

## **Resolution Re: Dehcho Process**

Following is the complete text of the Dehcho Process resolution passed by a vote of 38-2 with no abstentions at the 16<sup>th</sup> annual assembly of the Dehcho First Nations in Kakisa Lake, NT, June 27, 2008.

**WHEREAS** Treaties 11 and 8 confirmed that the Dene of the Dehcho territory are the owners and stewards of lands and resources in their territory, and also provided that we would share our land in exchange for promises made by the Crown; and

**WHEREAS** there continues to be uncertainty with respect to ownership and jurisdiction because the written form of the Treaties does not match the Dene understanding of the Treaties; and

**WHEREAS** the intention of the Dehcho Process is to produce a final agreement which will achieve certainty by clarifying and building upon Treaties 11 and 8; and

**WHEREAS** the Dehcho Proposal rejected Canada's Comprehensive Land Claims agreement model based on land selection as means of achieving certainty and instead offered an agreement with Canada which would achieve certainty through shared stewardship of the whole Dehcho territory; and

**WHEREAS** the DFN seek a lands and self-government agreement with Canada which balances the need to protect ecologically sensitive areas and key harvesting areas with the need for Dehcho communities to have sufficient lands and resources and governance powers to ensure that they can achieve economic self-reliance; and

**WHEREAS** the Land Use Plan which was developed by the Dehcho Land Use Planning Committee under the term of the IMA signed by Canada in 2001 is an integral part of the Dehcho Process which seeks to balance the conservation of ecologically sensitive areas and watersheds with development opportunities for both Dehcho Dene and other Canadians; and

**WHEREAS** Canada committed in the 2005 Settlement Agreement to implement the Land Use Plan as soon as possible after the Plan's completion, but later broke this promise and sought to tie implementation of the Plan to Dehcho support for a land selection based AiP; and

**WHEREAS** many of the key objectives of the Dehcho Proposal can be achieved by implementing the Land Use Plan and exercising our jurisdiction throughout the Dehcho Territory; and

**WHEREAS** it is critical that the DFN prepare strategies for the implementation of the full jurisdiction of the Dehcho Dene, based on our understandings of our Treaties,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that:

1. The highest priority for negotiations with Canada at this time will be the completion, approval and timely implementation of the Land Use Plan;
2. Once Canada has approved and agreed to implement the Land Use Plan, and comply with their commitments under the Interim Measures Agreement, the DFN negotiating team will begin negotiations on self-government arrangements which are appropriate for the unique needs and circumstances of the DFN and appropriate to the goal of maintaining a balance between conservation objectives and economic development;
3. Following self-government negotiations, the DFN will begin negotiations on other AiP matters, including the ownership of selected surface and subsurface lands, primarily outside of conservation areas; and
4. Negotiating will develop strategies for the implementation of the jurisdiction of the Dehcho Dene in our territory based on our understanding of the Treaties.