



**Deadline for responses Tuesday January 30, 2024**

**Submitted by the Délı̨nę Renewable Resources Council**

## Round 2 Information Requests (IRs) for Communities

### A. Communication about climate change

*IRs from the SRRB to all Sahtú Communities:*

1. What is the best way for governments and other agencies to communicate information to your community about climate change, changes to the land, and changes to the animals?

Some good ways to communicate information to the people of Délı̨nę are:

- Host more in person meetings where information can be communicated to us and we can ask questions and give input,
- Put information on the radio,
- Put posters up around the community,
- Promote information during bingo games,
- Put information into a Délı̨nę newsletter,

There should be more information shared with us about what is happening in the Délı̨nę District. This information should be visual and easy for us to understand. We also need information translated for us into Dene Kǎdǎ. If information is in writing, not everyone can read Dene Kǎdǎ so it should be said over the radio, said at meetings, or recorded for us to understand.

Virtual meetings are ok if it is not possible to travel to Délı̨nę. We like to have prep meetings ahead of time to get an intro to the information so that we can think about what we have heard and be ready to give our input at future meetings.

Some Elders have trouble hearing and so big meetings are challenging for them to participate fully. We should offer one-on-one translation and visits to Elders' homes to share information to those that struggle to participate fully at big meetings.

## B. Questions about adaptation to changes you cannot control, including climate change and wildfires

### *IRs from the SRRB to all Sahtú Communities:*

1. As land users, has your community changed the way you live, move, or behave on the land, in response to changes you have noticed on the land? What kinds of things are people in your community doing differently?

We are noticing changes to the land, water and ice. This is changing the way we travel on the land and the things we can do at different times of the year.

For example, last spring a person from Délı̄nę went to Deer pass to fish but they had to go way inland to get there. Coming back they also had to go way out to get back to Délı̄nę safely because of changes in the environment. Hardly anyone went to Deer Pass last year because it is difficult to get there safely now.

The ice is changing. We need to plan differently now because the ice disappears more quickly. Years ago, the ice would still be there in July, now it is gone by June.

The water levels are dropping. We are also worried about chemicals getting into the water. We need to protect our water. The animals need it, live on it.

We need to remind people about safety, especially younger harvesters. We are concerned about young people and their future especially with climate change. We want to make more information available to youth about travelling on the land safely.

We love our kids and we want to do something good for our kids in the future.

We cannot really predict what will happen with climate change. Historically, we went through it a long time ago. There was one year when winter continued throughout summer so it was winter all year. In case this might happen again or other changes, we need to be prepared. We need to be ready and have a plan.

We cannot change what has happened and cannot go back. We need to prepare ourselves and our youth for the future. We are a spiritually strong people. When we pray, that is a way we can get support. We want people to be safe and live a good life.

2. What role should humans have in helping caribou adapt to changes in the climate?

Humans should not interfere with ʔekwé. We should not be talking about ʔekwé this much. We need to leave ʔekwé alone.

We can work to protect the lands, waters and plants. This will help the ʔekwé when they come back. But we should not be interfering with the ʔekwé.

We need to protect all the food and plants for the animals. Animals need to survive too. Our food comes from the land, and we need to protect and take care of our food on the land.

We also want animals to live a good life too and not to have danger. This is one reason we need to put out forest fires right away. We do not want animals to suffer or be in danger.

ʔekwé have left because they have been disturbed. We have seen this happen before. They were gone before for 30 years, but they came back. They are gone again, but they will come back. It is a cycle that happens. Our stories are that they will come back, so we have to wait.

Our number one law is to take good care of our wildlife. We know that GNWT made ʔekwé suffer with collars. ʔekwé are aware; they are like us and know what is happening around them. They know that the GNWT is making their lives worse by collaring them and bothering them. We need to leave them alone and they will come back.

We need to respect ʔekwé. We need to respect the land. The only way we can survive is with wildlife and land – the three of us make one. We need to keep each other. Land keeps wildlife, wildlife keeps Dene. It is a circle. We need to show respect when harvesting to keep this circle.

There is a story about díga (wolf) and ʔekwé. In the past, díga and ʔekwé had a meeting together. They met and the díga wanted to shut down travel up north. The ʔekwé wanted to come up north for their food and explained that is why they wanted to come up. The díga said no. ʔekwé said “we have good meat and that is why we come up. We don’t do anything wrong. In the future, people and other animals will live here. We as ʔekwé, we will still be there.” The díga still did not want them to come up. They continued to meet. The díga lost because one díga said “we will be living off the ʔekwé too, as well as people.” Díga said ʔekwé do not do anything wrong. We Sahtú do not do anything wrong either. The government is like the díga. We are like ʔekwé, we do not do anything wrong. People should start listening to us.

3. Has your community started planning or taking actions related to climate change or wildfires and their impacts on caribou? What kind of actions has your community taken?

We continue to implement our Belare Wíle Gots’é ʔekwé – Caribou for All Time – A Délıne Got’ıne Plan of Action, which has plans in it for actions related to climate change. See pages 24-26 of the November 2021 version of the plan (which was submitted during the Délıne Public Listening Session).

We are looking for more funding to implement that plan in ways that will help us deal with climate change and fires, including:

- Monitoring for changes in the land, water, plants and wildlife,
- Public awareness and safety campaigns, and
- Teaching youth how to get out onto the land.

4. What resources does your community need to adapt to and mitigate the effects changes on the land that you cannot control, such as climate change and wildfires?

We need more funding for monitoring. This is very important. We need to see what is happening to our lands, waters, plants and wildlife. We want to be able to measure the changes and report back to the community about what is happening. Then we can work on what to do next. First, we need the information. As a community, we cannot do anything about stopping climate change. But we are here for our children and we are worried about the impacts of climate change on children. We need information to help them.

We need this information reported back to the community regularly and in a way that people understand.

We want to hire our own people to do this monitoring. We want to purchase drones to help us collect data to monitor. We want to collect data and each year look at the data and present the findings to the community so that we are all aware of the changes and impacts of fires.

Deb Simmons was very good about monitoring and working with communities. We miss her greatly. We need to support each other in the Sahtú. All areas are different, but we can work together to support our work and gather all the information we need for the younger generation.

We need funding for more education, training, and learning resources. We are worried about the impacts of climate change. The Elders say that all we can do is prepare ourselves for the changes coming. We can see and feel that changes are coming every month. Eventually, the warm weather may make it that the wildlife we depend on for harvesting will disappear. We will run out of food. This is what we should prepare our kids for. Kids are not learning how to get out on the land and will not be able to survive. The youth say that they want more opportunities to learn skills on the land. They want to be matched with Elders and other mentors to learn these skills. We could create resources for the school about climate change and on the land skills. Our Elders have tradition diplomas, they have so many skills and so much knowledge. We want more education and training for younger people to learn these skills too.

Climate change is impacting not just wildlife but also our traditional medicines and vegetation. We need to protect these things. And one way to do that is through more monitoring. For all of these things we need to be monitoring. We want to have a strong Guardian program where we have paid people out on the land looking after the lands and waters. We also want to look into having our own conservation officers (as new positions or expand work of the Guardians) who will monitor and enforce our ʔekwé Plan.

We are also worried about the impacts of forest fires. Forest fires produce ashes that can travel a long way and contaminate the water but also impact the plants and food for birds and other animals. If there is a forest fire, do not let it burn. It needs to be put out right away. We need fire fighting equipment in Déljñę. We need training and equipment so that we can fight wildfires ourselves and not rely on ENR or others. We want to be able to make fire fighting decisions ourselves. We know the trapping areas and most important areas for wildlife, so we need to be able to protect those areas. We could also help other communities in the Sahtú fight fires if they want our help.

Due to the landscape changing with climate change and younger people not having the same skills on the land, we expect there will be more need for search and rescue and we need more training and equipment in Déljñę for us to conduct search and rescue.

5. Does your community have stories about how communities should respond or adapt to changes on the land that you cannot control? Can you share how you have learned from these stories to guide your community in a good way in the past? Can you share how you learn from these stories now?

No new stories to add. There are stories and summaries of our Dene ʔeʔa that are relevant in our Belare Wíle Gots'ę ʔekwę – Caribou for All Time – A Déljñę Got'jñę Plan of Action.

6. Do you have any comments about other parties' responses to round 1 IRs? To help us understand your comments, please indicate both the party who gave the response and which of their IR responses you are commenting on. Other parties' responses can be found at: <https://www.srrb.nt.ca/document-repository/public/public-hearings-registry/caribou-conservation-climate-change-and-forest-fire/02-1-submissions-response-to-information-requests>

No comments

### C. Observations of caribou and climate change in general

#### *IRs from Déljñę to all Sahtú Communities:*

1. Please share any information you have about ticks and other bugs or illnesses impacting ʔekwę.

N/A

#### *IRs from the SRRB to all Sahtú Communities:*

1. Please share any changes, if any, has your community observed in:
- Mice and/or other small rodents
  - Birds

We have noticed new species of birds that we have not seen before in Délıne. For example, last summer a red bird was spotted that no one had seen. About 2-3 years ago, we also saw a blue heron or whooping crane on the shores of Great Bear Lake. We had never seen one before, it is usually only in Alberta.

We have no observations on mice or rodents to add.

2. If you have observed changes in bugs/insects, mice and/or other small rodents, or birds, have these changes affected caribou? In what ways?

We have noticed fewer mosquitos in the summertime the last few summers. They are not as bad as they used to be. Also, not as many flies as there used to be.

#### **D. Hıdo Gogha Sėnégots'ıa (Planning for the Future – PFF) – Planning, Climate Change and Wildfires**

##### *IRs from the SRRB to all Sahtú communities*

1. How can Hıdo Gogha Sėnégots'ıa (Planning for the Future – PFF) help you address and respond to climate change impacts and wildfires?

We will continue to use our Belare Wıle Gots'ė ʔekwė – Caribou for All Time – A Délıne Got'ıne Plan of Action to guide our actions and this plan can help us respond to climate change impacts and wildfires.

We want this plan to stay with us forever. We changed it in 2021 to add łue (fish), some more Dene ʔeʔa, and more about predators and competitors. This will be the plan that we use to help address and respond to climate change and fires.

2. What content should be included in a Hıdo Gogha Sėnégots'ıa (Planning for the Future – PFF) written plan to address climate change impacts and wildfires?

No comment

#### **E. Hıdo Gogha Sėnégots'ıa (Planning for the Future – PFF) – Planning Process**

##### *IRs from the SRRB to all Sahtú communities*

1. How is planning described in your language? Can you share key terms or terminology in your dialect about community planning?

From our Belare Wíle Gots'é ʔekwé – Caribou for All Time – A Déljné Got'jné Plan of Action:

Dene	English
ʔededáhk'á	habitat, where people and animals can find good food
ʔedets'é k'áots'erewe	governance; we are our own bosses, but we have to follow the law
ʔehdzo got'jné	hunters, harvesters, trappers
ʔehdzo Got'jné Gotsé Nákedı	Sahtú Renewable Resources Board (helper of the ʔehdzo got'jné)
ʔehtsáə kə	grandparents
ʔekwé	ʔekwé
ʔekwé gha máhsi ts'jnjwe	ceremonial harvest (we thank the creator for ʔekwé)
ʔekwé njəh	caribou make a thundering sound when the populations return
ʔéne	mother
ʔəə	law, principles, policy
ʔjtá	father
Areyəné ełóot'jné ats'jt'e.	We are all one family.
asjı kats'jnjwe	harvesting all things
bedzio	adult male caribou (big)
belarewíle gots'é ʔekwé	caribou for all time
Déljné ʔehdzo Got'jné	Déljné Renewable Resources Council
Dene béré	traditional Dene foods
Dene béré kats'jnjwe	alternative harvest (we hunt and gather all kinds of different Dene foods) – linked to the totality of the Sahtú Needs Level
Dene kədə	Dene language
Dene náoweré	Dene knowledge
Dene Ts'jı	the whole concept of what Being Dene (being who we are) means to our grandparents
Denecho kə gok'átá náts'ezé.	We have to hunt like our grandparents did. The
díga	wolf
gogha horíla	in danger, at risk
Goə́ beghə gots'edé njde	When people talk about ʔekwé too much, it's not good.
dzá qt'e.	

Dene	English
goregho	shrubs
há	and, with
Ekáa k'énj't'é ewilát'á kút'a.	You've harvested the quota, so that's it – shutting down the harvest.
máhsı cho	thank you very much; welcome; hello
móla	outsider
nátsezé, kanátsezé	hunting, hunting something
néné	land, habitat
Sahtú	In this document, mainly refers to Great Bear Lake (in other contexts refers to the Sahtú Region defined by the Sahtú Dene and Métis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement)
Sahtú Got'ıne	Dene of Great Bear Lake
tsıa	young caribou
tsída	female caribou
yárégo	young male (smaller)

2. What stories does your community have about how your community can work together to make decisions and plan for a good life from the ancestors, grandfathers or grandmothers, or other knowledge holders? Can you share how you have learned from these stories to guide your community in a good way in the past? Can you share how you learn from these stories now?

From our Belare Wíle Gots'é ʔekwé – Caribou for All Time – A Déljñę Got'jñę Plan of Action. Please see more the stories in the Plan.

## ʔekwé ʔeʔa – Law of the Caribou

Story told by Charlie Neyelle

*This story was told to me by se ʔjtá, my father. ʔjtá used to say, "Make sure you take good care of this story and what it says. Learn this ʔeʔa, this law for ʔekwé. In the future, when you kill ʔekwé, this is how you must work on ʔekwé in the future. You must work this way on ʔekwé until the day you die.*

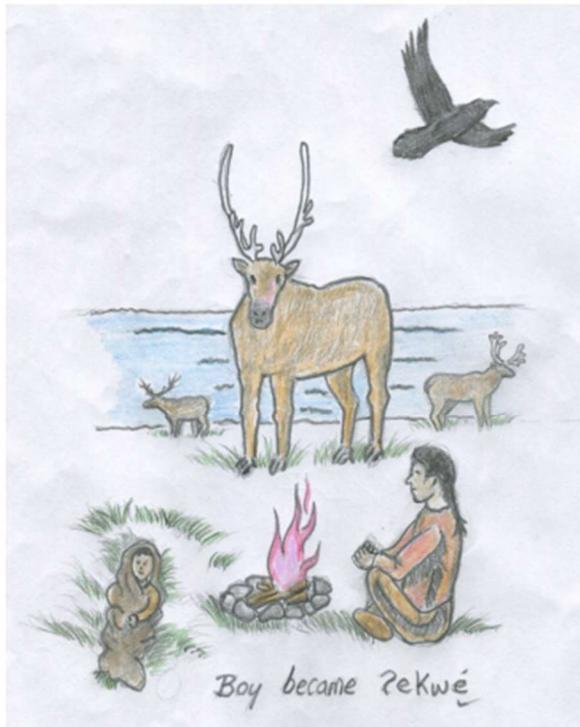
A long time ago there was a Dene couple who had a baby. This baby would cry and cry. The baby cried so much, the parents became exhausted. They finally fell asleep because they were so tired. When they woke up in the morning, the baby was gone. They could see his tracks in the snow, so they followed his trail. The baby's footprints turned into ʔekwé footprints, walking across the lake to join the other ʔekwé. Then the parents understood why the baby was crying. He wanted to join ʔekwé.

The following year, there were really lots of ʔekwé arriving. There in the middle of the herd was the little boy who had turned into a yárégo (young male ʔekwé). The little ʔekwé could see his parents. He said to benɔ (his mother), "ʔéneɔ (mother), don't worry about me. You can use the sinew and the babiche from my body for your sewing."

And he said to ene há ʔjtá há, "My skin can be your clothing and your bedding, you can use it for your sleeping mat. So, you two, do not worry about me."

Finally ʔekwé said, "ʔjtá, when you work on me, when you cut my head off, place it in front gently. For the rest of the body parts, you cut and place them behind gently. Don't throw the meat behind. Make sure you carry it and place it gently behind the head."

This is how the yárégo wanted to be treated kanáts'ezé (when he was hunted). He was making a law for himself.



3. What are good ways of community planning according to Dene and Metis? What are good ways of community planning?

Please read our Belare Wíle Gots'é ʔekwé – Caribou for All Time – A Déljné Got'jné Plan of Action, it has good ways of planning according to our Dene ʔeʔa.

A highlight was to look back:

### History

An important part of planning is looking back to see what worked and didn't work.

There are four main periods in the history of Déljné Got'jné that we can learn from.

1. Old time Dene way of life - ʔekwé há Díga há had a meeting.
2. Government comes – nátsezé restrictions, starvation and resistance.
3. Land claim agreement – co-management, management plan, and learning across cultures.
4. Self-government –Déljné Got'jné learning to be who they are in changing times.

4. What kind of planning work has your community done for Hjdó Gogha Sénégots'íʔá (Planning for the Future – PFF) since the second PLS (April 2022)?

We have not changed our Belare Wíle Gots'é ʔekwé – Caribou for All Time – A Déljné Got'jné Plan of Action since November 2021. We are not going to update it now. Instead, we want to focus our efforts on implementing our plan. We have a great plan, but we need capacity and resources to put the plan into action.

5. For communities that have started Hı́dó Gogha Sė́nė́gots'ı́á (Planning for the Future – PFF), can you share:
- a. Your experience with planning as a community; and
  - b. Any lessons or tips about planning that could help other communities?

Our process and lessons are outlined in the Belare Wı́le Gots'ė́ ʔekwė́ – Caribou for All Time – A Dė́lɲė́ Got'ɲnė́ Plan of Action. We do not have anything else to add.

The steps in our planning process were:

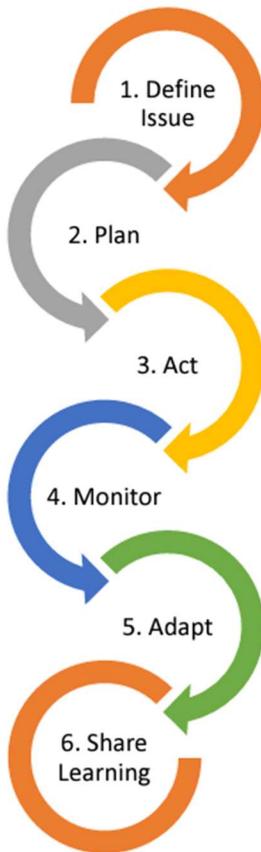


Figure 1: Six Steps in the Process

6. Do you have any other contributions or comments to share about how communities plan and/or Hı́dó Gogha Sė́nė́gots'ı́á (Planning for the Future – PFF) in general?

No other comments.