

Northwest Territories Council of Leaders Meet in Yellowknife

Yellowknife (September 27-29, 2022) – Indigenous leaders and leaders from the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) held the fourth meeting of the Northwest Territories Council of Leaders (NWTCOL) over three days from September 27-29, 2022, in Yellowknife, NT.

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

- continuing to advance work on the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples through the work on the memorandum of understanding and moving forward with the legislative framework discussions;
- continuing to advance legislative initiatives included in the GNWT Legislative Agenda for the 19th Legislative Assembly, including identifying social, economic and cultural GNWT legislative initiatives for collaborative development with Indigenous governments;
- discussing the need for proactive approaches to adapt to the effects of climate change in the NWT;
- working collaboratively to support economic opportunities that will help ensure the Northwest Territories' social and economic situation is improved despite the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, inflation and the decline in resource extraction activities; and
- outlining NWT Council of Leaders key priorities for the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework, Budget 2023, and federal engagement.

The NWTCOL forum offers members the opportunity to discuss territory-wide social and economic matters that are of interest to all member governments and work towards solutions.

The NWTCOL continues to be a productive forum and an example of meaningful partnership between the Indigenous and GNWT leaders, consistent with the principles of reconciliation.

Leaders attending the meeting included:

- Sub-Chief Brenda Berreault, Acho Dene Koe First Nation
- Akaitcho Dene First Nation, Officials only
- Grand Chief Herb Norwegian, Dehcho First Nations
- ʔekw'ahtı́dó Danny Gaudet, Délı́ne Got'ı́ne Government
- K'aowədó Leonard Kenny, Délı́ne Got'ı́ne Government
- Grand Chief Ken Kyikavichik, Gwich'in Tribal Council
- Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Official only
- Chief April Martel, Kátł'odeeche First Nation
- Councillor Robert Lamalice, 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
- President Allan Heron, Fort Smith Metis Council, Northwest Territory Métis Nation
- Chief Toni Heron, Salt River First Nation
- Councillor Kendra Bourke, Salt River First Nation
- Chair Charles McNeely, Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated
- Grand Chief Jackson Lafferty, Tłı́chǫ Government
- Chief Clifford Daniels, Tłı́chǫ Government
- Chief Alfonz Nitsiza, Tłı́chǫ Government
- Chief Doreen Arrowmaker, Tłı́chǫ Government
- Chief Adeline Football, Tłı́chǫ Government
- Premier Caroline Cochrane
- Minister Diane Archie, Deputy Premier, Infrastructure
- Minister Caroline Wawzonek, Industry, Tourism and Investment; Finance
- Minister Julie Green, Health and Social Services
- Minister Paulie Chinna, Housing NWT
- Minister Shane Thompson, Lands; Environment and Natural Resources; Municipal and Community Affairs
- Minister R.J. Simpson, Justice; Education, Culture and Employment

MLA Freida Martselos, representing the 19th Legislative Assembly Special Committee on Reconciliation and Indigenous Affairs, attended the meeting as an observer.

Federal Northern Affairs Minister Dan Vandal joined the leaders on the final day to discuss the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework.

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: Acho Dene Koe First Nation, 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. Subsequent meetings were held November 18-19, 2021, and May 20, 2022.
- The MOU commits the NWT Council of Leaders to meeting annually.

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