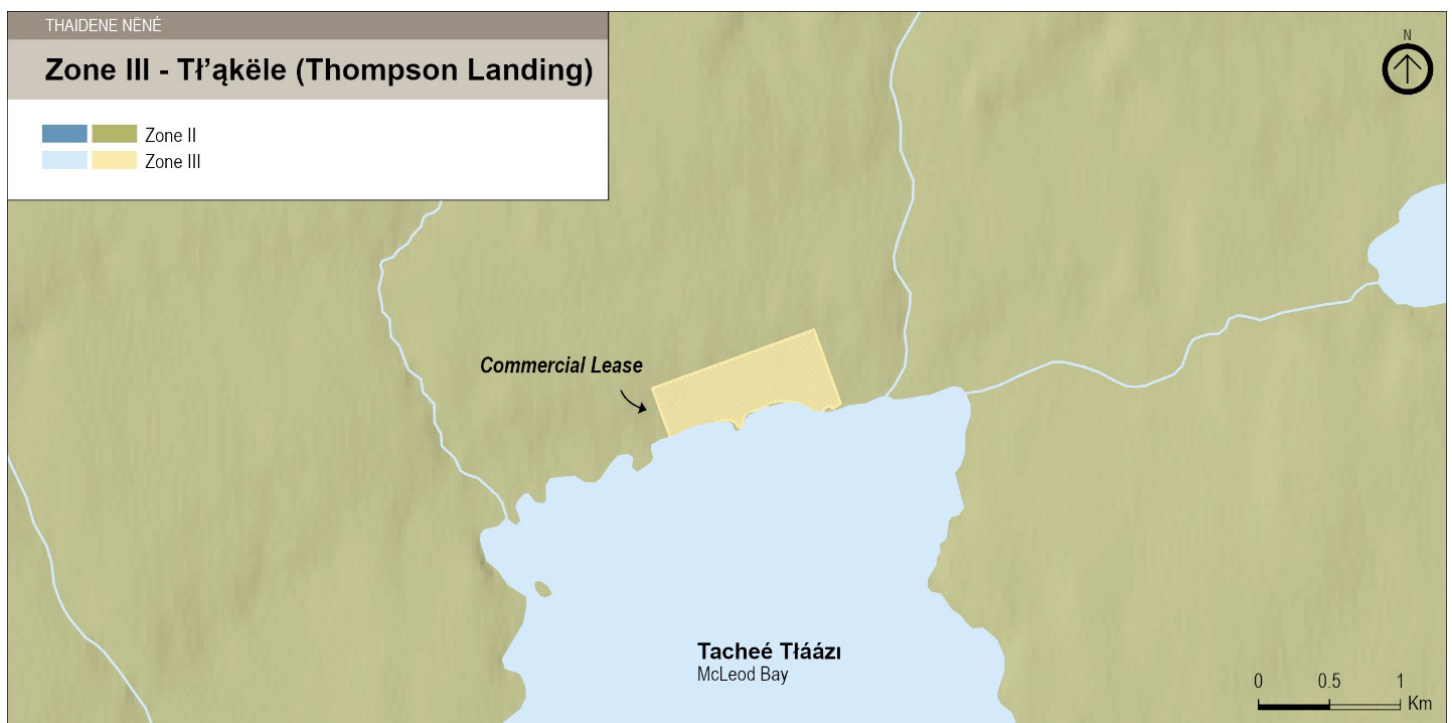


Map 8 - Zone III: Keldelé (Taltheilei Narrows) Commercial Lease





Map 9 - Zone III: Tł'ąkěle (Thompson Landing) Commercial Lease





8 Other Management Tools and Important Sites

Temporal closures are an important management tool in protected areas. They are used as and when needed, often for emergency situations or to support cultural use.

In addition to zoning, two other designations are used to identify sites: culturally/environmentally sensitive areas in the National Park Reserve, and sites of cultural importance within Thaidene Nënë.

Management of these important sites may be through the territorial *Protected Areas Act*, *Canada National Parks Act*, or other legislation.





Temporal closures

Temporal closures restrict visitor access to certain areas or activities for a specific period. These closures relate to various management needs, such as public safety, environmental protection, wildlife conservation, or to help facilitate harvesting activities for the Indigenous Peoples of the Area. As there are different legislative regimes for the National Park Reserve and the Territorial Protected Area, the mechanism to apply temporal closures differs.

Parks Canada uses Superintendent's Orders from the *National Parks General Regulations* to temporarily close an area or restrict specific activities.

Through regulations, the Government of the Northwest Territories can create areas subject to temporal closures in the Territorial Protected Area when required, by issuing a public notice of the area subject to temporal closure at least 30 days in advance and posting a description and map on the Protected Areas Registry.¹²

¹² For Thaidene Nënë Territorial Protected Area, the ability of the Government of the Northwest Territories to create areas subject to temporal closures only takes effect upon Thaidene Nënë Territorial Protected Area Regulation amendments allowing for temporal closures coming into force.

Culturally and environmentally sensitive areas

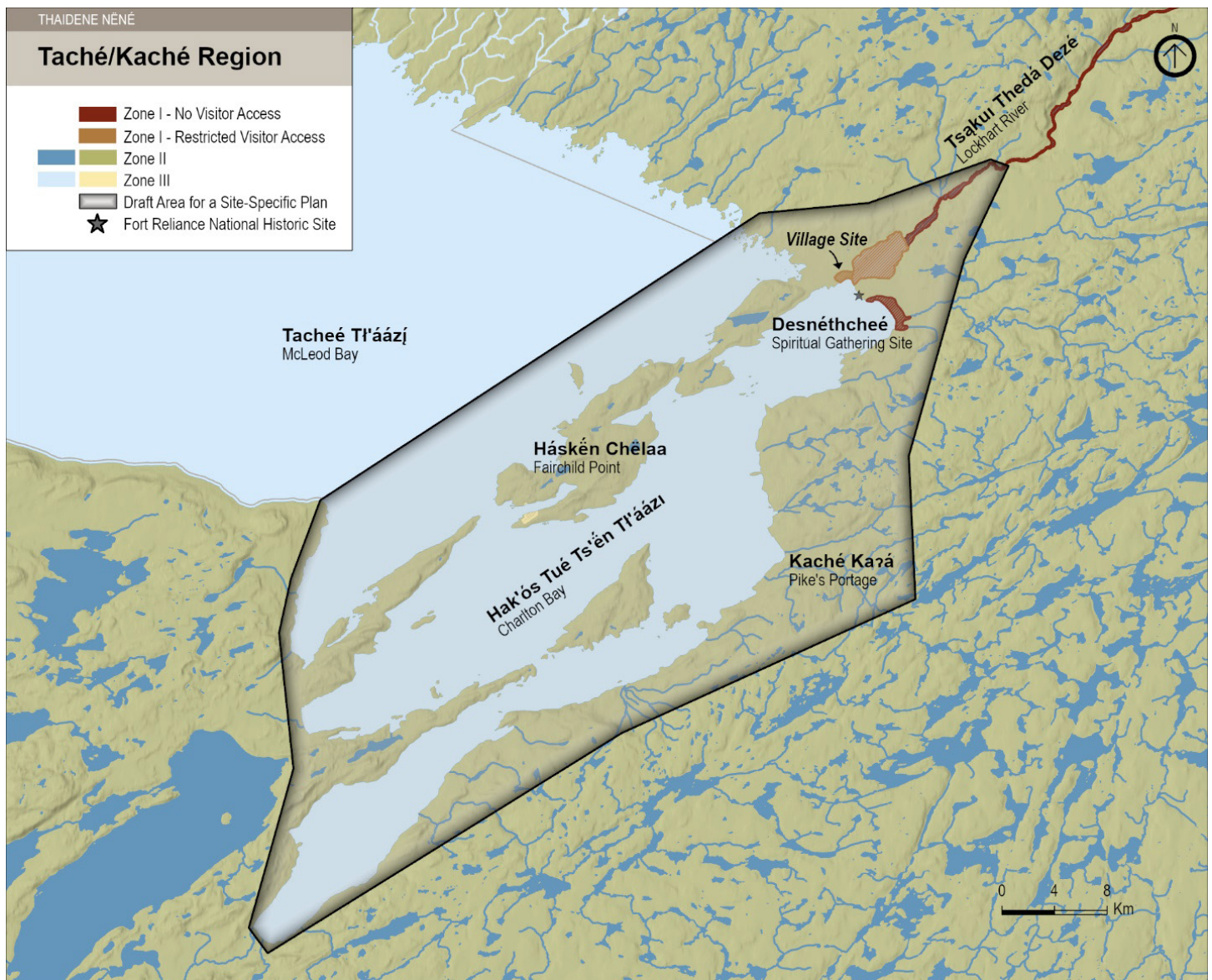
This designation only applies in the National Park Reserve. It is used for smaller areas that contain significant and sensitive resources that require special protection or management. Culturally and environmentally sensitive areas can be applied within any of the zone types. Currently, no environmentally sensitive areas are identified.

Because of the sensitivity of these sites, they may not be shown on maps. As new information is obtained, it may be necessary to refine the boundaries of sensitive areas or to identify new ones. If necessary, this designation may be removed from some sites. Boundary changes will not require a revision to *Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá*.

Taché/Kaché Region

The Taché/Kaché region is of significant cultural importance to Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation. Within this region is the village site of the same name, gravesites and other sacred sites, the mouth of Tsakui Thedá Dezé, and Desnéthcheé (the spiritual gathering site). Visitor guidelines for the Taché/Kaché region will be developed as part of a site-specific plan. A rough outline of the Taché/Kaché region is shown in Map 10; the map will be refined during development of the site-specific plan.

Map 10 - Culturally Sensitive Area – Taché/Kaché Region Draft Outline



Nı́t'ér Nué Naá Tı́'áázi (Wildbread Bay)

Nı́t'ér Nué Naá Tı́'áázi is a culturally important area to Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation. It is used annually from late summer to early fall for harvesting. Visitor access will be restricted during times of harvest. The closure will be time limited and seasonal.

Łúh Chogh Tué (Whitefish Lake) Village Site

This village site is an important birthplace and home for several families from Łutsël K'é. Work is on-going to understand this site more fully. Visitors must be accompanied by Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation or Parks Canada staff, or a licensed guide from a Signatory Indigenous Government.



Sites of cultural importance

This designation within Thaidene Nënë applies to areas that are culturally important but may not have Thaidene Nënë specific visitor restrictions. Archaeological sites are located throughout Thaidene Nënë. Visitors are prohibited from disturbing archaeological sites under legislation. If a visitor comes across an archaeological site, they must not handle, move, or otherwise disturb archaeological artifacts.

Sites of cultural importance may be managed through other legislation or regulations to ensure a respectful relationship with these areas. Specific guidelines or protocols for each sensitive area may also exist or be developed to help inform visitor use, such as paying the land.¹³ Because of the sensitivity of these sites, they may not be shown on maps. However, legally binding requirements, guidelines, and protocols will be communicated with visitors.

Łús Chené (Hachoghe's Shovel/Stick Handle)

Łús Chené is at the south end of ʔedacho Tué (Artillery Lake). ʔedacho Tué used to be called Tsátué (Beaver Lake) because there was a giant beaver living there. Hachoghe was a powerful person—known to other Dene as Yamǫria and Yamǫǫzha. He protected the people from the giant animals, including the giant beavers. Hachoghe used a shovel to dig into the beaver's lodge, only to have the beaver escape. The handle of the shovel is still visible. This site is accessible for visitors, but there are protocols for travellers to pay the land at this site when coming to ʔedacho Tué.

¹³ Paying the land is a protocol where people pay the land and water with something valuable like tobacco, spruce boughs, tea, or sugar as a sign of respect.

Bet'síghı́ (Utsingi Point)

Water is alive here. The site is accessible to visitors, but there are traditional protocols encouraging all travellers to pay the land and be quiet and respectful when passing Bet'síghı́.

Village Sites

There are many other villages sites within Thaidene Nënë. More will be done to better understand the sites and determine the best management approach. Some sites may not be appropriate to identify.

Arctic Star Lodge

This lodge on the north shore of Kaché Kuwé (McLeod Bay) is an important area to Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation. Many members worked there for long periods of time that took them away from their families.

All Burial Sites

Burial sites are located throughout Thaidene Nënë, and burials continue there to this day. Visitor access to known or marked burial sites is prohibited within 10 metres. If a visitor comes across a burial site, they should leave the immediate area.¹⁴

¹⁴ For Thaidene Nënë Territorial Protected Area, this prohibition takes effect upon Thaidene Nënë Territorial Protected Area Regulations amendments setting out this prohibition coming into force. This text is advisory until such amended Regulations are in force.

9 Monitoring and Evaluation

The Thaidene Nënë Agreements require Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáłtı to review and revise *Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá* within ten years after it is first approved. Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáłtı and the Partners are jointly responsible for ensuring the relationship plan is meeting its desired results. Success can be measured from the number of targets/indicators achieved during the life of the plan.

We commit to basing our annual workplans on *Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá*. We will consider progress made against goals, objectives, and targets/indicators as we set out our focus for the next year. We will develop and provide annual implementation reports to Signatory Indigenous Governments and stakeholders.

To accommodate the collaborative management of Thaidene Nënë, the Partners will work together over this first ten-year planning cycle to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework that

meets the legal requirements of both the National Park Reserve and the Territorial Protected Area. This includes the Partners identifying and collecting current baseline and monitoring data to evaluate ongoing progress towards achieving the goals and objectives of this plan.



Appendix A – Strategic Environmental Assessment Summary (Parks Canada)

All national park management plans are assessed through a strategic environmental assessment to understand the potential for cumulative effects. This understanding contributes to evidence-based decision-making that supports ecological integrity being maintained or restored over the life of the plan. Thaidene Nënë National Park Reserve was established in 2019. Given this recent establishment, data is currently being collected to better understand species presence in the National Park Reserve and develop ecological integrity indicators. Therefore, the strategic environmental assessment assessed the potential impacts on different aspects of the ecosystem, including species at risk that have the potential to be present in the National Park Reserve.

Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá contains several targets focused on increasing understanding of the current and historical environment of the National Park Reserve, including:

- A research and monitoring program that will identify knowledge gaps and research priorities;
- Mapping of key wildlife habitat; and
- Land-based Elder and youth programming in Thaidene Nënë. These programs will include sharing language, traditional knowledge, spiritual connections to the land, and Indigenous laws and stories of Thaidene Nënë.

The strategic environmental assessment for *Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá* considered the potential impacts of climate change, local and regional activities around the National Park Reserve, expected increases in visitation, and proposals. The plan contains specific targets to mitigate these impacts on the environment, including:

- Fire management planning, which considers climate change impacts;
- Zoning of important sites to manage visitor access;
- A visitor orientation program, which will include allowable uses of Thaidene Nënë and a visitor code of conduct;
- A tourism strategy and harvester education to reduce negative impacts on key habitats and species;
- A water resource protection strategy, which includes visitor/community education and invasive species measures; and
- An assessment and clean-up plan, which identifies sites requiring clean-up and standards for restoration.

Thaidene Nënë Xá Dá Yáłtı led the development of *Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá*, the relationship (management) plan for Thaidene Nënë National Park Reserve, supported by the Partners and Signatory Indigenous Governments.

The strategic environmental assessment was conducted in accordance with Parks Canada policy. Preliminary screenings will be conducted under the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* or successor legislation, as required for projects from the management plan.

Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá supports the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy goals of Sustainably Managed Lands and Forests, Healthy Wildlife Populations, Connecting Canadians with Nature, and Safe and Healthy Communities.

Many positive environmental effects are expected and there are no important negative environmental effects anticipated from implementation of *Thaidene Nënë Badı Xá*, the relationship (management) plan for Thaidene Nënë National Park Reserve.

Credits (clockwise from left to right; top to bottom)

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