

Delà Got'jne Self-Government Negotiations UPDATE



January 2019

December Main Table Negotiations Report: Delà Got'jne team keeps the focus on our priority issues



The negotiation teams for Delà Got'jne, Canada and the GNWT at the last Main Table negotiation in Ottawa.

When:

December 13 and 14, 2018

Where:

Ottawa. GNWT hosted the meeting at the GNWT Offices on Sparks Street.

Who attended:

The Delà Got'jne team included: Joseph Kochon (Chief Negotiator), Chief Wilbert Kochon (Behdzi Ahda' First Nation), David Codzi (President, Ayoni Keh Land Corporation), Hyacinth Kochon (Advisor), Jennifer Duncan (Advisor), Dora Duncan (Interpreter), Dakota Orlas (Community member), Stephanie Irlbacher-Fox (Governance Advisor), Shannon Ward (Lands Advisor), Roxane Poulin (Communications Advisor), Larry Innes (Legal Counsel)

The next Main Table negotiations:

- January 28-29 in Edmonton
- February 26 by conference call

CONTEST

Answer the **THREE QUESTIONS** on the **LAST PAGE** of this bulletin to be entered in a draw to win a gift certificate for the Co-op!

DEADLINE: February 15

The Delà Got'jne Self-Government Negotiations team works for the members of the Behdzi Ahda' First Nation and the Ayoni Keh Land Corporation. We publish regular updates on the negotiations and related activities to make sure our members know what is happening and can see how their feedback is being used.

Members' questions and feedback are welcome.

Have questions or comments?

Stop by the BAFN office or contact David Codzi
867.709.2700 • davidcodzi@behdziahda.com

The Government of Canada's Reconciliation Agenda

What it means for our negotiations

The Government of Canada is changing a lot of its policies about Indigenous peoples for "Reconciliation". This means that Canada is open to new ideas at negotiations. However, the federal negotiators do not always have clear instructions for what they can agree to put in our agreement.

A good example of this is something called the National Fiscal Policy Process. Through this process, the Government of Canada is working with self-governing Indigenous Governments and Indigenous Governments who are in negotiations, from across Canada to set up a new way to finance self-government. The purpose of the process is to make sure that self-government costs are calculated properly. It is also the first time Canada has agreed to look at funding to close gaps between Indigenous communities and other Canadian communities for social well being, housing, and infrastructure. When finished, the new policy will guide negotiations about the amount of funding for the Delà Got'jne self-government to operate.

Delà Got'jne representatives are involved in this process and contributing to the discussions.

What is UNDRIP?

UNDRIP stands for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, a statement adopted by the United Nations in 2007 that sets an international minimum standard for treatment of Indigenous peoples. It is meant to ensure the rights of Indigenous peoples are protected in the areas of culture, education, health, and political participation. It also talks about the recognition of Indigenous peoples' rights to their lands and natural resources, and respect for their treaty rights. UNDRIP calls on countries to support the self-determination of Indigenous peoples and to meaningfully consult with them in order to get consent on matters that concern them.

Canada is in the process of passing the UNDRIP Act (also known as Bill 262) that would ensure that the laws of Canada are consistent with UNDRIP. This Bill also calls on the Government of Canada to work in cooperation with Indigenous peoples to develop an action plan to achieve the objectives of UNDRIP.

Community Lands: Update

There are some important community land matters that must be dealt with in the self-government agreement. These are very technical matters, so the three governments set up a working group on land issues and it has made good progress.

A new community boundary

Currently there is no legal community boundary in Colville Lake. The working group has made a recommendation to the Main Table on a recommendation for a **new community boundary for Colville Lake** that all parties agree will allow room for current and future needs.

In order to create the new boundary, there is also work to be done to divide a large parcel of Sahtu land – called **Parcel 44** – that is shared with Déljñę and that will become part of the new boundary. This will require working with Déljñę and SSI.

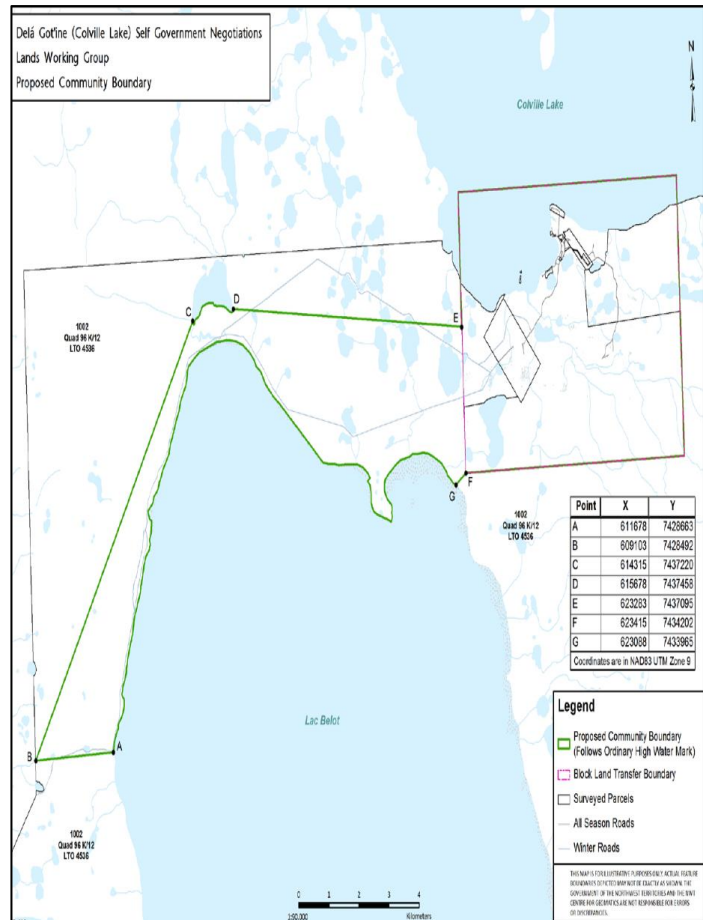
Reducing land related debts

There is still a lot of work to be done to figure out how different parcels of land owned by the GNWT will be transferred to the Delà Got'jne Government (DGG). **Our goal is to have as much land in the community transferred to the DGG and to do this as smoothly as possible.** We also want to make sure we have good surveys and legal descriptions of all the properties so we don't run in to any problems in the future.

The Dela negotiation team is also concerned about **members who are accumulating lease rent arrears**. Dela Got'ine should not be paying lease fees on land they are going to own once we are self-governing. The GNWT has said they are willing to sit down and talk about this issue.

Ensuring we do not inherit any unhealthy land

The working group has also made good progress on identifying existing and suspected **contaminated sites in the community**. We do not want any contaminated sites to be transferred to us, so we are doing research on these sites before final decisions are made about which lands are transferred. This will continue to be a priority for the summer. Negotiators will soon begin talking about how contaminated sites will be handled in the Agreement.



Other topics that were discussed

- The Delà Got'jne team is pushing the GNWT to take a broader view of the **Local Services chapter**. The GNWT only wants the chapter to deal with jurisdiction over municipal-type services (e.g. water, sewage, etc.) but we want to ensure the agreement gives our government the ability to deal with any local issues that are important to the community and residents.
- **Social housing** remains a major priority for the Dela team and we talk about it at every session. Our goal is to get as much control as possible over housing.

"We don't want to be living under a 'yay' or 'nay' from anyone. In our history, we never had to wait for anyone to say 'yay' or 'nay'. We did things together, it was nice and simple. Now we are trying to build a system where we keep that history in mind. Modern-day politics is very different. It is not our way." – Joseph Kochon

"How to live on the land and survive. That is what our Elders have taught us. Just give me an axe and a gun and I will survive. It's not work for us. We are part of the land. That's how we want to live. That is how we want our youth to live. We want to help our own people. We want to help them make their lives better."– Chief Wilbert Kochon

- The parties continued to discuss the chapter called **"General Provisions"** which is where they will set out principles and requirements that are general or that are meant to apply to the whole agreement. The Delà Got'jne team wants to include a **"most favoured nation" clause** in this section. This would ensure that if another self government agreement has a better deal on a subject we have already negotiated, the Dela Got'ine Government would be able to get the better deal too.
- The parties continue to discuss our proposed **governance model based on the traditional got'jnes**. While all parties accept the principles of this model, the GNWT wants guarantees that non-Tsudeweh will be represented.
- The Delà Got'jne team is proposing that Canada and the GNWT commit in the agreement to having their staff get **"cultural competency training"** so they understand the self government agreement, Dela Got'ine culture and way of life, and what that means for how they do their job. Canada and the GNWT are open to talking about this but have not made any commitments.
- The Delà Got'jne team is asking that all parties commit to **third-party oversight of the implementation of our agreement** and to **regularly scheduled reviews of the agreement and how well it is working**. We feel this will help ensure our agreement is properly implemented, that all parties meet their obligations, and that issues that arise can be dealt with quickly and effectively.

New target date for the self-government agreement: April 2020

A target date of April 2020 has been set for completing self-government negotiations. Changes in Canada's policies have been positive, however this means that Canada and the GNWT are not getting back to us as quickly as we had hoped on some subjects. Funding from Canada for negotiating is set at a level that prevents us doing work necessary to make progress quickly.

Delà Got'jne Self-Government

CONTEST

Answer the THREE QUESTIONS below to be entered in a draw to win a gift certificate for the Co-op!

Drop off your answers in writing at the BAFN office or email them to:

delagotineselfgov@gmail.com

DEADLINE: February 15

Question 1: Name three topics the Delà Got'jne team is dealing with in the self-government negotiation.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Question 2: What does UNDRIP stand for?

Question 3: What kind of community lands does the Delà Got'jne negotiation team want to make sure are not transferred to us part of self-government? (circle one)

- a. GNWT government buildings
- b. Land that is contaminated
- c. Land that has rents owing

Good luck!!!