



NEWS RELEASE

May 22, 2018

Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Vuntut Gwitchin Sign Overlap Agreement

The Chiefs of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Vuntut Gwitchin recently signed an Overlap Agreement that resolves a decades-old issue regarding overlapping traditional territories.

The agreement provides certainty for both First Nations regarding rights and jurisdictions by establishing a contiguous boundary that delineates the extent of Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation (VGFN) and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in (TH) traditional territories.

The historic agreement was signed in Old Crow, Yukon, May 19, at the Vadzaii Choo Drin gathering and restores important authorities to VGFN and TH, which under the terms of their Final Agreements were suspended in overlap areas. This agreed upon contiguous boundary will result in the overlap areas encompassing the Porcupine River watershed upstream of Old Crow becoming exclusively within VGFN Traditional Territory and the areas of overlap encompassing the Nation River, Kandik River, and Peel River watershed becoming exclusively in TH Traditional Territory.

The agreement will also guide future use and management of the resolved overlapping area and enhances the positive working relationship articulated in the North Yukon First Nation Declaration and Intergovernmental Accord.

“We are pleased to have accomplished this mandate from our General Assembly and our Final Agreement,” said Chief Roberta Joseph. “This ends nearly twenty years of effort, building on the foundation of our elders, citizens, and past and present leaders in both of our respective communities. Our agreement defines our relationships with the land and the people—relationships that exist back to our ancestors from long ago. We look forward to continued collaboration with Vuntut Gwitchin on many more collective initiatives.”

“This agreement has been a long time in the making,” said Chief Bruce Charlie. “It represents years of hard work, traditional knowledge sharing and a strong partnership between Vuntut Gwitchin and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in. I am proud to be a part of the signing of this agreement and look forward to continued effective land management in the North Yukon.”

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For further information contact:

Wayne Potoroka, Communications Director
Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government
967-993-7100 ext. 108
wayne.potoroka@trondek.ca

Rebecca Shrubbs, Policy and Communications
Vuntut Gwitchin Government
(867) 966-3261 ext. 258
rshrubbs@vgfn.net