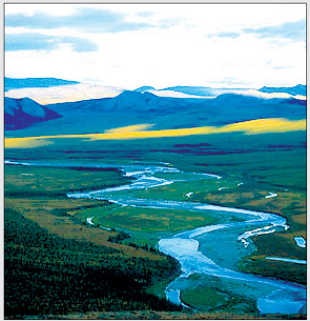


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Honouring Tradition: Aboriginal Day festivities keep traditions alive across the North. See page 14.



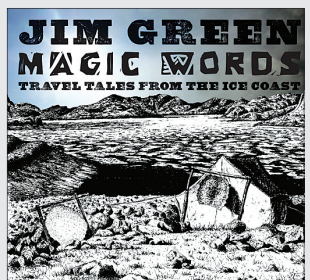
North Slave Métis win lawsuit against GNWT
The North Slave Métis Alliance got an Aboriginal Day gift with a court victory against the territorial government. See page 2.



Toronto foundation helps to protect the Mackenzie
The Walter and Duncan Gordon foundation is setting its sights on Mackenzie Basin protection with a new educational campaign. See page 3.



Review board approves Giant Mine remediation
The Mackenzie Valley review board has recommended ministerial approval of the Giant Mine remediation plans. See page 6.



Northern poet visits 'ice coast' with new album
Storyteller Jim Green heads to the High Arctic with his new album, *Magic Words*, based on a seal hunting trip he took in the 1970s. See page 15.

NORTHERN Journal

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Kim Beaulieu (left) and Harvey Mandeville use tools shaped from the bone of a caribou leg to scrape the layers of flesh off a moosehide. Moosehide tanning was one of the main Aboriginal Day events on the K'atl'odeeche First Nation reserve just outside of Hay River on Friday. See page 11.

Federal employees affected by devolution could lose homes: union

Crown housing not part of devolution agreement

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG
Employees being moved over to the territorial government through devolution may have no place to live when implementation of the devolution agreement – set to be finalized June 25 – begins on Apr. 1, 2014.

Positions with Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development (AANDC) that include Crown accommodation may no longer have that option once they stop working for the federal government, according to regional vice president of the Union of National Employees (UNE) Kevin King, who represents federal employees in Alberta, Nunavut and the NWT.

“The GNWT has been out of the housing business for a long time,” King told *The Journal* while in Fort Smith for the local union AGM. “If they move to the GNWT, housing won’t move with them. So if you live in a tight housing market, like in Yellowknife, this could truly impact if someone’s able to devolve.”

Though he couldn’t provide exact figures on how many employees would be affected with respect to accommodation, he suspected employees in Norman Wells, Inuvik and Yellowknife would be impacted.

According to AANDC spokesperson Claudia

Fournier, the department is on top of figuring it out for its employees.

“AANDC has been successful in negotiating with Public Works and Government Services a six-month transition period following the transfer date of devolution for those in Crown housing to find new accommodation,” she told *The Journal* in an email. “This means that those employees will have until October 1, 2014 to make new arrangements for accommodation.”

King said it is “foolhardy” for the territorial government to think it can set people up with transitional housing or stays in expensive hotels. For

those whose positions are not being transferred over to the GNWT, he said the prospect is dimmer.

“For people not moving over, not only do they have the prospect of losing their employment, but their housing will also be at risk,” he said.

The GNWT does not support Crown housing, and representatives from the devolution office indicated supplied accommodation for what are currently federal employees would not be part of the devolution agreement; however, because GNWT salaries are higher than the base salaries of federal employees,

they said subsidized housing is taken into consideration through employees’ earnings.

King said he questions how much AANDC employees are certain of their job futures, despite implementation being roughly nine months away. He said people are unsure whether they still have a job and what their salary range will be, along with existing allowances like isolation pay, vacation travel and accommodation.

He said he hoped all the details would be figured out by the end of summer or early fall, at the latest.

“People need a framework of at least six months so they can plan their lives,” he said.

NEWS BRIEFS

RCMP bust drug traffickers in Yellowknife apartments

Two Yellowknife men have been charged for drug trafficking following a search of two city apartments on June 15. RCMP discovered 2.5 kg of marijuana, a small amount of crack cocaine and a large amount of cash in two units in Sunridge Apartments. Craig Tyler Dryneck, 24, and Rusty James Landry, 26, have each been charged with two counts of possession for the purpose of trafficking. They are scheduled to appear in court on Aug. 27.

Inuvik woman charged with impaired driving causing injury

An Inuvik woman has been charged following a collision between two vehicles in downtown Inuvik on June 15. Both female drivers were sent to hospital but have since been released. Linda Ann Firth, 26, was arrested and charged with operating a motor vehicle causing bodily harm while impaired by alcohol. She is facing an additional four counts including dangerous driving. Firth was released from custody on conditions. She is to appear in court on Aug. 20. Police say the incident is still under investigation.

One of two missing boaters found

One of the two missing canoe occupants has been found and recovered by Wood Buffalo RCMP. The body of a 66 year-old Lac La Biche man was found in the Athabasca River, north of Fort McKay, on Sunday afternoon. Out of respect for his family, the name of the deceased will not be released. The cause of death is unconfirmed at this time, pending the results of the autopsy. Foul play is not suspected. The search for the other 58 year-old canoe occupant remains ongoing. Four men set out for a canoe trip along the Christina River, south of Janvier, Alta. on June 8 in two separate canoes and were reported as being overdue on June 12. A military helicopter from Cold Lake located a 67 year-old and a 59 year-old on June 12 on an island. Both were treated for minor injuries on scene.



North Slave Métis Alliance president Bill Enge addresses the crowd at last Friday's Aboriginal Day festivities in Yellowknife.

Politics Aboriginal

North Slave Métis win court victory on Aboriginal Day

By JACK DANYLCHUK
The North Slave Métis Alliance has celebrated

Aboriginal Day since its inception in 1996 with a community fish fry, but this year's feast may be remembered as the sweetest ever.

As thousands queued for plates of fish and bannock under a bright blue sky, Alliance president Bill Enge announced that the North Slave Métis scored an important legal victory in the fight for recognition of their Aboriginal rights.

"The North Slave Métis Alliance won its caribou harvest lawsuit against the government of the Northwest Territories yesterday in the Supreme Court of the Northwest Territories," Enge said to a chorus of cheers.

"The court found that the government of the Northwest Territories had an obligation to consult and accommodate the North Slave Métis Alliance and failed miserably in its obligation as a Crown actor.

"The court recognizes what we have said all along, that we hold Aboriginal rights over our traditional lands," Enge said, and called the ruling "a game-changing decision."

"This is a momentous day for the recognition of Aboriginal rights in the Northwest Territories, a momentous day for Métis in Canada and a life-changing day for North Slave Métis members," he said.

Filed in June 2012 after the territorial government failed to include the Métis in an allocation of animals from the Bathurst caribou

herd, the suit was one of three court actions initiated by the alliance in the last 12 months to assert Métis rights.

Earlier this year, the alliance filed a suit asserting Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) failed to properly consult the North Slave Métis in

respecting indigenous rights."

Aboriginal Day is a time for all Canadians to recognize and celebrate the contribution Métis, First Nations and Inuit have made to building Canada, Enge said.

"The Métis played a key role, as middlemen in the fur trade, explorers,

This is a momentous day for the recognition of Aboriginal rights in the Northwest Territories, a momentous day for Métis in Canada and a life-changing day for North Slave Métis members.

*Bill Enge
North Slave Métis Alliance*

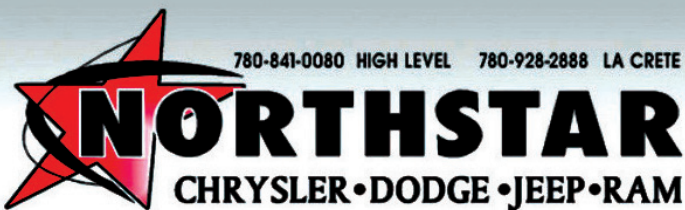
devolution negotiations. That suit has since been dropped.

The alliance followed that with a request for a judicial review after AANDC Minister Bernard Valcourt said the North Slave Métis do not possess Aboriginal rights under Section 35 of the Constitution.

Enge said the territorial government is about to gain more power, but "for devolution to work, the government needs to start acting like a grownup and fulfill the constitutional obligations of the Crown

entrepreneurs, hunters and trappers, patriots and statesmen. Today is the day for Métis to remember hardships and sacrifices our ancestors endured to ensure Métis of Canada would not be wiped out of existence."

Enge invoked the memory of Louis Riel, "our most famous historic leader, who led the Métis in two resistance movements. His death was not in vain. His sacrifice will always serve as an inspiration for Métis as they fight to have their Aboriginal rights respected by the Crown."



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Toronto foundation sets sights on Mackenzie Watershed focus of documentary film currently in production

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

One of the foremost philanthropic foundations in Canada is focusing its energies on the North to help protect one of the largest - and least understood - freshwater basins in the world: the Mackenzie.

The Toronto-based Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation, which works to encourage public dialogue and shape policy across the country, has been working on Northern-centered initiatives for three decades and recently decided to combine its love of the North with an interest in freshwater water stewardship.

Piggybacking on existing work being done by the territorial government with respect to the NWT Water Stewardship Strategy and its central component of community-based water monitoring, the foundation is jumping on board to help out with promoting the area and the issues affecting it.

"What we've done to date is really focused on communications about the basin,"



Gordon Foundation CEO Thomas Axworthy gives a book to Dene elder Francois Paulette during Slave River Day celebrations in Fort Smith on June 8.

said Carolyn DuBois, water program director with the foundation.

"It's really interesting, especially working here in the south, that people don't even know what the Mackenzie Basin is, they don't know the basics like the fact that it drains North to the Arctic Ocean and all that, so for us

the thrust so far has been around communications and trying to generate interest, not just from the public but also from researchers and other organizations to get involved in doing work in the basin."

Part of the foundation's Mackenzie-centered communications strategy includes

funding a 20-minute documentary planned for release during Canada Water Week next March. Yellowknife filmmakers Jay Bulckaert and Pablo Saravanja are currently filming up and down the Mackenzie, and DuBois said the film will hold something for both a southern audience and those in the North.

The short film will be housed on a dedicated educational website with social media activities and is designed to be worked into public meetings, training sessions and the like.

Already, the filmmakers have captured a Slave River muskrat count excursion and the recent Slave River Day festivities in Fort Smith.

"It's just going to feature the beauty of the basin, people's relationships to it and some of the issues and complexities affecting the area," DuBois said. "For southern audiences, this is going to be, for many people, probably an introduction into the basin, just kind of showcasing its beauty. And I think in the North...it will resonate with people as a film that really captures how they relate with freshwater in the basin."

The foundation is also looking at ways it can support the ongoing community-based water monitoring work happening throughout the territory by organizing and

disseminating the data in a way that people can use and understand.

"I'm really impressed to see what they've been doing," DuBois said of the territorial government. "It's really encouraging, their whole model - trying to get communities to drive what questions are asked through the monitoring and research done is, I think, really important. So the piece that we're interested in that we're still sort of looking into is how information is collected and then reported back to people."

She said the end goal is to create a greater understanding of the basin as a whole to help influence good policy decisions.

"Among the largest rivers in the world, the Mackenzie is among the least studied. It was just realizing that it's really important to collect information about the basin to be able to make good freshwater management decisions and good resource development decisions - to have that good baseline data," she said.

Politics Devolution

Métis Nation approves devolution deal

Final deal to be signed with feds Tuesday in Inuvik

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

The NWT Métis Nation became the first Aboriginal party to the devolution agreement to give final approval to the deal last week, just days before the territorial government announced the final agreement would be signed in Inuvik next week.

"The Métis Nation has been involved in devolution negotiations for many long years," Garry Bailey, NWTMN president, said in a press release issued last Wednesday following a vote by the NWTMN board of directors, adding that they were "satisfied from the beginning" that devolution would not negatively impact the Métis' ongoing negotiations with the federal government for their own land and resources agreement.

Though he said there are still issues to be resolved with the GNWT in regards to the intergovernmental resource revenue sharing - specifically, the proposed formula



NWT Métis Nation president Garry Bailey

for sharing 25 per cent of the Net Fiscal Benefit with Aboriginal governments - he said there is time to work them out before the Apr. 1, 2014 implementation date.

"Now that the devolution agreement has been approved, the Métis Nation will continue to actively participate in devolution implementation to ensure that there is a smooth transfer of responsibilities and maintain constructive working relationships. At the same time, the Métis Nation will

continue to build-upon sound working relationships with the other Aboriginal governments who are party to the Agreement in order to strengthen our common interests."

Bailey noted that the transfer of some management of resources and environment under the jurisdiction of the territorial government did not change the obligations of the federal government to the NWTMN with respect to their ongoing negotiations.

"We expect all governments to adhere to those obligations and to work to achieve full implementation of the Métis Nation's goals under that agreement," he said.

NWT Premier Bob McLeod will be joined by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Minister Bernard Valcourt, along with Aboriginal government signatories, in Inuvik on Tuesday, June 25 to sign the final agreement at the Midnight Sun Recreation Centre.

2013 PROPERTY TAX PAYMENT

Tax Notices were mailed to all property owners on Tuesday May 28, 2013. Payments are due Friday June 28, 2013.

A Tax Installment Payment Plan (TIPP) is available for your convenience. You may find this an easy and cost-effective way of paying your annual tax bill.

If you have not received your Property Tax Notice, please contact the Taxation branch.

Information regarding your Property Tax Notice and the TIPP program are available on our website at www.woodbuffalo.ab.ca or by calling 780.743.7900 or toll free at 1.800.973.9663.

Important deadline:
Property Tax Payments are due June 28, 2013
Regardless of circumstances

www.woodbuffalo.ab.ca



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The Northern Journal welcomes letters to the editor. Letters must be signed and include a phone number so the author can be verified. Names will be withheld on request in special circumstances where the reasons are determined to be valid. The Journal reserves the right to edit letters for length, libel, clarity and taste. Opinions expressed in letters and columns are not necessarily those of the publisher or editor.



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Aklavik	Fort Resolution	Rae Edzo
Behchoko	Fort Simpson	Sachs Harbour
Colville Lake	Fort Smith	Trout Lake
Deline	Gameti	Tsiigehtchic
Eagle Plains	Hay River	Tuktoyaktuk
Ekatie Diamond Mines	Inuvik	Tulita
Enterprise	Jean Marie River	Uluksaktok
Fort Good Hope	Lutsel K'e	Wekweti
Fort Liard	Nahanni Butte	Wha Ti
Fort McPherson	Norman Wells	Wrigley
Fort Providence	Paulatuk	Yellowknife

Available in Alberta at:

Anzac	Fort Chipewyan	Kehewin
Atikameg	Fort McKay	Kinuso
Brownvale	Fort McMurray	Lac La Biche
Cadotte Lake	Fort Vermillion	Mornville
Chard	Frog Lake	Peace River
Cheteh	Glenevis	Red Earth Creek
Cold Lake	Goodfish Lake	Saddle Lake
Conklin	Grande Prairie	Slave Lake
Driftpile	Grouard	St. Paul
Duffield	High Level	Valleyview
Edmonton	High Prairie	Wabasca
Enilda	Hythe	
Enoch	John D'or Prairie	

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The new normal?

Flooded neighbourhoods, rivers overflowing their banks, a state of emergency – we are not talking about Calgary or one of the 25 other southern Alberta communities being inundated. In Fort McMurray, a state of emergency ended June 17 after the Hangingstone River was in flood and there were concerns the Clearwater River and its tributaries may spill over as well. A large chunk of the bank of the Hangingstone was threatening to slump, blocking the river channel within the city. More rain is currently in the forecast.

Fort McMurray's plight has been pushed to the background with the dramatic devastation and huge number of people impacted in the south of the province, but there are flooded homes and families in need in northeast Alberta too. At least they may benefit from the pledges being made by the premier and prime minister after their mutual hometown, Calgary, was hit so badly.

Fort McMurray had some time to prepare, unlike Canmore, High River and Calgary. What apparently happened in the foothills around Canmore was that after a week of rain had saturated the ground, a deluge of over 200 mm of rain fell in a day followed by flash flooding.

The worst nightmare for Calgary during the flooding, voiced by Mayor Naheed Nenshi in one of the earlier newscasts when flood water was first hitting his city, was concern that the force of the deluge might cause one of the many dams upstream to burst. Indeed, given the amount of water they already had to deal with, that would have been dire.

What if such a weather pattern had parked a low pressure system further north, impacting Fort McMurray instead, with flooding there on the same scale? Would the berms for the massive tailings

ponds have held against the undercutting of an even more swollen Athabasca River? Could those toxic tailings have entered the river? Of course it is possible. What about that for a worst nightmare? Alberta now has a "world class environmental monitoring system," so apparently we need not worry about such things.

The rains in southern Alberta resulted from a persistent weather pattern meteorologists call an "omega block" caused by a loop in the jetstream over Western Canada. Its lines on a weather map create a design similar to the Greek alphabet letter omega: Ω. Those weather patterns can stay in place for days or weeks. The big-picture question is, was that unusual pattern influenced this time, or even caused, by climate change?

Another big "What if?" no one is talking about is the lurking fear; could it happen again? Maybe what we are seeing in southern Alberta is yet again not "the flood of the century." It might be that catastrophic flooding in southern Alberta will become commonplace.

The Alberta task force set up to deal with recovery after the Slave Lake fire two years ago is still in place and will be reconvened for use in the aftermath of the flooding. Both were weather-induced disasters. In fact in both cases, "a perfect storm" described the cause - an unusual coming together of different weather phenomena to create a unique, powerful event. Such events seem ever more common. Perhaps that task force will need to be permanent. Indeed, every province and territory may need one.

If such events are to be the "new normal," municipal governments will require new approaches in how homes are built and communities are organized. After major southern Alberta flooding in 2005, described then as

"the flood of the century," the 2006 Provincial Flood Mitigation Report recommended a cessation of the sale of Crown lands in known flood risk areas (which did not happen). That would be a smart place to start. How about no basements allowed in flood risk areas? Other building code provisions should be considered. Essential community infrastructure, like utilities, should only be located on high ground. Similarly, communities in boreal forest areas, subject to wildfires, need the same proactive treatment.

We depend on the weather to be benign. Our lives are structured around that. If we can no longer depend on relatively predictable, friendly weather, we would be smart to take action.

The Harper Conservatives have denied climate change is happening. They have gutted Canadian environmental research capability, terminated environmental scientists and slashed funding. Their timing could not have been worse.

The debate over climate change – is it caused by industrial pollution (the "greenhouse effect") or is it just our planet doing its thing as it has always done? – badly needs investigating. We should be committing resources to it and supporting scientific study.

Simply denying climate change does not make sense, nor does turning against science. Do the Harper Conservatives believe science is evil? Does it, in their view, clash with the Bible? Does it get in the way of industrial development and the creation of wealth? Why the anti-science stance? The people of Canada deserve to know.

Things are happening in nature, possibly dramatic changes. We need to know why, and what to do about it. That should be a priority.



Rita Rashleigh (from left), Lena Paul and Bernice Mandeville celebrate their graduation from the Pentecostal S.A.L.T. College in Fort Smith on Saturday. Rashleigh, the valedictorian, and Mandeville graduated with diplomas in theology. Paul finished with a certificate in theology.

ARCHIVES

15 Years Ago...

An undefined partnership

Residents of the Northwest Territories for the last six months have been breathing a sigh of relief after their government representatives told them their days as deficit fighters were drawing to a close. There was talk of surpluses, talk of what to do with all the money the government would have to spend after Nunavut split and left the NWT for good. Somewhere along the line money ran out.

Issue: June 22, 1999

20 Years Ago...

New technology brings distance education students almost into classroom

Arctic College students in a remote community will be the first to benefit from the state-of-the-art distance education technology this fall. "It's a milestone for the campus here, it's a milestone for the college system," said Jim Evans, coordinator of the Distance Education by Radio program at Thebacha Campus.

Issue: June 22, 1993

30 Years Ago...

Western Arctic MP raises missile fears

MP Dave Nickerson says the cruise missile should not be tested on Canadian soil until there is proof that there is no danger to Canadians. The MP rose in the House of Commons last week, after the United States formally asked permission to carry out the tests. In recent weeks it has been revealed that there have been at least three malfunctions during the cruise missile tests in the Nevada desert.

Issue: June 23, 1983

Hay River Homecoming – Mayor’s welcome

With the Hay River Homecoming right around the corner, I’ve been thinking a lot about our community, its history, its spirit and the many significant people that have been involved in its growth. From a seasonal fishing camp, to the busy community it is today, Hay River has seen many challenges, and changes. Our community has survived floods, economic hardships and booms and the occasional near miss from wildfire. Through this all, residents continue to push forward and grow this wonderful community we all call home.



Mayor Andrew Cassidy

I would be remiss if I didn’t talk about commercial fishing and the lasting impression this industry has on our town. Many residents trace their roots to a mother or father who moved North to help build the

freshwater fishing industry on Great Slave Lake. The attitude and “grit” that our community’s founders brought and instilled in their families is still prevalent today. Fishing is a brutally hard, dangerous and

unforgiving industry. Fishermen, and all those involved, must be resilient, adaptable, perceptive and hard working. These attributes are still found in the second, third and even fourth generation Hay Riverites.

That is all of us - those still involved in the industry or those who have moved on and created new opportunities.

We are a resourceful town and no longer rely solely on a single industry. Hay River residents set our own direction and make our own future. We are in the driver’s seat. We do not sit back and wait to see what the future brings. We are actively progressing and look forward to each new challenge with the same determination and spirit our founding men and women taught us. We owe a lot to those who were here before us.

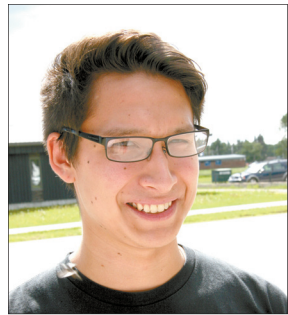
To all those who have left us and returned for the events this weekend, welcome back, welcome home. It is good to see you again.

Mayor Andrew Cassidy

Life

In this day and age, and all ages past The need, use and importance is opposite of last. It’s top of the list, I can’t stress that enough, Got anything better? - “uhh, yeah, lots of stuff” Wrong - without it we wouldn’t be here, Nothing could exist. Yes, I know, “oh dear!” We drink, cook and clean with it on a daily basis, Shower, bath and wash your dirty little faces. Yes, indeed I am talking about water, What else would you want when the days grow hotter? Or year round where the season is always summer, Wouldn’t that be swell? Well, with the exception of hell - (bummer) H₂O, Dihydrogen Monoxide, subscript ell (l). With water covering 71 per cent of the Earth’s surface You might be wondering what’s the reason to be nervous. Well, Joe, in case you didn’t know, Only two point five per cent of that is drinkable. --And if you’re thinking, “so?!” Well, my friend, you must be thinking slow. With the pollution of our lakes and rivers, Soon that value will reach the ominous zero (Oh no!) Energy and water are used to extract bitumen Tailing ponds are leaching - ahh, it makes me sick, man. Greenhouse emissions are another product of the process, Expelling more gas than 140 other countries, it’s nonsense. Come on, Stephen, don’t you have a conscience? Value, respect and protect our water, my friends, Please remember and preserve that in your mental dens.

-Sadele Paulette



Paulette was the overall winner of the schoolwide PWK My Life poetry contest in Fort Smith.

Flood insurance - are you protected?

Canada is one of few countries that does not require flood coverage on insurance policies. The following is from the Squareone Insurance website:

It’s important to note that flood damage is distinct from water damage. Flood damage means loss or damage caused by surface water originating from rain, snow, overflowing rivers, lakes and other bodies of water. Most home insurance policies provide some water damage coverage. There are several reasons flood insurance is not available in Canada.

1. Since flood insurance is not a mandatory coverage in all Canadian home

insurance policies, providers are concerned only people with a high risk of flood damage would purchase the insurance.

2. In most cases, governments know that specific areas are susceptible to flood. As such, zoning these areas for residential development, without first investing in proper infrastructure, means it’s only a matter of time before flood damage will occur.

In both situations, it is virtually impossible for home insurance providers to obtain enough premiums to cover potential losses from flood damage.

www.squareoneinsurance.ca

CORRECTIONS

In last week’s story, “Northerners voice concerns at Wildlife Act hearings,” it was incorrectly stated that the previous draft version of Wildlife Act was voted down at the eleventh hour at the end of the 16th Assembly in 2011. The 16th Legislative Assembly did not vote on the proposed legislation. The legislation was withdrawn by the Minister before third reading in the Legislative Assembly.

Incorrect information was also in the article “Avalon progressing with Thor Lake, Pine Point plans.” Avalon Rare Metals Inc.’s CEO, Don Bubar, said, “We talked about \$30 million...” in regards to the funds needed for preparatory work, not “\$30,000 million,” as stated in the story.

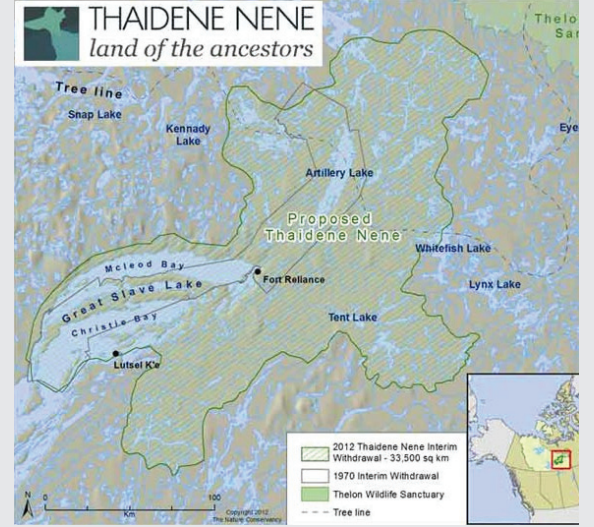
MUKLUK



FACEBOOK FEEDBACK

Northern Journal 2013

The NWT Métis Nation (NWTMN) is crying foul over its alleged lack of inclusion in talks with Parks Canada over the proposed Thaidene Nene national park reserve near Lutsel K’e.



Métis demand consultation on Thaidene Nene park



Emilie Rose Bjornson: No respect for Treaty 1900, they should let the First Nation settle first...the park will allow them to practice their Aboriginal rights?

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Forecast

Inuvik Yellowknife

Wednesday		Thursday		Friday		Saturday	
24 High	10 Low	28 High	17 Low	23 High	19 Low	24 High	15 Low
24 High	17 Low	26 High	14 Low	25 High	14 Low	28 High	18 Low

Norms: 20°C and 8°C Norms: 20°C and 11°C

Hay River Fort Smith

Wednesday		Thursday		Friday		Saturday	
20 High	16 Low	20 High	10 Low	21 High	12 Low	25 High	15 Low
28 High	16 Low	29 High	16 Low	26 High	15 Low	28 High	13 Low

Norms: 20°C and 9°C Norms: 22°C and 9°C

Review board approves Giant Mine remediation plan

Decision renews environmentalists' faith in assessment process

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

The Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (MVEIRB) recommended last week that the Giant Mine remediation project proceed to the regulatory phase for approvals on the condition it follows a suite of measures to protect the environment and address public concern.

"After careful deliberation, the review board concluded that the proposed project is likely to cause significant adverse social and biophysical impacts, including cumulative impacts arising from the potential effects of the proposed project in combination with the effects of past mining activities," MVEIRB said in its official statement. "It also found that these impacts would generate significant public concern."

The remediation project includes plans for managing 237,000 tonnes of underground arsenic trioxide dust by way of ground freezing, remediating the surface site by covering up 13.5 million tonnes of tailings, managing open pits, demolishing buildings and containing contaminated soils. All released site water is to be



File photo

Demolition of the roaster complex began last week.

treated through a diffuser in Great Slave Lake.

Measures imposed by the review board require the project timeframe be reduced from perpetuity - that is, keeping the ground frozen forever - to a "more manageable time frame of 100 years," according to the report.

As well, the proponent - the federal government - is required to "facilitate ongoing research

in emerging technologies towards finding a permanent solution." Independent reviews are required for the project every 20 years to evaluate its effectiveness and identify potentially better solutions than ground freezing.

Other measures prescribed by the review board include carrying out a comprehensive general risk assessment, a detailed human health risk

assessment and human health monitoring; the investigation of long-term funding options for the project, estimated to cost over \$900 million; independent oversight.

On the issue of water, the board recommended improving water treatment to a drinking water standard from the initial goal named by the proponent, which aimed at keeping arsenic levels in treated water at a maximum of 100 micrograms/litre. The board also recommended replacing the proposed underwater diffuser near N'Dilo with a near-shore outfall immediately offshore the Giant Mine site.

"It is the Review Board's opinion that these measures will mitigate the significant impacts identified in the Report of Environmental Assessment and address the causes of public concern. The Board has recommended that the Project be approved subject to these measures," the board stated in its report.

"This is a complex and unique project to deal with a challenging problem," MVEIRB chair Richard Edjericon said in a news release. "The review board's measures

will reduce the significant impacts of the project as proposed, and improve the project, while addressing the public concerns that the board has heard. These measures will help ensure that people and the environment are protected, while setting the stage to find a permanent solution."

The report has been sent to the minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development (AANDC) for consideration and, upon approval, the project can move on to the licensing and permitting phase of the process.

Faith renewed in assessment process

After 20 years working on the Giant Mine file, Kevin O'Reilly, a member of Northern policy think-tank Alternatives North, said he is "very satisfied" with the decision made by the review board.

"I think it's evidence that environmental assessment works in the Northwest Territories," he said. "And it wasn't just Alternatives North, either; there were other parties - the Yellowknives Dene, the North Slave Metis and individual citizens in the community

- who obviously had a profile and effect on the findings that the board made, so we're very happy with the decision the board made."

O'Reilly said his group was very pleased with the board's call for independent oversight and the requirement for a legally binding environmental agreement for the project to move forward.

"I think that's one of the very, very important building blocks to get this project off on a better foot," he said.

As well, he was pleased to see the board's request for the establishment of a trust fund for the long-term funding of the project, along with a multi-stakeholder research agency - involving the public - to look at emerging technologies that could find a more permanent solution for the remediation project.

"If there is some independent oversight in between (the 20-year review period), that's great, and even better if there's investment in ongoing research and development," O'Reilly said. "So those all work hand in hand in ensuring there's a much better plan in place."

Surface Rights Board approved for NWT

Board does not have powers to deny companies access to disputed land

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

The federal bill aimed at establishing a Surface Rights Board for the NWT, designed to resolve land-access disputes in the territory, received royal assent last Tuesday in Ottawa.

Part of the federal government's overhaul of the Northern regulatory regime, the Surface Rights Board replaces the current temporary arbitration systems set up under the Sahtu, Tlicho and Gwich'in land claim agreements.

Work to create the board had been ongoing since June 2011.

The board will have authority to render binding decisions awarding access to and compensation for commercial purposes on Aboriginal, Crown and privately-owned lands in the NWT when conflicts arise between companies and those with surface or subsurface rights.

The board will not have the power to stop a project or deny companies access to land, nor will it have the authority to issue mineral rights or any other type of surface or subsurface rights.

While some First Nations and Northern non-governmental organization Alternatives North



Photo: Tania Liu

The new NWT Surface Rights Board will decide compensation in land dispute matters, but cannot deny access to land.

expressed concern over the bill, claiming it erodes treaty rights, the territorial government applauded the approval last week.

"Almost all of our land matters can be dealt with through existing processes, but in the rare cases where there are disputes between surface and subsurface rights holders, this board will avoid costly, lengthy court cases," Environment and Natural Resources Minister Michael Miltenberger

said in a news release. "This is an important step in completing the regulatory system in the NWT."

While both Nunavut and Yukon have had similar surface rights legislation for several years, only one dispute has ever been heard. The Surface Rights Board of Alberta routinely deals with issues of access.

Miltenberger added that the board will be maintained by new territorial legislation after devolution.

The presence of multiple existing processes to deal with most land-access disputes in the NWT was why Northern non-governmental organization Alternatives North addressed a letter to the federal government earlier this year expressing its opposition to the board.

Alternatives North member Kevin O'Reilly said much of his group's concern stemmed from the process in which the regulatory change was developed.

"I think if there had been a more cooperative spirit in developing the legislation and setting it up as a co-management approach and regime rather than the minister appointing all of the board members and so on, it would probably be easier to accept as a place of last resort to sort out disputes," he told *The Journal*. "In the absence of those things, what's been proposed and actually passed now is not good and not the way that people tend

to want to do business here."

He said he is interested in seeing what happens following devolution, such as whether or not the territorial government decides to move towards a more collaborative management approach with Aboriginal governments and the public in general.

"Maybe there's an opportunity to improve and make it more amenable to a co-management approach when the GNWT gets it, but we'll see; maybe it's something that they can change relatively quickly afterwards," he said.

Besides process, O'Reilly said there were many concerns with the substance of the legislation, including the fact that it would apply in municipal boundaries, that the board did not have the authority to deny access and that parties to the process could only include the resource developer and the aggrieved party, rather than opening it up to other interested parties.

"There's a number of not very helpful or open democratic provisions within the legislation itself that are just not part of Canadian values or Northerners' values," he said.

Playing the waiting game

K'atl'odeeche explores options following withdrawal from Dehcho Process

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

"We're just playing the waiting game."

With three different claims processes in motion, K'atl'odeeche First Nation (KFN) Chief Roy Fabian says all they can do is hurry up and wait.

"So we're just waiting on that one," he says over and over again as he talks about the myriad of negotiations ongoing with the federal government.

That said, he doesn't mind, as long as the First Nation is getting the best deal it can.

"We've been waiting a long time; we can wait some more. We're not going anywhere. We're going to stick to our Treaty 8, we're going to keep our reserve and we're not going anywhere. But Canada needs to deal with some of these outstanding issues."

The First Nation, which holds both a reserve east of the town of Hay River and traditional territory throughout the Dehcho region, left the Dehcho comprehensive claims process with the federal government in February, defying Canada's preferred claims process of the day on the basis that members did not want to give up the reserve, granted in 1974.

Since then, KFN has been trying on different claims to see which process fits. Members reiterated again in April that the comprehensive claims process - even at the community level - is not an option, due to the fact that it requires First Nations to extinguish title over the land and, therefore, give up the reserve.

What's left is a mixed bag of options, and KFN is trying all of them.

"We're looking at different processes to see how we can try to gain more jurisdiction over our traditional territory. We're looking at everything," Fabian said.

Treaty Land Entitlement

KFN began its Treaty Land Entitlement (TLE) process years ago when the reserve was established. Fabian says the population count wasn't done properly back then - "they shortchanged us in terms of land" - and so KFN provided a counter offer with additional information to back it up.

According to the chief, that stalled everything.

"The offer they made was ridiculous, so we countered by doing some more research, and when we submitted these files, the research we did, they said this is new information and cannot be part of the existing TLE. They're saying that you have to file a new TLE. So we're just waiting for them to get in contact with us, but what that means is that if we file a new TLE, more than



Photo: Renée Francoeur

K'atl'odeeche Chief Roy Fabian says the First Nation is exploring all of its options to increase jurisdiction over its traditional lands.

likely we'll go to the bottom of the list. It's a first come, first served system."

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development

years back with eight other First Nations of Treaty 8, and as with the other selective claims process, KFN is waiting for a move from the federal government.

wouldn't be affected by the \$150 million cap on the claim.

AANDC said they are committed to still resolving the agricultural claim, and that

the offer to issue individual claims still stands.

"We are currently reviewing all information with regards to the Treaty 8 First

Time Requests for Agricultural Benefit claims and are currently seeking financial mandates in order to present settlement offers to the First Nations," Guibert said. "Individual settlement offers will be presented to each First Nation with a specific claim."

Loss of Use claim

That brings the third file KFN is waiting on, which involves the loss of its historic reserve site on Vale Island, Hay River's "Old Town." Back in the early 20th century, the First Nation was given one square mile of the island for land use, but that has since disappeared, Fabian said.

"Over the years, Canada and the town and everybody kind of whittled away at that reserve, and eventually it did away with the whole reserve in 1956 without consulting... So we're putting in what they call a loss of use claim, simply that Canada needs to address that issue with us."

Now the chief is waiting to hear if the claim is valid to enter negotiations or not.

"They told us they will have a decision by December 2014, over a year away," he said. "We're just waiting."

We've been waiting a long time; we can wait some more. We're not going anywhere. We're going to stick to our Treaty 8, we're going to keep our reserve and we're not going anywhere. But Canada needs to deal with some of these outstanding issues.

KFN Chief Roy Fabian

(AANDC) responded to say they have made "real progress" in the resolution of specific claims:

"Due to our Justice at Last Initiative and the Specific Claims Tribunal Act, we have cleared the backlog of claims and settled over 90 claims since 2007," AANDC spokesperson Genevieve Guibert told *The Journal* in an email.

"We have been negotiating with K'atl'odeeche First Nation to resolve the First Nation's Treaty Land Entitlement claim. We see these negotiations as ongoing."

'Cows and ploughs'

The First Nation is also working on a second file, one Fabian said goes under the colloquial name "cows and ploughs," referencing the agricultural benefits supplied through the treaties.

Like the TLE, KFN started its agricultural claims process

"Canada made an offer and First Nations felt that the offer was too low and there was kind of a deadlock, so what they decided to do was Canada and the First Nations agreed that they would get an independent economist to take a look at the file and make a recommendation," he said.

"So we went through all that process and the economist, back in 2010, completed his review and made a recommendation and the First Nations accepted it and, if I remember correctly, even the minister at the time accepted it. But shortly after that, Canada kind of stepped away from the whole thing... We haven't had a response from them in the last two years."

Though the eight different First Nations joined together to negotiate collectively, Fabian said they had an agreement with the federal government to have each of their files looked at separately so they

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Council compiling Slave/Peace watershed report

Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance to make policy recommendations

By RENÉE FRANCOEUR

Members of the Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance (MPWA), one of Alberta's newest watershed planning and advisory councils, are preparing to begin a comprehensive, two-year report on the state of the watershed, which covers about one third of the province.

The report - a snapshot of the Peace/Slave River water basin's condition - will be a collection of science, local traditional knowledge and public concern about wildlife, water drinkability and water levels.

MPWA held an open house in partnership with Wood Buffalo's Peace-Athabasca Delta Ecological Monitoring Program (PADEMP) in Fort Smith for the first time last Wednesday to introduce the organization to the community and hear local concerns with regards to the Slave River.

Questions from the dozen people attending the open house ranged from the edibility of muskrat to fracking's impact on ground and surface water.



Rhonda Clarke-Gauthier (left), Bob Cameron (centre) and Adam Norris of the Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance make a stop in Fort Smith to talk about water concerns and network with members of Wood Buffalo's Peace-Athabasca Delta Ecological Monitoring Program.

MPWA, a non-profit organization designated by the provincial government as the

official Watershed Planning and Advisory Council for the basin under the Alberta Water

Act's Water for Life Strategy, also met with First Nations groups in Fort Smith.

"Even though our jurisdiction ends at the border, what we hear from people in Fort Smith can reflect what we need to do in our part of the watershed as you get the water we send downstream... It speaks to how we're all interconnected and interdependent on the basin," Adam Norris, MPWA's watershed coordinator and Wednesday's keynote speaker, said.

Collaborating with other monitoring organizations

The report - the first step to accomplishing the group's mission - is just about to get underway with a kickoff planning meeting scheduled for next week, Norris said.

Following the release of the report, MPWA will progress to developing an integrated watershed management plan, which will promote beneficial water practices and better ways to to lessen human impacts on the watershed.

The management plan will then help the group make policy recommendations to the Alberta government.

this framework is currently underway.

After making policy recommendations, MPWA would then take on an expanded educational and monitoring role, Norris said.

Stuart Macmillan, PADEMP's chairperson, also gave a brief presentation on PADEMP's work, including the monitoring of dry land in the wetlands and annual flooding in the delta.

"We haven't seen a flood since 1997 and before that, it was 22 years without a flood," Macmillan told the audience. "Traditional knowledge holders tell us it was once about every eight years or so."

Macmillan also addressed the extensive muskrat surveying PADEMP does, as the muskrat is a indicator species.

"They respond quickly to changes in the delta and can tell us a lot about the condition of the ecosystem. They're culturally important. They play a central role in the diet, spirituality of local people and provide material... Trapping muskrat also maintains a cultural connection to the land."

PADEMP, one of many monitoring programs in the area, was established in 2008 in response to growing concerns about expanding development such as hydro, pulp and paper mills, oil and gas exploration and climate change.

It is made up of 10 Aboriginal groups, six federal, provincial and territorial governments and two other non-governmental organizations.

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Our mission overall is to monitor cumulative effects from land use practices and industry, to address these through policies and education and finally to work to support watershed stewardship in the future.

*Adam Norris,
MPWA's watershed coordinator*

such as PADEMP will help when it comes to facts and numbers for the report, Norris added.

"Organizations like PADEMP do a lot of data collection, so we want to collaborate, take that and put it together with what we've collected first-hand from local people's observations and questions," he said. "Our mission overall is to monitor cumulative effects from land use practices and industry, to address these through policies and education and finally to work to support watershed stewardship in the future."

"These policies would affect water licenses and withdrawals," Norris told *The Journal*. "For example, how much water they give certain companies or certain cities, or whatever. That will be affected by what we present in our plan. They've also told us it will be taken up in the land use framework."

The province began a Land-use Framework in 2008, calling for a separate development plan for each of the seven new land use regions, including the Lower Athabasca.

The third and final phase of public consultation on

Fort Smith man stands on guard for whooping cranes

Canadian Wildlife notes whoopers expanding nesting range

By RENÉE FRANCOEUR

Almost every evening from May to September, Ronnie Schaefer of Fort Smith can be found in his hip waders slogging through marshes on Salt River First Nation reserve land, just down from Lobstick Creek.

His mission - completely voluntary - is to watch over the tallest birds in North America, the whooping cranes, which nest in the area after a 2,500-mile summer migration from Texas.

"They're my passion and I want to help protect them. You can't see this anywhere else," said Schaefer, a town bylaw officer and Salt River First Nation councillor.

Canada is home to the world's largest migratory population of whooping cranes. According to Environment Canada, there are almost 300 birds in the Wood Buffalo flock - the only self-sustaining, wild flock on earth.

Whooping cranes were designated as endangered in Canada in the year 2000. It was estimated by the Whooping Crane Conservation Association that only 16 whooping cranes were left on the entire planet in 1941-1942.

"I was probably 14 when I saw my first whooper. I was out hunting birds at Foxholes. When I came to realize these were endangered birds, I just wanted to take care of them," Schaefer said. "I want to share what I know and see with others so we can come together to help preserve their habitat."

Schaefer has named the two young cranes he's been keeping an eye on Snowball and Snowflake, who he thinks are descendents of the original "Lobstick pair," which still nest further down on the Foxholes prairie land.

Canadian Wildlife counts 74 nests in 2013

Many cranes make their nests in the traditional breeding grounds in the northeastern corner of Wood Buffalo National Park. Their nests are counted every year for a survey by the Canadian Wildlife Service, undertaken in partnership with Environment Canada and Parks Canada.

This year, 74 nests were counted, according to Mark Bidwell, a species at risk biologist with Environment Canada. That number is one less than the record set in 2011 at 75.

"Counting the nests gives us an idea of how the birds



An elegant whooping crane swoops across the wetlands.

Photo: Klaus Nigge



Ronnie Schaefer of Fort Smith takes a closer peek at Snowball and Snowflake.

Photo: Renée Francoeur

are doing and it helps us track their movement," he told *The Journal*. "The number of nests goes up and down from year to year, but over long periods of time, it's continuing to tick upwards. That's a positive."

Bidwell estimates about 150 birds are breeding out of the 300 in the flock.

As well, Bidwell noted, the population continues to expand outside the park. Eight nests were discovered outside Wood Buffalo's perimeters this year - one more than ever recorded. Additionally, breeding pairs, known to go back to the same nest year after year, are making nests in new locations, never before monitored by surveyists. Four to six new nests were recorded this year.

"What this means is the population is moving increasingly into areas that are not formally protected. It's not a critical situation yet as most birds are still using the park and the ones using areas outside the park, those locations are still quite remote. In Texas, however, where they spend the winter, it's different and they are coming into more contact with people and development."

More possibilities of human interaction with the cranes also worries Schaefer.

"Almost every long weekend there are people out quadding in this nesting area at Foxholes," he

said. "On the May long weekend, a big group was headed right for the nest and if I hadn't been here to stop them, they'd most likely have run right over it...There's this perception, you can go quad anywhere. You can't. This is a restricted area. I put big 'Whooper Warning' signs up to keep people away from them, but it doesn't seem to be working."

Sonia Trudeau, who went out with Schaefer to see the cranes last month, said she cried when she saw the eggs.

"That is something no one gets to ever see. It's so special. I've lived here in Smith all my life and never seen that," she said. "More people need to be aware of where the nests are. We need to protect them and their habitat or they won't be here one day."

The Canadian Wildlife Service will return to the Fort Smith area in August to do a follow up survey on the nesting success and chick productivity.

"Typically, 40 to 50 per cent of the nests we found in May will have chicks survive. That's not as bad as it sounds for a big-bodied bird who can live up to 20 years," Bidwell said. "While most pairs lay two eggs, usually only one

chick survives. Sometimes there are both, though, depending on the year and resources."

Meanwhile, Schaefer said he plans to keep a close eye on Snowflake and Snowball's rusty-brown coloured chick, who just hatched last week.

"They know me. I can read them. I know when to back off when they're in protective mode. I think they know I'm looking out for them," he said.



Photos by Tessa MacIntosh

Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training

The Department of Human Resources is pleased to announce the launch of Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training. This training was developed for GNWT employees, and is also available for viewing by the general public at www.hr.gov.nt.ca/acat.

The intent is to provide GNWT employees with information and context for the communities and regions we live in and the residents we serve. Its content is northern specific and provides historical information on government and Aboriginal relationships.

Diversity and inclusion are crucial aspects of a strong and stable public service. This training increases understanding about Aboriginal culture, enhances awareness, and promotes a spirit of inclusion. This training also reaffirms Aboriginal values and partnerships as a key foundation of the GNWT, based on respect, recognition and responsibility.

Robert R. McLeod

Robert R. McLeod
Premier of the Northwest Territories

Hon. Glen Abernethy

Hon. Glen Abernethy
Minister of Human Resources



Bumps-be-gone at Hay River airport

Territorial government allots funding for much-needed repairs

By RENÉE FRANCOEUR

Things are about to get smoother on the runway at the Merlyn Carter Airport in Hay River.

The territorial government recently announced that \$2.5 million will go towards the much-needed repairs at the airport, one of six crucial hub airports throughout the Northwest Territories.

Runway conditions at the airport have been “viewed by air carriers as no longer viable” for high speed jet traffic since 2012, stated a recent news release.

Carriers have been forced to use alternate airports, particularly Yellowknife.

The repairs will occur on the larger of the airport’s two runways, airport manager Kelly O’Connor told *The Journal*.

“The main runway is completely paved and is 6,000 feet long, 150 feet wide and is the only one that can handle jet traffic, whereas our smaller one is partially paved, partially gravel,” he said.

Repairs are specifically slated for “settlement areas,”



The runway at the Hay River airport is scheduled for new repairs sometime this summer.

O’Connor said. “The ground is subsiding under the runway in these spots...They have to cut out sections and mill the edges so you have nice square edges and then you pave over top for a smooth surface.”

The last time the runway was patched was in 2007.

“This runway has its problems. It’s had a history of these issues...Then government is hoping to find some kind of a special engineered solution that will stabilize

this runway so we don’t have to keep patching it up,” O’Connor said.

He said he believes the GNWT will begin looking into a more permanent solution soon after this year’s patch job.

“The Hay River Airport is a vital hub for transportation in the Northwest Territories,” Hay River South MLA Jane Groenewegen said in the news release. “The decision to move these repairs forward will restore

the level of service that the air industry has come to expect.”

According to the government, the job will soon be tendered and work is expected to take place in July and August. Repairs will be completed by the end of summer and are not expected to disrupt scheduled air traffic.

“The estimate is that the whole runway will be shut down for one week for repairs. Buffalo and First Air can manage on the short airway, but Northwestern out of Fort Smith needs more length so they have to reduce their loads during the time the main runway is closed,” O’Connor said.

Minister of Transportation David Ramsay said the repairs will contribute to a strong, sustainable transportation system in the NWT.

“The Northern aviation industry is vital to the economic well-being of NWT residents,” he also stated in the release. “This investment will help support a safe, reliable and efficient airline industry.”

Photo: Kelly O’Connor



Smith’s Landing First Nation #196 Notice of General Election

A GENERAL ELECTION

for one (1) Chief and four (4) Councillor positions
is being held in Fort Smith, NT and Edmonton, AB.

CHIEF CANDIDATES:

Frederick Daniels
Elizabeth Stirrett
Andrew Wandering Spirit

COUNCILLOR CANDIDATES:

Dianne Benwell
Agnes Cheezie
Geronimo Paulette
Thaidene Paulette
John Tourangeau

POLLING STATIONS

ADVANCE POLL
JUNE 25, 2013
Seniors’ Room,
Fort Smith Rec. Centre

ELECTION DAY
JULY 2, 2013
Blue Room, Pelican Rapids Inn, Fort Smith NT
Chateau Louis Hotel, Edmonton AB

Polls are open from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

TREATY CARDS MAY BE REQUESTED.

Lynda B. Martin, Electoral Officer
(867) 872-2945



Kim Beaulieu (right) and Liz Pope use "oolahs" to remove the rough hide hair with Harvey Mandeville in the background.



Lilian Sinclair of Fort Resolution explains the composition of the scraping tools.



The group heaves the frame down from its position on the trees to turn it around to scrape flesh from the top half.

Arts & Culture Traditional Arts

KFN brings moosehide tanning back to reserve

By RENÉE FRANCOEUR

This year's Aboriginal Day for the K'atl'odeeche First Nation (KFN) just outside of Hay River was all about moosehide.

Traditional moosehide tanning and dryfish making were the main two events happening on the KFN reserve for the national holiday, organized by the band's project coordinator, Kim Beaulieu.

"There's really no one here who does moosehide tanning so it's something we thought people would be interested in," Beaulieu said.

Lilian Sinclair and her husband Harvey Mandeville traveled from Fort Resolution to lead the workshop for Beaulieu and Liz Pope of Hay River.

"I want to make moccasins for my family from moosehide I've smoked and I thought this would be a great opportunity to learn because there's really no one who does this around here anymore," said Pope, originally from the Sahtu.

Mandeville and Sinclair taught the women how to scrape the hair off with a rounded, medal "oolah" tool after soaking the hide for five days in water.

"The hide is what we call green right now. You have to get all the layers... The white hair closest to the skin, you have to make sure to get that all off or it will be rough," Sinclair, who has been working

with moosehide for over 30 years, said.

Sinclair told the story her grandmother told her about how traditionally the women would scrape and smoke the hides when the men were away hunting.

"You girls are doing great," she said to the sweat-laden Beaulieu and Pope, swatting a swarm of horseflies away as they worked. "It's very intense work isn't it? And time consuming."

There's really no one here who does moosehide tanning so it's something we thought people would be interested in.

*Kim Beaulieu
K'atl'odeeche First Nation*

It was a special time for women, she said.

"They would go into the bush with their hides and shake them four times. It was just the women...Then one day a little boy followed them, curious about what they did to the hides and they saw him. So ever since then, the men have had to build the frames to stretch the hide and make the tools and help out that way," she said with a laugh and a look in her husband's direction.

After scraping off as much hair as they could - this took about an hour or so - they stretched out the hide on a handmade frame and a tool from the bone of a caribou leg was used to further scrape off the flesh.

"The bloodier, dark part, you have to get that all out. You'll notice the smoked hides that have darker spots, that's because they didn't scrape enough of the flesh off," Sinclair said.

The group plans to continue with the tanning this week and already have another hide soaking, next in line to be scraped.

While Aboriginal Day activities full of traditional crafts, drum dances, hand-games and fish fries were getting underway across the Northwest Territories, it was overall a quieter day at KFN.

"We are not doing very much for Aboriginal Day because Treaty Day is coming up on Tuesday and that's our big thing," KFN Chief Roy Fabian told *The Journal* on Friday. "We had a couple things going on and a big community dinner brought everyone out together."

Fabian said he also went out to Sandy Creek for Aboriginal Day where a group of seven students from Trent University in Ontario were camping and learning from KFN elders to make dryfish.

"They're here as part of a month-long Canadian studies trip. They come from all

different programs in the school - arts, nursing. I met one young woman from Germany,"

Fabian said. "I spent the morning talking to them about Dene culture."

CANADA DAY MESSAGE FROM MAYOR & COUNCIL

On behalf of Council, I would like to wish all our residents in the north a very happy Canada Day 2013!

This weekend we celebrate our beautiful country, the abundant freedoms and opportunities it offers, and all those who have helped shape it into what it is today. From our wonderfully multicultural community to our stunning natural surroundings, we have much to be thankful for in Wood Buffalo!

I hope when you gather with family and friends this weekend, that you have a moment to reflect on the many great things that make Canada an incredible place to live.

I wish you all a happy Canada Day, and a safe and enjoyable summer!

Sincerely,

Mayor Melissa Blake



www.woodbuffalo.ab.ca





Kaysea Fountain, 7, of Fort Resolution goes rubber duck fishing for a prize.



Hope Warner, 12, shows off her homemade "River Girl" jellies.



Sylvia Lockhart (left), 13, and Fiona Huang, 12, volunteer in the kids' game tent in support of the



Carlos and Brigitte Tapia take in the Hay Days tunes with sons (left to right) Pablo, 5, Antonio, 3, and Leonardo, 1.



Kavel Nitsiza, 8, goes for a hole in two at the kids' game tent.



Victoria Tweedie-Piter (left), 10, and Nicole Griffiths, 11



in Community

Keeping you informed.

Suncor Energy would like to notify Wood Buffalo community members that planned maintenance work on one of its upgraders begins in mid-April.

Over approximately seven weeks, there may be periods of increased flaring and the potential for odours in the Fort McMurray area during the shutdown and startup of the unit. Suncor will work to minimize these. Alberta Environment and regional stakeholders have been informed.

For more information, please contact the Suncor Stakeholder Relations Group at 780-792-9545. Regional air quality information is available from the Wood Buffalo Environmental Association at www.wbea.org

www.suncor.com

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Arts & Culture Festivals

Hay Days serves up sizzling weekend of music

By RENÉE FRANCOEUR

Over 200 people danced and soaked up the tunes throughout the two-day music festival in Hay River on Friday and Saturday.

Hay Days 2013 featured a number of events, including a kids' game tent, an outdoor jam hosted by the French Association at the Fisherman's Wharf and a free summer solstice barbecue in honour of Aboriginal Day, just to name a few.

Ottawa folk sensation Craig Cardiff, known for his soft guitar playing, gentle voice and pensive lyrics, was one of the more popular events, headlining the music night at the Ptarmigan Inn's Doghouse Sports Bar.

Cardiff's 2011 album *Floods and Fires* was nominated for a 2012 Juno Award for Roots and Traditional Album of the Year. Thanks to that same album, Cardiff was also nominated as Contemporary Singer of the Year at the 2012 Canadian Folk Music Awards.

Other musicians taking to the stage included Dene-Inuvialuit singer/songwriter Leanne Goose from Inuvik, Yellowknife's Mike Filipowitsch, originally of Kitchener-Waterloo, Ont., and

Paul Cargnello, a Montrealer known for his mix of reggae, rock and blues stirred with a southern twist.

"We had a lot of local Hay River talent, but also artists from Yellowknife, one from Fort Simpson and of course a few from out of the Territories," said Jared Monkman, vice president of the Hay River Music, Arts and Cultural Society, which runs

of Industry, Tourism and Investment sponsored an art show throughout the festival with artwork on display and for sale, ranging from elegantly beaded moosehide and muskrat items from Georgina Fabian to handmade beauty and cleaning products and jellies from Monique Warner and daughter Hope.

The Thebacha and Wood Buffalo Astronomical

It's a big thing for Hay River...and we want it to become a longstanding, established thing.

*Jared Monkman
Hay River Music, Arts and Cultural Society*

Hay Days.

"It's a big thing for Hay River, like Yellowknife's Folk on the Rocks, and we want it to become a longstanding, established thing," he said.

Monkman hopes to see the festival grow even bigger over time and said Hay Days' fifth anniversary next year will have a number of unique and exciting things in store.

The GNWT's department

Society's booth stole the show with constellation stories inside a huge, blown-up planetarium borrowed from the Telus World of Science centre in Edmonton.

A steady crowd of spectators took in the festival, Monkman said.

"It was a good turnout. Hay River doesn't have many venues for musicians, so Hay Days provides that and it's a great boost for the community as a whole," he said.



Volunteer at the "angry birds knock Lights On program.



Leanne Goose of Inuvik performs her bluesy country solos on the outdoor stage Saturday.



Jacob Aylward, 6, slides and somersaults in the inflated jungle castle.



..., swirl up cotton candy.



Gina Web (left), Michael Roy and Georgina Fabian stir up some laughs with Roy's handmade driftwood canes.



Gabi Morse, 9, helps set up the kids' game tent with mom Jill.



Craig Cardiff of Ottawa croons to a crowd of over 100 Friday night at the Doghouse Sports Bar.



HAY DAYS THANKS

Mayer and Town Council would like to thank all the performers, volunteers and participants for helping us have yet another successful Hay Days celebration!

We hope to see you all again next year!



Left to right, Mike Couvrette and Tim and Ian Gauthier man the planetarium during the art show.

Photos: Renée Francoeur

Aboriginal Day celebrated across the North



Yellowknife councillor Phil Moon Son flips fish fillets. Barry Buckley supplied 2,000 fillets of trout and whitefish.



Qayaaq and Genova Angutimarik of Igloodik, NU take in the Fort Smith celebrations.



Thousands lined up for a free lunch of trout and whitefish in Yellowknife.



Drummers perform a traditional song at the first annual Liidlii Kue First Nation Traditional Spring Gathering in Fort Simpson.



Vance Sanderson displays a local Métis cookbook at the celebrations in Fort Smith.



Handgames during Mikisew Days in Fort Chipewyan spark some friendly competition.

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The team from Behchoko throws up a cheer after winning the \$10,000 handgames competition during the Liidlii Kue First Nation Traditional Spring Gathering in Fort Simpson.

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NORTHERN Journal

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Ixaka Newkirk



Live music fills the grounds in Fort Chipewyan where crowds gathered to celebrate Mikisew Days with drumming, dancing and a community feast last week.

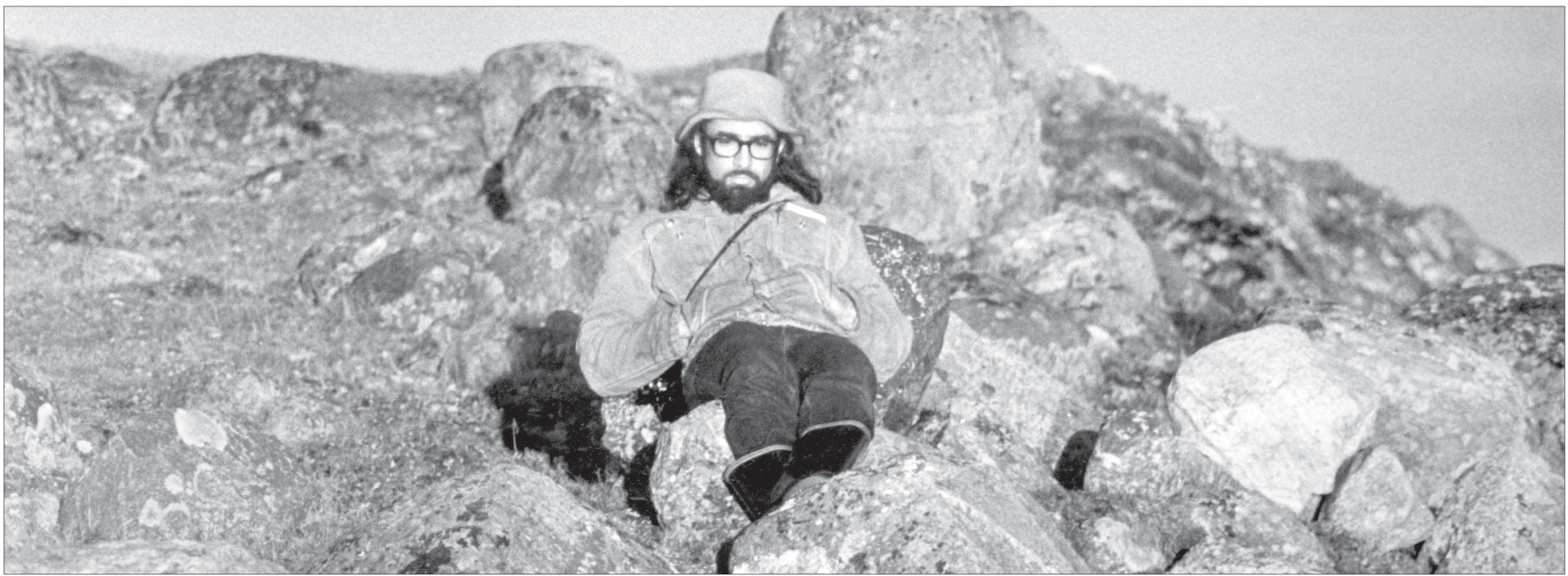


Photo: Andy Steen

A younger version of Jim Green rests on the rocks near Taloyoak - the inspiration behind his new album, *Magic Words* - where he worked for the NWT government in the early 1970s.

Arts & Culture Spoken Word

Storyteller visits 'Ice Coast' on new spoken word album

Jim Green's Magic Words harkens back to an 'older time' in the Arctic

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

Sea ice, seal fat and the smell of Bombardier exhaust kick off Jim Green's latest storytelling adventure, *Magic Words: Tales from the Ice Coast*, the second spoken word album by the Northern poet and storyteller to come out in the last year.

The author behind the recent album, *Notes from the Gold Range*, and former CBC contributor famed for his tales of "Dog River" this time heads 200 miles north of the Arctic Circle to tell a story inspired by a simpler, mythical time when all living creatures spoke the same language.

"I've always liked everything I've ever heard and read about when everybody spoke the same language, and even after that when they weren't speaking the same language any more, but they could still understand each other's language," Green said. "Magic words are like words so magic that all you have to do is say it and that's the way it would be - ain't that wonderful?"

On *Magic Words*, Green shares a personal memoir of a seal hunt he took part in in the early 1970s while living and working in Taloyoak, Nunavut - then a part of the Northwest Territories - interspersed with a handful of Inuit legends that root the geography of Netsiksiuvik Inlet ("the place to look for seals") in the rich history and culture.

Though the tale is a fairly straightforward account of a seal hunt, Green uses the story to employ some of the storytelling techniques he learned while living among the Inuit, like breaking up the narrative and not ending at "the end," which he said helped him first break free from convention.

"It was up there that I learned some things about storytelling that I never learned in school, because

my education was, like everybody else down here, a lineal affair where one thing leads to another, which leads to another and leads to another," he said. "And then you know, you get to whatever point in high school and you study a short story and the teacher tells you the short story has a beginning and a middle and an end and it's tied together like this, and so and so. And I found out that that might be the way they teach it in English..but that's not necessarily the way it works in the real world."

While few of the characters, which include Green and real-life residents of Taloyoak, use "magic words" to communicate with one another in the story, the album itself becomes an appeal to a time when people were more connected with the land and wildlife.

"It was all a matter of respect in those days," Green's voice recounts, longingly. The success of the seal hunt is attributed to respect for Nuliajuk, Goddess of the Sea and Mother of the Sea Beasts, who "had surely freed the seals," while Baby Narssuk, the ill-tempered orphan child-god of weather, is blamed for the rain, snow, ice, hail, wind and water that plagues the travellers as they fight to return to town with their kill.

"A lot of the ability (to communicate across species) has been lost," Green said. "I mean, there are just not that many people in touch with the natural world any more. You'd have to be living there all the time and open yourself up to those possibilities."

Those familiar with Green's *North Book*, a volume of poetry also rooted in Taloyoak, will revisit familiar imagery, but the similarities stop there. While *North Book's* observations are often as cold and harsh as the surroundings, *Magic Words* is warm like tea and bannock

cooking over a seal oil qulliq.

Backed by flute music, the album is almost sensory overload, a place and time where falcons screech, stretched seal skins shine in the sun like "giant glistening Arctic cow pies," and you can smell bannock cooking in the cast iron pan along with the rotting of dog carcasses, feel moss, the warmth of seal blood and the freezing cold of the ocean on your hands, and experience the visual chaos of the moment captured in an index of sights:

"Kids, women, old men, young men, everybody, troops over for a share of the fat and fresh liver. Flashing knives and sweeping ulus, bloody hands and smiling

faces. Dogs lunging at their chains, shouting for their share. Skin peeled off, ribs cut out for lunch, the rest divided for the dogs, and the seal is gone."

Filled with the somewhat off-colour humour embedded in the chosen Inuit legends (where certain male body parts make frequent appearances) and loving descriptions of swooping seabirds and fat seals, the ice coast of *Magic Words* with its unforgiving weather is no longer a sometimes-cruel everyday reality for Green, but a cherished memory.

Green is self-conscious about his intrusion into the High Arctic landscape, continually comparing his

observations of the surrounding flora and fauna to familiar ones in the south, perhaps implying his own migration. He notes a passage from a book he reads on the seal hunting trip, saying a good land ethic changes the role of man from the position of conqueror to a respectful member of the land community.

Like the explorers constantly referred to subtly throughout, generally through places' colonial names, he refers to himself as "the writer cataloging, naming this place, adding it to his memory of the world," and wonders, as he gazes upon the false dawn of nightless summer, "if this was all a dream, and maybe somebody else was in it."

Green said he knew the story was there all these years, but it was only a year and a half ago that he got to work on it, using old letters and diary entries from the '70s to put it all together.

"This story's been steeping for all this time...I would just type a letter to somebody, but really what I was doing was typing the carbon copy," he reflected.

Now that it's finished, Green said he plans to send a copy of the album to the radio station in Taloyoak and "see what happens."

"It's going to be interesting...I'll send one to the radio station and everyone in town will hear it," he said, laughing. "We'll just see how it goes."

BRIDGE RESTRICTIONS

Speed restrictions of 40 km/hr are now in place on the following bridges:

- Frank Channel Bridge km 243.8 Yellowknife Highway (No.3)
- Hay River to Pine Point Bridge km 2.2 Fort Smith Highway (No.5)
- Buffalo River Bridge km 55.7 Fort Smith Highway (No.5)
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THANK YOU FOR JOINING THE FIGHT *for life*

Fort Smith high school creating fitness centre

Mandatory fitness classes for junior high start in September

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

The books, computers and tables of the old library have been moved downstairs to make way for a cutting edge fitness facility in Fort Smith's PWK high school, the first of its kind in the territory.

Soon, a variety of treadmills, cross-trainers, stair climbers, bikes, rowing machines and a rotating climbing wall will be absorbing the energy of students through mandatory morning fitness classes for junior high and optional afternoon and evening workout sessions for the senior students and Phoenix School program.

"There are tons of studies out there that say physical exercise increases focus, it increases the ability to handle complex problems, it decreases behavioural issues, so there's all sorts of studies out there that link it to improving academics and decreasing any



File Photo

PWK High School principal Al Karasiuk wants to encourage his students to develop healthy lifestyles.

types of behavioural issues," said Al Karasiuk, PWK principal and project lead.

"So it's going to be a win-win-win. And if we can develop healthy adolescents

who incorporate fitness into their daily lives, then I think we're going to have a much better adult population."

As a partnership with public health professionals at the Fort Smith Health and Social Services Authority, the student wellness program will also provide confidential "health report cards," measuring students' body mass index, blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar.

Students will also have access through its on-site public health clinic, the Health Café, to dietitians, public health nurses and physiotherapists.

Though the hour-long fitness class will be mandatory for Grades 7-9, regular phys-ed classes and extracurricular recreation will be an option for those students who also want to engage in team sports.

The project has received funding through the school board, as well as community donors. With a budget of \$210-220,000, Karasiuk said the District Education Authority still looking for an extra \$50-\$60,000, but no current lack of funds is going to stop the project from going ahead.

Karasiuk said he was inspired by similar initiatives taken by other schools to address behavioural issues with physical exercise and fitness programs incorporating health report cards. While one program was only in place for high school students, Karasiuk thought it would be more beneficial for his students to start getting into working out earlier.

"If the whole goal is to build healthy habits, waiting till Grade 10 is a pretty long time to wait. If we can

get these kids in Grades 7, 8 and 9 and give them three years of health and fitness, by Grade 10 hopefully they will continue on their own, maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Why would you wait till Grade 10 to start addressing some inactivity issues or other health issues?"

Karasiuk said he recently gave a group of parents a tour of the planned facility and said 100 per cent of the families that came through were behind it.

"The only people who are a little bit unhappy are the current Grade 12s," who complain that the school is only doing this now that they are leaving, Karasiuk said.

"I want to make the school a place kids want to come to, so if we can hook them with fitness and exercise, then so much the better."

Health & Wellness Early Childhood

NWT updates early childhood development framework

By RENÉE FRANCOEUR

The government of the Northwest Territories wants children to have the best chance at success "right from the start."

The department of Education, Culture and Employment along with the department of Health and Social Services released an updated version of the early childhood development framework, originally drafted in 2001, to do just that.

The renewed framework, called *Right from the Start*, focuses on the early years from prenatal to age five, features "cutting-edge

research, emerging information and a section on best practices and techniques for the most effective approaches" to early childhood development.

According to the draft framework, statistics indicate that NWT children are more likely to be exposed to negative experiences and circumstances that impact their early childhood development, compared to the rest of Canada.

"We can do a better job of providing early childhood assessment services to all families and we will improve our range of programming to respond to

identified needs...We have heard that we need to help families by providing better outreach and public education initiatives and this will be part of our commitment to action," Health Minister Tom Beaulieu told the House recently.

"Starting during pregnancy, we need to ensure that expectant mothers have the support they need - whether it's help to stop drinking, eating a healthy diet, being protected from an abusive relationship or getting the best prenatal care possible."

The framework notes how James Heckman, an

economist and Nobel Prize winner, has calculated that spending \$1 on early childhood programs pays the same dividends as spending \$3 on school-age programs and \$8 on education for young adults.

"Every dollar invested in early childhood development can yield up to a sevenfold return," Beaulieu said in a press release.

Among many key points, the framework calls for the expansion of early intervention programming aimed at infants, children and parents and enhanced access for all families and communities to high quality, affordable early

learning programs and child care services.

A 10-year review of the previous framework found gaps in services and funding for children with challenges, disabilities or developmental delays.

"This is important for policy makers to prioritize, given the knowledge we now have about the advantages of investing and providing appropriate supports early in life," the framework stated.

Another gap identified was the lack of program monitoring and evaluation.

According to the report, "consistent data collection and analysis did not occur.

This is important to make sure the program or service is meeting identified outcomes and expectations."

The renewed framework commits to monitoring, reporting and ongoing evaluation for continuous quality improvement.

The departments will finalize an action plan to support the framework's commitments over the summer. This plan will outline priorities over the next three years and will be supported by a monitoring and evaluation framework.

To read the framework, visit www.rightfromthestart.ca.

Right from the start facts

- The Northwest Territories is home to 39,211 children aged five years and younger.
- Of that group, 2,311 (59 per cent) are Aboriginal.
- The NWT has a higher birth rate than the rest of Canada. In 2010, the NWT rate was 16 births per 1,000 people, which was up from 15 births per 1,000 in 2001. The Canadian rate remained more consistent at 10.8 births per 1,000 in 2001 and 11.1 births per 1,000 in 2012.

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GNWT wants more spending from Northwestel

CRTC hearings evaluate company's revised modernization plan

By RENÉE FRANCOEUR

The government of the Northwest Territories wants to see telecommunications company Northwestel step up when it comes to providing modern internet to Northern clients.

Public hearings held by the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) in Inuvik and Whitehorse last week heard a series of presentations to help the commission evaluate Northwestel's five-year, \$233-million modernization plan, which was revised and cut back in January.

The company "can spend more and must spend more," Mike Aumond, the GNWT's deputy minister of Finance and secretary of the Financial Management Board, told the CRTC hearing panel last Monday.

The government is largely concerned with changes to the company's original modernization plan, especially the "decision not to upgrade internet speeds in satellite communities and its plans to cut back on transport expenditures," Aumond said.

According to Aumond, the highest internet speed available in the 10 NWT satellite communities is expected to be well below the target speed established by the CRTC.



The CRTC panel hears a presentation in Whitehorse last Thursday from the Dakwakada Development Corporation (part owners of Latitude Wireless in Yukon).

"At the end of the day, these satellite communities will have 'high speed' internet access at 1.5 mbps download and 384 kbps upload. This is not acceptable now, and will be even less acceptable in 2017 when the plan is to be completed, especially when NWT satellite communities have recently been offered the ability to purchase internet packages at 2.5 mbps upload/384 kbps download speeds," he said.

"We believe these speeds are only being offered now due to the Falcon Communications/Northwestel broadband project with third party funding that will end in 2017. At that time, if we understand the modernization plan correctly, NWT satellite-served

communities will revert to 1.5 mbps download speeds. This is not modernization."

Darrell Beaulieu, president of Falcon Communications Ltd., noted in his presentation to the panel later that day that more bandwidth funding would be required to continue service at rates comparable to the rest of the territory in the satellite communities after 2017.

Beaulieu said a longer term solution is currently being examined.

Fifty-eight terrestrially-served communities will see "substantially increased" internet speeds, which will vastly exceed the commission's targets of 5 mbps download and 1 mbps upload, Eric Clement,

Northwestel's communications manager, told *The Journal*.

"Thirty-eight satellite communities will have access to high-speed internet, served by Northwestel or SSi Micro, albeit at speeds lower than the CRTC's 5 mbps download and 1 mbps upload. To raise speeds in the satellite communities, there needs to be a coordinated effort to look at reducing the cost of backbone, specifically satellite backhaul," he said.

On behalf of the GNWT, Aumond urged the panel to direct Northwestel to offer service with a minimum 5 mbps download and 1 mbps upload speed to all its communities, and that the company "is probably fully capable of

doing this without further funding support."

The government also expressed concern with backhaul transport, the way the wireless network is connected from remote points to large, centralized sites, noting that there have been many complaints about its inadequacy.

"Our government is looking to build a fibre link through the Mackenzie Valley because the area is inadequately served by Northwestel's existing microwave network," Aumond said.

According to Aumond, Northwestel cancelled all planned fibre optics expenditures and reduced its total planned transport expenditures by \$36.5 million in response to the CRTC's Wholesale Connect Decision in February, which significantly reduced the wholesale rates to use Northwestel's backbone infrastructure to help out the competition, such as Iristel and SSi.

Meanwhile, the company's modernization plan promises to increase backbone transport capacity by 150 per cent, strengthening overall network capabilities and further supporting competition.

Other benefits to the plan include having 100 per cent of the Northern population

access enhanced calling features and 99 per cent access 4G wireless technology, enabling the use of smart phones and tablets, the company said in a recent release.

"We have been investing and we believe that this is something to be proud of, but we appreciate that there is more to be done and that's what our modernization plan is all about," Northwestel's CEO Paul Flaherty said in the release. "Our plan will significantly strengthen the social and economic fabric of the North while ensuring that such investments are sustainable and can be built upon for years to come."

Northwestel's monopoly in the NWT, Yukon and Nunavut came to a halt nearly two years ago when the CRTC stepped in to open up the North to other telecommunications competition.

In 2011, the CRTC requested the company develop a plan to not only address concerns such as competition, but also modernize its out-of-date infrastructure. The recent hearings serve to assess the plan and how it compares to the rest of Canada, as well as ensure it can be implemented in a timely manner.

Health & Wellness Organ Donations

GNWT to propose revised Human Tissue Act this fall

By RENÉE FRANCOEUR

The Northwest Territories' Human Tissue Act, which regulates organ donations, is long overdue for a make-over, according to members of Legislature.

Thanks to recent support from cabinet, it may soon see some much needed updates, such as clearly providing for transplants between living bodies (for example, a kidney donation to a relative).

Range Lake MLA Daryl Dolynny brought forward a motion on June 6 calling for the GNWT to revise or replace the act "in order to create a framework for organ donation that reflects the best practices across Canada."

All eight regular members voted in favour of the motion and, while cabinet abstained from the initial vote, government House Leader Michael Miltenberger later confirmed on behalf of Health Minister Tom Beaulieu that "the government is going to come forward with a legislative proposal" this fall, outlining potential amendments to the act.

"I am very pleased there is so much support," Dolynny told *The Journal*. "I can't tell you how many hours of research

have gone into this...I've compared our act to all jurisdictions across Canada and I've even taken it one step further where I've compared it to international changes on the issue. Let's hope they take some of the recommendations brought forward in my research."

The current act was designed in 1988 and runs only a page and a half.

According to Dolynny, it lacks protection from criminal and civil liability for organ donor parties acting in good faith and without negligence and does not provide a concrete definition of "tissue."

It also contains no mention of who may carry out organ removal, beyond referencing "therapeutic purposes," "medical education" and "medical research" as reasons for removal.

There are no penalties for act violations, and the sale of body parts or benefitting from donation of organs or tissue is not explicitly banned. It's also unclear in the consent provision if a "spouse" includes a common-law partner.

Cleaning up the "hopelessly outdated" legislation is the first step towards implementing the first official organ donor registry in the territory, Dolynny

said. Without a registry, it's difficult to guarantee Northerners who want to be organ donors that the operation will actually go through.

"You can participate on a voluntary basis by signing an organ donor card, but really that has very little bite and that can be challenged...There's legal liability issues behind participating in the current program. You really have to have

Let's hope they take some of the recommendations brought forward in my research.

Range Lake MLA Daryl Dolynny

luck on your side and family support to make it happen," Dolynny said. "Clearly, right now, we're not a part of the Canadian database but hopefully that changes down the road as we begin this process."

A single organ donor can save up to eight lives, and tissue can help up to 50 other people, Dolynny said.

More than 4,000 Canadians are on waitlists for transplants, including seven in the NWT. The demand is not

being met, often with tragic results, he added.

"Personally, I've known someone who wanted to donate one of their kidneys and I can't tell you how complicated that was to do that and it wasn't covered under our health care. You basically want to give someone a chance at life and legislation is preventing that," he said.

This isn't the first time efforts have been undertaken to

modernize the act. The topic was brought up in 1994, in 1998 and again in 2001. Yellowknife Centre MLA Robert Hawkins also urged former health minister Sandy Lee to look at the act in 2009.

"I think interest in the act waned a bit too over the years because of the cultural sensitivity in giving away one's organs from a spiritual perspective. I went into this knowing that," Dolynny said. "Having said that, interestingly enough,

I think there has been a change in mindset, a modernization of thought if you will, and it's being more accepted by many of the stakeholders who may have previously had some issues about donating organs."

Frame Lake MLA Wendy Bisaro agreed that organ donation is "far more common" than it was in the 1980s.

"Improving the Human Tissue Act is a necessary first step in improving our system," Dolynny concluded in the House. "We owe a functioning system of tissue donation to our residents and to other Canadians. Let's be clear. Right now, if one of our residents needs a kidney or a heart or a lung or even a cornea, they depend 100 per cent on Canadians in other jurisdictions. We aren't helping, but we do benefit from the generosity of others."

Organ donations cost effective

Transplants not only save lives, but they have the potential to save the government and taxpayers money.

According to Dolynny, a single kidney transplant saves the health system about \$250,000 every five years. The estimated savings of kidney

transplants alone was \$800 million in Canada in 2009, he told the House on June 6.

Transplant services are carried out in the NWT in partnership with Alberta Health Services (AHS) as specialized surgical teams, equipment and advanced life support essential to organ harvesting are not available in the NWT. Logistical barriers such as geography, transit times and lab limitations also prevent the NWT from organ harvesting, Beaulieu explained to the Legislative Assembly.

The Stanton Health Authority has partnered with the Human Organ Procedure Exchange (HOPE) Program based in Alberta, which funds all air and ground travel costs for potential NWT donors to travel there.

"They (AHS) are currently looking for better ways, better options for identifying potential donors, including the possibility of a registry that will include our residents in any initiatives they develop," Beaulieu said in the house.

In 2010-2011, four Northerners received liver transplants through HOPE. In 2011-2012, there were five liver transplants, one islet cell transplant and one partial liver donation from a living donor.

Pitches for unconventional aircraft fail to move experts

By JACK DANYLCHUK

Proposals for radical alternatives to conventional air transport struggled to become airborne in a room full of experts at a two-day conference in Yellowknife on Arctic logistics and infrastructure.

There was polite applause after John Morris and Ernesto Soria presented their ideas for airships and air trailers that might some day carry freight and fuel to remote sites beyond the reach of roads.

Morris, president of Heliplane, laid out the details of an unmanned cargo delivery system that he calls an air trailer – a glider without wings that is towed behind an aircraft and uses a vertical rotor to provide lift and a soft landing from any altitude.

“It looks like a helicopter, but it’s not,” Morris said.

The difference is that the rotor on an air trailer relies on air pressure for motion and the weight of the cargo to provide stability.



A 250 tonne all-aluminum, jet-powered, helium-filled blimp, contrasting with the Heliplane “air trailer” shown above, was one of the concepts discussed at a two-day conference in Yellowknife last week on Arctic logistics and infrastructure.

Soria, director of business development for Varialift Airships, made a pitch for an all-aluminum, jet-powered,

helium-filled blimp capable of transporting as much as 500 tonnes and landing without a conventional airstrip.

A 250-tonne airship would measure 150 metres long, 50 metres wide and 50 metres high with a 9-metre high cargo bay.


Helium would be contained in a series of light packages that Soria compared to bags used to hold potato chips.

Morris compared the gyroplane to the large cargo gliders used in the Second World War. The British saw it as a cargo system, and in the late 1950s, a 200-passenger gyroplane operated between London, Paris and Brussels.

“The British government cancelled the program, but Groen Brothers Aviation (a US company) is funded to bring out another 200-hundred passenger aircraft,” Morris said. “We are using the same technology to develop air trailers with 80,000 to 200,000 pounds of capacity. A load of 200,000 pounds could be towed by a C-130 size aircraft. When the tow cable is released, the spinning rotors provide sufficient lift to land the cargo gently.”

The only question from the audience was for Morris: how would the air trailer behave during take off in a crosswind?

It would be unstable in anything over 20 knots, he replied.



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Photo: Chuck Blyth

Paddlefest, Fort Smith's annual river festival, is seeking a one-time donation of \$5,000 from the Town of Fort Smith following a major funding cut from the territorial government.

Sports & Recreation Paddling

Paddlefest seeks money after losing half its funding

By MEAGAN WOHLBERG

With half its funding from the territorial government cut abruptly this year, Fort Smith's foremost summer tourism draw is in hot water and looking for the town to help bail it out.

Paddlefest, the event that brings in kayakers, rafters, canoeists and spectators from around the world to play on the Slave River rapids every August long weekend, unexpectedly had \$10,000 of its funding cut by the department of Industry, Tourism and Investment this spring and is now looking for a one-time donation of \$5,000 from the Town of Fort Smith to make sure the festival happens.

"They've changed the way they are distributing money now," Paddlefest coordinator Genevieve Côté said of ITI. "It was a shock – we were not expecting such a big cut

– so we're looking for new partners now in making Paddlefest sustainable. We found the other \$5,000; now we're just trying to get the other money we need through this one-time donation."

Côté said the club was aware ITI, which had funded 70 per cent of Paddlefest's budget for the last four years, never intended to make the arrangement a continuous sponsorship, but they were not informed of when or by how much the reduction would be.

"With the switch between organizers this year, we absolutely didn't expect that the said reduction was going to happen now, and we understand that many other organizations have been heavily reduced as well, we are not the only ones," Côté told *The Journal*. "ITI knew this was

going to be a big hit on us and they managed to make it better for us by combining both a SEED funding program and some money for the Tourism and Parks branch of ITI to

and Trade Advisory Board (TTAB) – and a full gallery of supporters, Côté brought her request to the town council meeting on Tuesday night to get support.

This is a huge draw, not only for tourism but for people to come and live in Fort Smith.

*Kevin Antoniak
Tourism and Trade Advisory Board*

cover a part of our budget... timing was the only bummer, and I wished we would have learned about it earlier, so we could have had more time to go through grant applications."

With support from two town bodies – the Recreation Advisory Board and the Tourism

Due to a bylaw requiring that donations over \$250 go through one of the town committees, no vote was held following Côté's presentation. Council will make a formal decision on July 2.

Though the issue was brought before council just last Tuesday, Côté said Mayor Brad Brake

approached her at the June 8 Slave River Day celebration to tell her the town would not be giving Paddlefest any money.

"Mayor Brake told me during the Slave River Appreciation Day that he knew ITI had cut our funding this year and if I thought the town would give us money I was dreaming. He added the town was also affected by the funding cuts and there was just no possible way the town could afford financially helping the festival other than the typical in-kind type support they have provided in the past," which has included items like staff support, and moving porta-potties and picnic tables, Côté said.

At the meeting, several councillors expressed interest in funding Paddlefest and, by extension, the Fort Smith Paddling Club in the same way that the Pelican Rapids Golf Club and Fort Smith Ski Club are given \$5,000 each per annum as a recreational service more than simply a one-off festival.

"We've been helping the South Slave Friendship Festival for a number of years, unsuccessfully... If attendance speaks to support, this is the biggest we have," councillor Chris Westwell said. "The paddling club brings a lot to the community and can be bundled in to what we do with the ski club and the golf course, not just as an event but recreation. It's worth considering what it would take to make this happen."

Concern was expressed by other councillors that Fort Smith's additional festivals, including Wood Buffalo Frolics and the Friendship Festival, are only given \$2,500 each.

"Five thousand is twice as much as we give to any other festival," councillor Don Webb told Côté. "Precedent setting can be expensive. It's not something we budgeted for and there hasn't been a meeting in a long time where someone hasn't be here asking for money."

TTAB chair Kevin Antoniak was present to support the presentation by Côté, expressing the board's view that Paddlefest is not only a major tourism draw to the community, but the paddling club as a whole provides an incentive for people to make the move to Fort Smith.

"If this was a hockey tournament, we wouldn't be supporting it... But this is a huge draw, not only for tourism but for people to come and live in Fort Smith. From a trade-tourism marketing perspective, that's the reason TTAB supports Paddlefest."

Several councillors agreed that, based on the numbers of visitors brought in, Paddlefest is currently the most successful tourism draw to Fort Smith and attested to the Paddlefest organizing committee as assisting greatly in the promotion of the town in the media as well as materials for tourists coming North.

"This is the single most organized festival in the community," councillor Kevin Smith said.

Paddlefest was named the number-one summer destination priority by the town's recently commissioned branding and marketing strategy and pictures of the festival are used regularly in both the town's and territory's tourism promotional materials.

This year, the festival has received funding from the Legion, the Northwest Territories Power Corp. and private donors along with ITI. The budget for the festival, which includes a Friday community event, two days of whitewater events, a dance and a week of spectator/instructional activities leading up to the festival is \$33,730.

Paddlefest has drawn between 300 to 500 participants and spectators each year since its inception in 2007, depending on weather. Last year, 52 people came from out of town to participate.

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Volleyball player wants fairer selection process

Fort Smith athletes cut from NWT team for not moving to Yellowknife

By RENÉE FRANCOEUR

A Fort Smith volleyball player is “frustrated” and “heartbroken” after being cut via email from the Northwest Territories’ beach volleyball Canada Summer Games (CSG) team because she couldn’t relocate to Yellowknife, the designated training centre, for the summer.

“I couldn’t believe what was happening,” Taylor Phillips, 19, said. “We asked if there was any way we could maybe just come up for week-ends and train that way and we were told that’s not realistic, that it wouldn’t be enough time with the coach. So then we even mentioned that it’s a beach program - in the games there isn’t even a coach participating - so you don’t need a coach 24/7...There was so much back and forth and we didn’t get anywhere.”

Phillips and her volleyball partner, Gaylen Pischinger, were the only two beach volleyball athletes outside of Yellowknife invited for the CSG tryouts last year, and even then Phillips said she had to push SportNorth and fight for Pischinger to be officially invited.



Photo: Renée Francoeur

Taylor Phillips can still be found training on the beach volleyball court in Fort Smith almost every weeknight despite being cut from the Canada Summer Games NWT team.

“There were six girls at tryouts and four of them were from Yellowknife,” Phillips said.

Both Fort Smith girls made the cut.

Later in the year, Phillips was also invited to try out for the indoor volleyball team. Again, she was the only one from outside of Yellowknife invited.

“I made it past both cuts for indoor volleyball and my parents bought tickets for

the games this year in Sherbrooke, expecting for me to go because - and I don’t mean to sound arrogant - I do feel like I’m a great volleyball player for the NWT. I train every day for about four hours. This is what I do. It’s my passion,” Phillips said.

In December, the coach began inquiring if she could move to Yellowknife for the summer and Phillips, who is working two summer jobs on top of coaching boys’

volleyball in Fort Smith, said she couldn’t because of her commitments.

“The whole time I was honest with him that I couldn’t move. Then a couple months ago, the coach said it was pretty well mandatory that I move to Yellowknife to train and that if I couldn’t move I wouldn’t be invited back for the last training camp.”

According to Phillips, the indoor volleyball CSG team has since folded, most likely

due to a lack of players, she said, and the indoor coach has now taken over as the beach volleyball coach.

“After all of that with indoor volleyball, I thought, ‘Oh no, what’s going to happen with beach volleyball?’ There’s two of us on the team and we’re both in Smith. But we crushed the Yellowknife girls the last time we played against them so I thought it’d be okay. It’s a totally different sport.”

She was wrong.

The same thing happened, and now both Phillips and Pischinger have been left out.

“We haven’t heard a thing since the coach’s last email saying we’d no longer be on the team,” Phillips said.

The girls were told Yellowknife has better access to recreational facilities and one-on-one time with valuable coaches.

“We have everything they have and we probably have it better here, honestly. Why can’t the training centre be here? Our coach is great...We don’t have a lot of girls playing so we go against the guys and they don’t take it easy on us. It’s great training.”

Phillips brought forth her plight to her MLA Michael Miltenberger at the end of last month during a constituency meeting.

“I’m fighting for the younger athletes. I don’t want to see them going through the same thing. I want to see change. People are telling me this has been happening for 40 years and nobody does anything about it. I want more athletes from across the NWT invited to the CSG tryouts - or get rid of those invitations altogether. I think that would inspire more people to choose athletics and live healthier lifestyles.”

Miltenberger told Phillips he would work on bringing the minister responsible for sport, Municipal and Community Affairs Minister Robert McLeod, to Fort Smith sometime this summer.

Phillips said she has yet to hear if that will take place.

The 2013 games run Aug. 1-9 in Sherbrooke, Que. It would have been Phillips’ first CSG. She’s previously competed in the Western Canada Summer Games and twice in the Arctic Winter games for volleyball.

Well done. Congrats! Awesome. Great job. We’re so proud of you. Wow! Way to go. Fantastic! You did it! Super. Hats off to you. Amazing! Shine on. Take a bow. Hurrah! Hip, hip hooray! Let’s celebrate. Yeah! Reach for the stars. Superb! You rock! I knew you could do it. Woohoo! Right on. What an accomplishment. The future’s yours. OMG. No way! Bravo!

You’ve made a community proud. It’s moments like these that make all that hard work worthwhile. Congratulations Athabasca Delta Community School graduates. Show the future what you’re made of. An occasion like this is why we continue to support the school and the many dreams of the people of Fort Chipewyan and Wood Buffalo.



The Syncrude Project is a joint venture undertaking among Canadian Oil Sands Partnership #1, Imperial Oil Resources, Mocal Energy Limited, Murphy Oil Company Ltd., Nexen Oil Sands Partnership, Sinopec Oil Sands Partnership, and Suncor Energy Ventures Partnership.



Celebrate Canada Day on July 1 in Fort Smith at Conibear Park

Schedule of Events

- 11:00 a.m.** Parade marshalling and judging at Uncle Gabe's
- 11:30 a.m.** Parade along McDougal Avenue to Conibear Park
- Noon** Flag Raising, Singing of Oh Canada, Float and Bike Competition Prizes, Community Awards, Speeches with Territorial Commissioner George Tuccaro
- 1:00 p.m.** Cake Cutting
- 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.** Games, Street Vendors, Entertainment
- 2:00 p.m.** Family pick-up slow pitch game
- 3:00 p.m.** Fish Fry

For more information, contact the RCC at (867) 872-4REC

