

Moving forward

The plan has five interrelated program areas that center on an Indigenous Guardian and Healing Program. We know that maintaining our connections to Nío Nę P'ęné and our ways of life is the best way to steward caribou and our homeland.



After receiving feedback at a series of community engagement meetings in Norman Wells, Tulít'a and Tu Łidlini in spring 2018 the plan was revised. Numerous actions, such as developing the Guardian and Healing Program as well as a proposed Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area, are already underway.

Together, Tu Łidlini Dena, Shúhtaot'įnę and Métis can play an important role in shúhta goęepé / bedzih / kudzih stewardship



Nío Nę P'ęné Begháré Shúhta Goęepé Narehǰá – Trails of the Mountain Caribou Management Plan was prepared by a Working Group of Indigenous partners that includes Tu Łidlini (Ross River) Dena, Shúhtaot'įnę, and Métis representatives of the ęehdzo Got'įnę Gots'ę Nákedı (Sahtú Renewable Resources Board), Norman Wells and Tulít'a ęehdzo Got'įnę (Renewable Resources Councils), the Tulít'a Dene Band, and the Tu Łidlini (Ross River) Dena Council. Please direct all inquiries to:

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Photos: Janet Winbourne

Nío Nę P'ęné Begháré Shúhta Goęepé Narehǰá

Trails of the Mountain Caribou

A joint stewardship plan for mountain caribou, developed and proposed by Shúhtaot'įnę, Métis and Tu Łidlini Dena



Restoring the health of caribou and people in their mountain homeland

Shúhtaot'íne, Métis, and Tu ǵidlini Dena share a large homeland centered around Dechǵlǵ / Dechenla (the land at the edge of the treeline) – a mountainous region spanning parts of today's Yukon and Northwest Territories. We are responsible for maintaining relationships with the land, the people, and other beings here, and we work in many different ways in our role as stewards within our Shúhta Dene néné / Dene kayeh (Mountain Dene homeland).

Our Dene ǵǵa / Dene ǵa nizin (sacred laws) tell us, 'This is your responsibility as caretakers of this land.'



Artwork: Robby Dick

Since the 1980s we have seen disturbing changes in a large area we call Nío Nę P'ęné – a place we know as the backbone that holds everything together for our people and preserves all of nature. It is the headwaters for several important rivers and critically important to several groups of shúhta goǵepé / bedzih / kudzih (Northern Mountain Caribou).

Our stewardship vision

- Shúhtaot'íne, Métis, and Tu ǵidlini Dena continue to peacefully co-exist with shúhta goǵepé / bedzih / kudzih (mountain caribou) in an ecologically diverse and healthy mountain landscape as they have for thousands of years
- Shúhtaot'íne, Métis and Tu ǵidlini Dena are travelling, harvesting, sharing and gathering throughout their territory, keeping Dene kǵdǵ / k'e (language), Dene ts'ǵǵ / Dene k'e (ways of life), and Dene ǵǵa / ǵǵa nizin (law / respect) strong.

In 2014 we met to talk about the changes we are seeing and the impacts that the changes are having on our Dene ts'ǵǵ / Dene k'e (ways of life). In 2016 we met again and discussed ways of moving forward and our strong commitment to work together in finding solutions. One action we decided on was to develop a joint stewardship plan for shúhta goǵepé / bedzih / kudzih.

We chose caribou to be the focus of our planning work at Nío Nę P'ęné because they are critical to the health of the land and to our Dene culture. We believe that if we can help sustain shúhta goǵepé / bedzih / kudzih hé (health), this will also help keep all the other parts of our homeland and Dene ts'ǵǵ / Dene k'e (ways of life) healthy.



In July 2017 about 40 people met at Dechǵlǵ / Dechenla to begin work on the plan. After the workshop, an Indigenous Working Group was formed, with partners to help support and fund the work.

By November the draft ***Nío Nę P'ęné Beghǵré Shúhta Goǵepé Narehǵǵ – Trails of the Mountain Caribou Management Plan*** was ready. It lays out our vision, principles, how we will work together, the threats we hope to address, our goals, and the program areas and projects that will help us meet our objectives.