

Dehlà Got'jine Self-Government Negotiations UPDATE

Summer 2019



Talking about self-government in our own language



Dora Duncan translating for Hyacinthe Kochon at the May negotiation session in Yellowknife.

At every session, we have an interpreter sit with Elders and community members to translate what is being said by all parties at the table. In the process, she is developing a strong base of knowledge to help translate the important words that will be the basis for our Dehlà Got'jine Self-Government Agreement.

Recent negotiations sessions

- April 1-3 in Colville Lake
- May 13-15 in Yellowknife
- June 25-26 in Ottawa

Upcoming negotiations

- October 29-30 in Yellowknife

Upcoming community workshops

- Translating words that will go in our agreement into our own language – *Date and details coming soon*

The Dehlà Got'jine 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
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What is being negotiated

In plain language

Ratification

Everyone will vote on the self-government agreement

How Dehlà Got'jne are kept informed of self-government negotiations:

- Sharing this newsletter,
- Meetings and workshops to share information and get input, and
- dehlaselfgovernment.ca website.

When the agreement is completed, it will be explained in detail so that all community members can ask questions and understand it before voting on it.

A vote by all members is required

The agreement will be approved through a “ratification vote”. For the agreement to be accepted, 50% plus one of all eligible voters must have voted “yes”.

Anyone who does not vote will be counted as if they are saying “no”. It is important for everyone to vote so that the decision is clear.

The agreement must also be approved in the NWT Legislative Assembly, and in the Parliament of Canada.

A Ratification Committee will manage the vote

A Ratification Committee will be set up to manage the vote. It will have representatives of the Behdzi Ahda” First Nation, the Ayoni Keh Land Corporation, the GNWT and the Government of Canada.

The Ratification Committee is responsible for making sure there is a complete and correct list of voters and that all voters are aware they are on the list. There will be a process for people to correct the voters list beforehand.

The committee will also make sure all voters receive a copy of the agreement and the information they will need to be able to vote.

Who can vote?

The agreement will describe who can vote. All eligible members of the BAFN and beneficiaries of the Ayoni Keh Land Corporation will get to vote, no matter where they live. Dehlà Got'jne team has proposed that the minimum voting age will be 16 years old. People who do not live in Colville Lake will be able to vote by mail.



Did you know Dehlà Got'jne Self-Government now has a website!

You should check it out at:

dehlaselfgovernment.ca

Self-government basics • Negotiations updates • Community Workshop Reports

Plain language documents • Photos • Newsletters

What is being negotiated

Review and Amendment

There will be a way to change our agreement if something isn't working

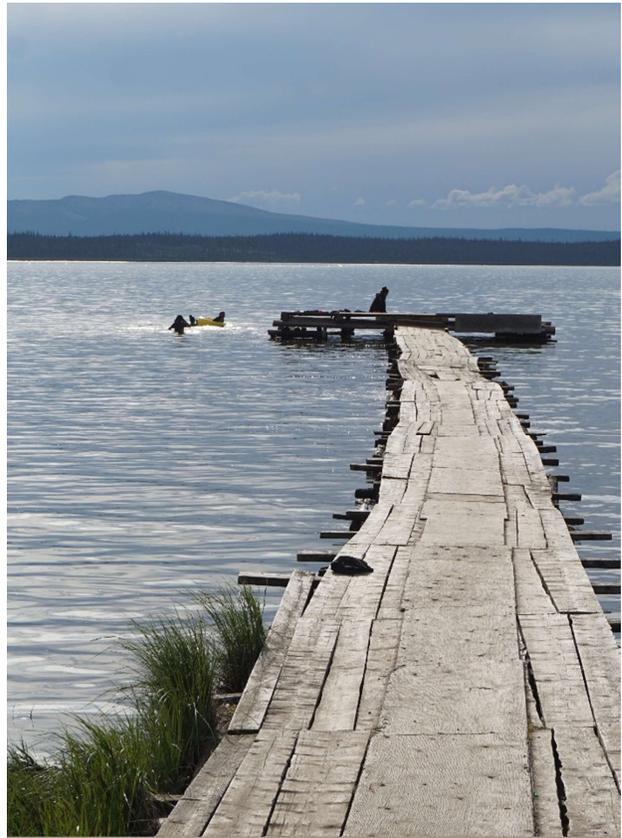
The Dehlà Got'jne Self-Government Agreement is simply a tool. Making sure it works as intended will be the ongoing responsibility of the Dehlà Got'jne Government, the GNWT and the Government of Canada.

The agreement can be changed if needed. A Review and Amendment chapter will describe how changes can be made. Most issues will be solved through working relationships between governments. However, in some cases if the agreement is not working well, the parties who signed the agreement will have a process to figure out if it needs to be changed, and then make changes.

The Review and Amendment chapter makes sure that all of the partners are monitoring how the agreement is working, and have a way to identify, discuss, and solve any issues.

We are negotiating:

- A process to allow any party to request amendments to the agreement at any time. This does not mean the amendment has to be accepted, but the parties have to discuss it.
- Required reviews of the agreement on a set schedule, so that the parties have to get together regularly to review how the agreement is working.
- Once a year, before the anniversary of the agreement's effective date, any party can request a review of the agreement. If one party wants a review, the other parties have to agree.
- The reviews will produce a report to the parties and can include recommended amendments to the agreement.



What is a review?

This is when the parties look at how the agreement is working and decide if changes are needed. A party can request a review of the whole agreement or just some parts.

What is an amendment?

An amendment is a formal change to the agreement. An amendment is negotiated and must be approved by all parties before it goes into the legal agreement.

Questions and answers

What is a self-government agreement and why do we need one?

As Indigenous people, we have an inherent right to govern ourselves. As Sahtu Dene and Métis, the right to negotiate self-government is confirmed in our land claim agreement.

While our people have always been very independent and we do not wait for government to take care of things, we often don't have the authority, tools or money to do the things we know are needed.

The Dehlà Got'jine Self-Government Agreement will be a way for us to put our inherent right into action and have it respected by others. It will give us more control and more funding so we can help make our community better for our people.

The agreement will be signed by the Dehlà Got'jine Government, the Ayoni Keh Land Corporation, the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Government of Canada and it will be protected by federal and territorial law.

Will it change our treaty or our land claim?

No. The self-government agreement will not change the rights and benefits we have under Treaty 11 or our land claim. Instead, it will build on them by giving us the ability to make laws, decide what to spend money on and to take over delivering some programs and services that are important to our community.

Who will self-government apply to?

Self-government will apply to everyone living in Colville Lake. This includes band members and other residents. The Dehlà Got'jine Government will be the only government in Colville Lake and will serve everyone in the community. It will also allow us to better serve Behdzi Ahda" First Nation members who live outside the community.

Will we still have access to the Non-insured Health Benefits program?

Yes. If you are eligible to register as a Status Indian under the Indian Act, you will still be able to register after self-government is in place. This means that you will still qualify for non-insured health benefits provided by government for Status Indians like dental care, prescription medication and prescription glasses benefits.

Have other questions?

We'd be happy to answer them!

Send us an email at dehlaselfgov@gmail.com. Or go to the contact section on our website at www.dehlaselfgovernment.ca.