



### How do all these agreements fit together?

If you think of the Deh Cho Process in terms of building a house, you could say that:

- the foundation was laid in Phase 1 with the **Framework Agreement** and the **Interim Measures Agreement**;
- the negotiations on **interim land withdrawals** and the **Interim Resource Development Agreement** are securing important building materials to proceed;
- the **GAIP** will provide the frame;
- the **AIP** will fill in the walls and roof; and,
- the **Final Agreement** will put on the siding and furnish the house.

### 3. Interim Resource Development Agreement

*Duh Gogha Ndeh ts;eh Saamba Holeh Ts'ehk'eh Eleh Seegots'eleh*

Negotiators are working toward an Interim Resource Development Agreement, known in Dene as *Duh Gogha Ndeh ts;eh Saamba Holeh Ts'ehk'eh Eleh Seegots'eleh*. With this agreement in place, the Deh Cho will be able to benefit from resource development in the Deh Cho territory and participate in economic development opportunities while a final agreement is being negotiated. The agreement also outlines a process for community involvement in oil and gas development and for the negotiation of impact benefit agreements.

It is the first time that such an arrangement has been made at this stage of negotiations. This is one example of the unique approach taken in



the Deh Cho Process. Creative solutions are being found to respond to the needs of the Deh Cho people and take advantage of the economic opportunities in the Deh Cho region while the parties negotiate a final agreement.

### 4. Agreement-in-Principle

Under the Framework Agreement, the Government of Canada, the DCFN and the GNWT have agreed to work toward an Agreement-in-Principle (AIP) in five years.

Early in negotiations, the DCFN explained they were looking for a final agreement that is based on land management, not land selection. This approach is new to land and resource negotiations in Canada. It is another example of how all three parties are willing to look at new ways of doing things that meet the needs and aspirations of the Deh Cho.

Capitalizing on the momentum gained so far in the Deh Cho Process, the Parties have agreed to work towards a General Agreement-in-Principle (GAIP) as a step towards an AIP. Unlike an AIP, which is very detailed, a GAIP would be designed to address, in broad terms, the major elements of a final agreement.

To begin identifying what elements will be dealt with in the GAIP, a governance workshop was held in Fort Simpson in April. Another workshop was held in Trout Lake in May on land management issues. Peter Russell facilitated both workshops and his reports are available through the contact provided at the end of this brochure. GAIP discussions will resume in the fall.

*If you have any questions about the information in this brochure, please call:*

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## The Deh Cho Process

### Building a Better Future Together



## Land, Resource and Governance Negotiations

### Message from the Minister



*I invite you to read through this brochure to learn more about the unique negotiations we call the Deh Cho Process. It describes the progress achieved so far and outlines how we hope to build on this success in the coming months.*

*I am pleased to report that the Government of Canada, the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Deh Cho First Nations have completed two pillars of the Deh Cho Process: a Framework Agreement and an Interim Measures Agreement. These agreements provide a solid foundation for the road ahead.*

*We have the momentum to move forward. We will continue to work closely together to develop the region's tremendous potential while balancing environmental, cultural, and traditional considerations.*

*The Interim Resource Development Agreement that is being negotiated reflects this approach. This agreement, combined with the Interim Measures Agreement reached last year, will provide the tools for the Deh Cho people to chart their own future.*

*All parties to these negotiations have the same goal: to see the Deh Cho people benefit from the opportunities available to them now, while working towards a final agreement. I am committed to doing my part to achieve that goal.*

**Robert D. Nault, P.C., M.P.**

## The Deh Cho Process – Building a better future together

The Government of Canada, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and the Deh Cho First Nations (DCFN) have completed the first phase of the Deh Cho Process.

On May 23, 2001, all three parties signed a Framework Agreement that lays out how negotiations will proceed. They also signed an Interim Measures Agreement, which gives the Deh Cho a role in resource management decisions in the region while a final agreement is being negotiated. These agreements show that all three parties are committed to working together towards a final agreement and a better future for the Deh Cho.

### Where are we at right now?

The Parties have already made a lot of progress on the next stage of negotiations, which includes:

1. establishing a land use planning committee;
2. interim land withdrawals;
3. an Interim Resource Development Agreement; and
4. an Agreement-in-Principle on land, resources and governance issues.



### 1. Land Use Planning Committee

The Land Use Planning Committee has established an office in Fort Providence, the committee members have been appointed, and staffing should be complete by this fall. The committee will develop a land use plan for the Deh Cho territory that will apply to lands outside the existing boundaries of Deh Cho communities and the Nahanni National Park Reserve. Once it is approved, the land use plan will provide for the conservation and development of the land, waters and other resources in the Deh Cho territory.

### 2. Interim Land Withdrawals

“Interim land withdrawals” is a process that will ensure that certain lands, surface and/or subsurface, are protected during the negotiation of a final agreement. The Interim Measures Agreement sets out four key guidelines for identifying what lands can be considered for withdrawal:

- (a) lands harvested for food and medicinal purposes;
- (b) culturally and spiritually significant areas;
- (c) lands which are ecologically sensitive; and
- (d) watershed protection.

These negotiations are progressing well. Federal and Deh Cho negotiators are working together to consult Deh Cho community members. They will gather the most complete information they can to identify and agree on which lands should be withdrawn. To do this, they will visit each Deh Cho community to present information and hear people's views. Third parties will also be consulted.

Once an agreement is reached, the lands will be temporarily set aside by a federal Order in Council for a specified period of time. From that point on, the Deh Cho people will be assured that no new mining claims can be registered or land leases issued on withdrawn lands during that time. Existing interests, such as mining claims that are already registered, would not be affected. Current environmental protection and land use legislation will also continue to apply throughout the Deh Cho territory during the negotiations.



Photos courtesy of Clayton Balsillie, DIAND