

Northwest Territories Council of Leaders hold Second Forum

Yellowknife (November 18 and 19, 2021) – Indigenous leaders and leaders from the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) held the second meeting of the Northwest Territories Council of Leaders (NWTCOL) over two days on November 18 and 19, 2021, in Yellowknife and virtually.

Leaders discussed a range of NWT-wide issues of mutual interest related to social and economic issues, including:

- advancing work on the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples through an officials' working group identified as a priority of the Northwest Territories Council of Leaders;
- working together to review the NWT Housing Corporation's mission statement and policies and collaborate, support each other and share information related to housing;
- continuing to share information around COVID-19, including vaccinations, and complete a lessons-learned exercise together on the approach to COVID-19 in the territory;
- continuing to share information on the wise management of caribou;
- ongoing discussion and planning around climate change in the territory;
- sharing information on work underway on the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls action plan;
- working together to ensure the voices and values of Indigenous government leadership, parents, students, and Elders are heard and incorporated as work continues to improve student learning outcomes;
- engaging on the procurement review and development of an Indigenous procurement policy;

The NWTCOL is an example of meaningful partnership between the Indigenous and GNWT leaders, consistent with the principles of reconciliation.

The NWTCOL forum offers members the opportunity to discuss territory-wide social and economic issues that are of interest to all governments.

Leaders attending the meeting included:

- Chief Edward Sangris, Yellowknives Dene First Nation (Dettah)
- Chief Fred Sangris, Yellowknives Dene First Nation (Ndilq)
- Chief Darryl Marlowe, Łutselk'e Dene First Nation
- Chief Louis Balsillie, Denínu Kúé First Nation
- ʔekw'ahtı́dó Leeroy Andre, Délı́nə Got'ı́nə Government
- ʔekw'ahtı́ Leonard Kenny, Délı́nə Got'ı́nə Government
- Grand Chief Ken Kyikavichik, Gwich'in Tribal Council
- Interim Deputy Grand Chief Kelly McLeod, Gwich'in Tribal Council
- Chair/CEO Duane Ningaqsiq Smith, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation
- Chief April Martel, Kátł'odeeche First Nation
- Chief Steve Vital, Nahanni Butte Dene Band
- Councillor Eric Matou, Nahanni Butte Dene Band
- Vice-President Marc Whitford, North Slave Métis Alliance
- President Garry Bailey, Northwest Territory Métis Nation
- Vice President Betty Villebrun, Northwest Territory Métis Nation
- Chairperson Charles McNeely, Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated
- Acting Grand Chief Sonny Zoe, Tłı́chq Government
- Chief Clifford Daniels, Tłı́chq Government
- Chief Alfonz Nitsiza, Tłı́chq Government
- Chief Doreen Arrowmaker, Tłı́chq Government
- Chief Adeline Football, Tłı́chq Government
- Mr. Eugene Hope, Acho Dene Koe First Nation
- Premier Caroline Cochrane
- Minister Diane Archie, Deputy Premier, Infrastructure
- Minister Caroline Wawzonek, Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment and Department of Finance
- Minister Julie Green, Health and Social Services
- Minister Paulie Chinna, NWT Housing Corporation
- Minister Shane Thompson, Departments of Lands; Environment and Natural Resources; Municipal and Community Affairs
- Minister R.J. Simpson, Justice; Education, Culture and Employment

MLA Lesa Semmler also attended as Chair of the 19th Legislative Assembly Special Committee on Reconciliation and Indigenous Affairs to hear leaders discuss the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Quick Facts

- Strengthening relationships with Indigenous governments is a priority of the 19th Legislative Assembly.
- The *Northwest Territories Council of Leaders Memorandum of Understanding* was signed by leadership on June 11, 2021. The MOU was signed for a four-year term.
- Signatories to the NWT Council of Leaders include: Akaitcho Dene First Nations, Délı̨nę Got'ı̨nę Government, Gwich'in Tribal Council, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Kátł'odeeche First Nation, Nahanni Butte Dene Band, North Slave Métis Alliance, Northwest Territory Métis Nation, Salt River First Nation, Sahtu Secretariat Inc., Tłı̨chǫ Government, and the Government of the NWT.
- The inaugural meeting of the NWTCOL was held on June 11, 2021, in Yellowknife, NT and virtually.
- The MOU commits the NWT Council of Leaders to meeting annually.

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