



DEHCHO FIRST NATIONS

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Dehcho First Nations Ask Canada and GNWT to Return to Negotiating Table

The Grand Chief of the Dehcho First Nations has written to Caroline Bennet, Minister of Indigenous Affairs Canada, and to Premier Bob McLeod of the NWT, to ask them to return to the negotiating table to complete an agreement on lands and governance as soon as possible. Negotiations have been stalled since the two governments wrote in April asking DFN to clarify our positions on the role of the GNWT in Treaty negotiations, and on the development of an integrated system for managing and protecting natural resources in the NWT.

The leaders of the 9 Dehcho Dene and Metis communities who comprise the Dehcho First Nations discussed these issues in great detail over the past five months, and have now unanimously responded. The Dehcho response reminds Canada and the GNWT that the Framework Agreement signed by all three governments in 2001 clearly spells out the roles of all three parties, and also reminds the two governments that the Dehcho have always supported the development of a truly integrated system of resource management in place of the current fragmented system.

In his letter on behalf of the region, Grand Chief Herb Norwegian said, “we urge Canada and the GNWT to return to the negotiating table to complete the work that we began in 2001”. Norwegian added, “it’s important to respect the process that we all agreed to follow in our negotiations. Our people are patient, but we’ve had far too many delays. In order to speed up the process, we suggest that the parties engage the services of a mediator at the negotiating table. We hope our negotiating partners will agree so that we can move the process forward to a successful conclusion.”

For more information, call Herb Norwegian at (867) 695-6607.