

DENE LAWS

Mek'éeé Dene Ts'ııı



NAHE NÁHODHE - OUR WAY OF LIFE



PROJECT OF DEHCHO FIRST NATIONS

welcome

máhsı edı megháahnda

This project is dedicated to our ancestors. They show us the way through the stories they have told, the knowledge they have shared, and the children they have raised.

Edı tł'a nahecho gı́lé gonats'éndı́h t'áh mek'eh eghálats'ındá á qt'e. Gogõndıé gháádé goghánahonehtę, t'ahsıı goghágonétõ kegedıhshõ nahets'ę kagedı, gots'ęh dáõndı́h t'áh dezõą genehsseh.

To promote Dene Zhatie in the Dehcho region, Dehcho First Nations, in collaboration with partners and local communities, undertook this video and book project to share Dehcho Dene language, culture and knowledge of the land.

Dehcho zhı́eh gozhatıé k'éndah met'áh ats'et'ı gha, Dehcho First Nations, Dene ndaa gohéh eghálagenda, gots'ęh kúé zhágóla ndaa gots'ágęndı t'áh Dehcho Dene zhatıé, gonáhodhe, gots'ęh dáõndı́h ndéh ts'ęh keots'edıhshõ t'áh edı edıht'éh náedah gots'ęh edıht'éh mek'ezhats'ehtı k'eh eghálats'ıdá.





From October 1 to October 7th 2019, twenty-four participants including elders, fluent language speakers, youth and staff members gathered at the Kat'odeeche Dene Wellness Center. Videographers documented the knowledge shared during the week and produced six short videos. The videos were then developed into six booklets in Dene Zhatie entitled Moose Hide, Spruce Tree, Dene Laws, Dene Laws and Stories, Camp Setup, and Plant Wisdom.

Its'éndaa Zaa tié gots'eh íáhdj, 2019 gots'é ekúh Dene ɔki honɔ ʔóó-dj l'éthede, ɔndah, Dene amii Dene zhatie t'áh nezuh ɔndeh, dezɔa ohndah gots'eh gohéh eghálagedéh Kát'odeeche Dene Najéh K'é légehdeh. Dene dáɔndíh t'ahsii kegogedjshɔ gots'é kagedi t'áh Dene goedht'éhíhchuh dek'ehnízhénidhah gots'eh mets'eh edjht'éh náedah ehts'étaí aek'áhe ts'ehtsj. Edí edjht'éh náedah ts'ets'j ts'eh edjht'éh mek'ezhats'ehhtí aetséíia ts'ehts'j.

We hope that this project inspires our youth. Enjoy.

**Edí mets'eh keots'edúʔáh ts'enidhɛ t'áh mek'eh eghálats'índá.
Nezuh megháahnda.**



1. Share what you have - Ełeghaets'edendih

Help your other relatives with what you have.

Ahsii t'áh néhlot'je gots'anendi.

Give them some of what you have. They all fed each other back then.

Azhii nets'eh éhsii ndaa goghaedindih. Thaat'oh azhq ełeghaegedendih jle.

It was a big fish a lot of people were able to eat from it.

łue nechá dene azhq zhets'eh shézhéh á qt'e.

And after they have eaten fish, they would sit around and talk with each other.

Káa łue ɔshégeazhéh énidé, kɔ dhɔqah gedéhtth'i gots'eh ełézháogindeh.

2. Help each other - Ełets'áts'ęndı

Wherever you're living, if there are elders among you, you respect and help them.

Godı náts'edéh, ǫhndah gotah nágedéh énidé gots'edıhchá gots'ęh gots'áts'ęndı.

You chopped wood for them or if they have difficulty hauling heavy things, you helped them.

Tse gogha táts'edehkáh ile énidé t'ahsıı gogha nekéh t'áh gots'áts'ęndı.



3. Love each other as much as possible - Ełeghḡnets'etḡ

Love one another as much as possible.

Séé azhḡ ełeghḡniatḡ.

Ama used to say they're all like your little brothers and your little sisters.

Amá kadi ełéh, nechea gots'ėh nedéa táḡndíh á agít'e.

We all have to love one another as we live together.

Azhḡ ełehéh náts'edéh t'áh ełeghḡnits'etḡ gha góḡḡ.

That's something Ama had said, and I follow that example by loving all those I meet.

Amá kadi ɲlé, gots'ėh ezhi k'jǐ amíi gháehnda énidé azhḡ goghḡniétḡ.





4. Be respectful of elders & everything around you - Qhndah gots'edjhchá & godhah ahsii azhq chu

You have to respect the elders and all that's around you.

Qhndah gots'eh t'ahsii azhq godhah mets'edjhchá gha zq góqo.

When the elders are eating you stay quiet, and when you are around elders you go about things quietly.

Qhndah shégezheh énidé tsíneh ats'it'e, gots'eh qhndah godhah ats'et'j énidé tsíneh t'áh ats'et'j.

Whatever on the land was given to us by the Creator, and it is the elders who taught us about these things.

Ndéh k'eh t'ahsii azhq Nóhtsı nahegházhénıqo, gots'eh qhndah gondi naheghágenıqo qt'e.



5. Pass on the teachings - T'ahsíı ots'edıhshq gogháts'ıǰáh

The knowledge you are given is not yours. It is to be passed on.
Edı gındı moots'edıhshq tı'a gots'ęh qıt'e íle. Gogháts'ıǰáh gha á qıt'e.

It makes you feel good.
Met'áh nezı edéts'ededıh.

My parents used to say: "This knowledge that you possess..
Secho kagedı:

“If you are not passing on the story in your life, and are silent, you are creating an illness for yourself.”

“Edı gındı met’áh góhgınde ile, gots’eh tsıneh anet’e énidé met’áh lah dıtsı gha” gedi ılé.”

It is heavy and I wish people would know about it. Our teachings are very powerful.

Nekéh gots’eh ezhi á séé azhı moots’edıhshı énidé enehthe. Dı nahegındı tı’a séé nátse á ıt’e.

We should be sharing this, we should be gathering our children and teaching them,

Met’áh etéhots’ede, dezqa kaındıh téats’eleh gots’eh goghágot’s’enehtı,

and if you were to keep yourself very well, it will become something that is believed.

gots’eh séé nezuh edek’ets’edıh, kaındıh énidé séé gogha ehthı’ı ats’edi.

This is very important to me.
Ezhi séé segha met’áhodéıá.



6. Be happy at all times - Łáqlíh t'áh gogha gonezy

The elders used to say: Do not be overanxious about things and do not be mentally worried.

Qhndah kagedjndí: t'ahsí t'áh gozóz qahí íle gots'eh t'ahsí ghonánahthę íle.

If there is work that need to be complete – work at it.

Eghálaeda nahegha gózq énidé k'éndah meghálahnda.

When you are speaking to elders and working with them, they are always saying

Qhndah gohéh gots'ende gots'eh gohéh t'ahsí k'eh eghálats'enda énidé

be thankful for all things.

t'ahsí azhq gha máhsi enahthę gedí.





7. Sleep at night & work during the day - Tedhe ts'ete & dzenę eghálats'ęnda

You sleep at night

Tedhe ts'ete

and during the day you worked at self-sustaining work.

gots'ęh dzenę énidé t'ahsí t'áh xálats'ededa.

In the old teachings, when you rise early and you listen to all the animals

Thaat'qh goghágogenehtę, eht'q niats'itę gots'ęh golqą ts'edíth'e

and things like birds, there is a good possibility that

gots'ęh chųą éhdah adádi, met'áh

you can pick up “įk'oo” for yourself (medicine power).

įk'oo ats'edíleh chu núndi á qt'e.

8. Be polite and don't argue with anyone - Dene ts'ę nahzų gots'ęh thá t'áh dene ahdahndı íle

There is one thing that they teach you in Dene.

Dene k'įį t'ahsıı íé t'áh xágogenehtę.

Be good to people and behave well towards people. Do not be argumentative towards people.

Dene ts'ę nahzų gots'ęh gots'ę nezų k'ęgoahᐱah. Thá t'áh Dene ahdahndı íle.

As my late father would say: You don't know the type of person a person is, Setá éᐱı adi gháádé: Dene daᐱndıh ᐅt'e mots'edıhshᐅ íle



you are therefore mindful of what you say.

ıt'áh séé godhá xᐅhts'ęhndıh.

You are especially mindful of what you say among strangers.

Xáhtᐅ tah ats'et'ı énidé chu godhá xᐅhts'ęhndıh.

You are observant of your surroundings and have a clear understanding of the situation before you speak.

Séé azhᐅ godhᐱh dágot'ı éhsıı kehots'ęhndıh gots'ęh keots'edıhshᐅ gháádé á dene ts'éots'ęndeh.



9. Young girls and boys should behave respectfully - Ts'éljə gots'əh deneljə ełegedjchá gha góʔ.

Boys and girls need to respect each other. Me, I talk to the young girls about how to respect themselves.

Deneljə gots'əh ts'éljə ełegedjchá gha góʔ. Sj, daqndih t'áh gonezų edek'ėgedih t'áh ts'éljə gots'ė guindeh.

So, when I talk to the young people, I always talked to them about their boundaries, and keeping themselves well.

Dezqə gots'ė gohndeh énidé, gonezų edexoahdih góhdehsi, gots'əh gonezų edek'ėahdih góhdehsi.

My husband and I teach them and he teaches them about the bush.

Sedené chú goghágonitə gots'əh edj t'a dechjtaħ t'áh goghágonehtə.

They're able to hunt quite well, they're able to take animals.

Káa gonezų detah aget'j, t'ahsíu chu łaghthi agújá.

Knowing how to respect animals as boys and girls is something that is very important to me.

Daqndih deneljə gots'əh ts'éljə ts'elj t'ahsíu ets'edjchá ezhi á segha hútb'íi met'áhodéʔá.

VOCABULARY

PAGE 4

néhlot'įę - your relatives

nets'ęh – yours

goghaedindih – you share with them

ełęghaegedendih – they shared with each other

łue – fish

shézhéh – it fed all

dhqah – around

PAGE 5

náts'edéh – people are living

qhndah – elder

gots'edįhchá – you respect them

gots'áts'endi – you help them

tse – wood

nekéh – heavy

PAGE 6

ełęghqniatq - love each other

ehłéh – used to

nechea – your little brother

nedéa – your little sister

ełehéh – together

gháehnda – I see

PAGE 7

godhąh – around oneself

mets'edįhchá – one respects

shégezheh – they are eating

tsíneh – quiet

Nóhtsj - Creator

naheghágeniıq - they have given us

PAGE 8

gqndı – story

moots'edįhshq - one knows

gogháts'įqáh – one gives

met'áh – with it

edéts'ededih – one feels

secho – my parents

PAGE 9

gógųnde – you tell them stories

lah – sickness

enehthę - I wish/think

ełéhots'ede – telling each
other stories
edek'éts'endíh – taking care of
self
goghágot's'enehtę - you teach
them

PAGE 10

kagedındí – they have said
ghɔnánahthę - you all think
about them
eghálaeda – work
k'éndah – continue
gohéh – with them
gedı – they said

PAGE 11

tedhe – night
dzenę - day
xálats'ededa – sustaining self
ehtł'q - morning
ts'edíth'e – you hear/listen
łk'oo – medicine power

PAGE 12

xágogenehtę - they teach you

nahzı - all be good
k'egoahɔah – all conducting
self/behaving
thá – what you say/words
spoken
éɔı – late (person that is de-
ceased)
dáɔndíh – the way it is

PAGE 13

denelıą - young boy
ts'elıą - young girl
sı - me
met'áhodéɔá – it is important
edexoahdıh – take care of your-
selves
góhdehsı – I tell them
łagıhthı – they harvest



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Amíı Gots'ágındı

This project is grateful, first and foremost to our elders and fluent language speakers who shared their wealth of knowledge and experience; without your support this project would not be possible.

Mek'eh eghálats'ındá t'áh amıı gots'ágındıh t'á, ala nahe ɔhndah gots'eh Dene amıı dezhatıé k'ıı zháogındeh edegɔndıé gots'eh azhıı egogedıhshɔ nahendáh agedı; azhɔ nahets'ágendi t'áh nezuh agújá.

A heartfelt thank you to Kat'odeeche First Nation for hosting this project in their home community.

Kat'odeeche chu máhsı nahendéh k'eh nahetah edı mek'eh eghálats'ındá.





This project has been made possible in part by the Government of Canada.

Government of Canada chu edı mek'eh eghálats'ındá t'áh nahets'ágındı.

Financial and inkind support was also provided by: Dechinta Center for Research and Learning, Dehcho First Nations and Dehcho K'ehodi.

Dechinta Center for Research and Learning, Dehcho First Nations gots'eh Dehcho K'ehodi chu saamba t'áh gots'eh nahets'ágındı gha chu.

Mahsi to Reel Youth and Carrie Breneman for their work on the project.

Reel Youth gots'eh Carrie Breneman chu edı t'áh nahets'ágındı gha máhı.

WE RECOGNIZE THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE FOR THEIR

Amí edı k'eh eghálats'ęnda t'áh gots'ágin

Aline Gargan
Alisha Moses
Anandi Brownstein
Betty Hardisty
Douglas Norwegian
Elaine Lamalice
Georgina Fabian
Helen Kotchea
James Cayen
John McLeod
Jonathan Antoine
Joyce Mcleod
Justina Black
Margaret Ireland
Margaret Leishman
Mike Low/ Dehcho AAROM
Nadine Menicoche
Nicole Sanguéz
Ramona Pearson
Robert Lamalice
Rose Moses
Violet Fabian
Yvonne Norwegian

Project leads:
Kristen Tanche, Violet Jumbo
and special thanks to
Andy Norwegian.



R HELP AND CONTRIBUTION TO THIS PROJECT:

dí gots'eh gotah ageat'j t'a:



MADE POSSIBLE BY:



DECHINTA
Centre for Research and Learning

Canada 

This project has been made possible in part by the Government of Canada.
Ce projet a été rendu possible en partie grâce au gouvernement du Canada.

