

First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun

# Newsletter



August 2025

## BERRY SEASON

It's saskatoon berry season! Have you gotten out on the land to harvest? Send us your photos to [socialmedia@nndfn.com](mailto:socialmedia@nndfn.com) (don't worry, you don't have to tell us where your secret patch is).



## UPDATE ON EAGLE GOLD MINE CRISIS & FNNND'S RENEWED CALL FOR A PUBLIC INQUIRY

On July 2, 2025, the Independent Review Board released their Final Report which confirmed insights that FNNND has known and has uncovered the ways Victoria Gold has been a negligent and irresponsible operator since day one. This irresponsibly has affected not just the environment, but also has had major effects on the economy and caused huge risk to human risk. Our question now is how could the Regulator, Yukon Government, allow Victoria Gold to continue to operate this way for over half a decade.

### The key factors responsible for the failure, as outlined by the IRB report:

1. VGC built an access road on the heap leach pad, which was never a part of the original planning. The inter-ramp slope constructed for this access road was far steeper (in some areas up to 35.5°) than the slope allowed in the design (19.5°) submitted to regulators. The failure on June 24, 2024 started with the failure of this overly steep slope. This triggered the catastrophic liquefaction of a much larger area of the heap just seconds later.

2. The HLF design required mixing of any poor quality ore (i.e., containing a lot of silts and clays) with a lot of good quality ore before placing it on the HLF. But VGC routinely stacked poor quality ore onto the heap without mixing, or at much higher ratios than the design assumed. Areas with high content of poor quality ore did not drain as they were supposed to, which dramatically affected the water levels and stability for these parts of the HLF.

3. The bottom layer of ore on the heap and a piping system were supposed to provide drainage for the leaching solution. The IRB found that VGC's construction of the piping system and choice of material used for the drainage layer led to impairment of the drainage systems. This exacerbated the drainage problems from poor ore quality and led to further increases in water levels on the heap.

4. In April 2024, VGC began increasing the irrigation on the heap in order to manage surplus water in the system, something that had been an issue since VGC's first year of operation. Eventually VGC was leaching on five benches before the failure occurred in June 2024. This led to an increase in the amount of leach solution flowing to the areas that already had poor drainage.

5. The ore in the In-Heap Pond and in other areas of the HLF was liquefiable such that it could fail dramatically and flow rapidly as a slurry once a failure started. This potential liquefaction was not considered in the design of the HLF.

Read the full IRB final report and more here: <https://emergency-response.nndfn.com/>

While the IRB report revealed important insights into the technical causes of Eagle Gold Mine's "catastrophic failure", the scope of the Independent Review Board's report was narrowly focused on the technical causes of the failure by design of YG. The IRB's work did not extend to thoroughly reviewing the role and effectiveness of the Yukon Government as the Regulator as a contributor to this crisis. The IRB report has clearly demonstrated that Victoria Gold had a culture of negligence in their ongoing failure to adhere to basic measures of their operating permit, and industry standard practices. It is for this reason that the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun has renewed our call for a public inquiry.

### Eagle Gold Mine Resale

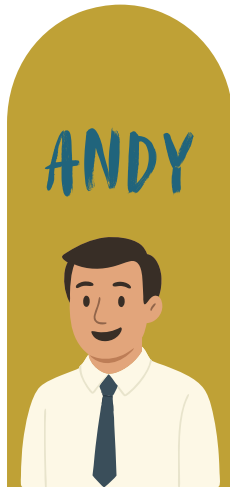
The First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun remains to have no stance on the resale of the Eagle Gold Mine as this remains an emergency situation and our priorities remain focused on the remediation and mitigation of environmental harm. When the Receivership for the Eagle Gold Mine site was first granted by the courts, the wellbeing of the environment was prioritized over maximising economic benefits. While there is evidence that this didn't end up being YG's and Receiver's priority, for any buyer, we expect the prioritization of the wellbeing of the environment and safe operation. This means still a lot of environmental remediation and further mitigation work, in which the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun expects to have a significant voice in. WITH NO FURTHER HARM caused to our Nation and land and water.

# STORIES AND UPDATES

## INTRODUCING THE NND WELLNESS TEAM!

### Andy Nieman, Director of Wellness and Social Programs

I am Northern Tutchone on my mother's side and Danish/German on my father's side. I am from the White River First Nation in Beaver Creek. I have a University Degree in Social Work, and a Graduate's Degree from the School of Hard Knocks, mainly the streets of Vancouver, Lol. I am going on thirty-two years of sobriety and I am super-stoked to be part of the exciting community wellness that is taking place in Mayo for the children, the youth, adults and the Elders. I have made a 5-year commitment to the process. I am married with two stepsons, six grandchildren, four dogs and three cats. I enjoy playing the guitar, writing songs, writing poems, being on the land, and I love all people.



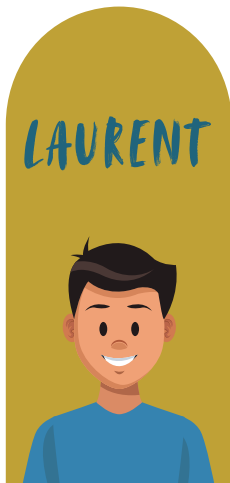
### Mackenzie Boyden, Wellness Projects Manager

Hi, I am Mackenzie, I was born and raised in Ontario with my three younger brothers. I am a Registered Nurse and have worked throughout northern Ontario, Nunavut, and Yukon. For the past seven years I've had the privilege of living in the Yukon. I'm passionate about community health and wellness, and I'm excited to bring my experiences to my new role as Wellness Project Manager for the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun. I look forward to supporting programs that promote holistic well-being and make a positive impact in the community. Outside of work you can find me outdoors, I love hunting, camping, and exploring new places.



### Laurent Turgeon-Dharmoo, Family Preservation Manager

Ihzi Laurent/Chunga uuzhii, I was born and raised in Quebec by a Quebecois mother and a Trinidadian father of East Indian descent. I hold a PhD in Clinical Psychology and have been living in Mayo for almost 7 years, tending to the mental and emotional health needs of community members. I am eager to bolster prevention services and supportive programming for families, children, and youth as part of my new position as Family Preservation Manager with FNNND. In my spare time, I like to travel, read, and being out on the land.



## FNNND CITIZENS INDIVIDUAL WELLNESS PLANS

The Wellness Department has refreshed the individual wellness plans to better support your unique path to wellbeing. My name is Mackenzie Boyden, and I am the new Wellness Manager. I will be focusing on aftercare programming in our community and I am here to support you.

Ways to reach out:

- ✓ Drop In
- ✓ Call to Learn More
- ✓ Book an Appointment

Call: 867-996-2265 ext. 115

## YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

This summer, NND is proud to welcome a group of youth into various paid positions across the Nation's office. Lots of incredible experiences are being had across the group of youth, including helicopter rides, receiving skills and knowledge from Elders, and cashing their first ever paycheques!

Interested in signing up next year? Reach out to Terra Blanchard at [educationmanager@nndfn.com](mailto:educationmanager@nndfn.com).



Ryder Peter-Profeit - Summer Employment Helicopter Ride



Jacquinn McGinty-Hager is receiving one-on-one mentorship with Gestie Tees, building, painting and developing the old graveyard



Summer Youth staff cashing first cheque!

## From the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun Development Corporation

Na-Cho Nyäk Dun Development Corporation (NNDDC) is proud to be part of a major step forward in public health and First Nation business.

The Yukon government has awarded a new 10-year, \$157 million contract to Alkan Air Ltd. to deliver air ambulance services across the territory.

What's especially exciting? The aircraft used for these lifesaving services are owned and leased through Yukon First Nations Air Leasing Limited Partnership (YFNALLP), a partnership of eight Yukon First Nation development corporations, including NNDDC.

This means more economic opportunities for our communities, indigenous ownership in essential services, and reliable medevac access for all Yukoners, including those in rural and remote areas.

This is reconciliation in action, where Indigenous-led investment helps to save lives and build a stronger future for everyone in the Yukon.

CONTINUED.....



## BIG NEWS FOR OUR COMMUNITY AND EMERGENCY HEALTH CARE

NNDDC is proud to be part of Yukon First Nations Air Leasing LP, where we hold an 18.75% ownership alongside seven other First Nation development corporations.

This partnership, formed in 2022, was created to support medevac services across the Yukon. We're excited to share that Alkan Air, which leases its medevac aircraft from Yukon First Nations Air Leasing LP, has been awarded a new 10-year contract by the Yukon Government.

As a result, Yukon First Nations Air Leasing LP will expand its fleet from 2 to 4 aircraft, ensuring continued, reliable emergency healthcare transport for Yukoners while creating long-term, stable care for our communities.

This is a major step forward in both Yukon First Nations economic participation and support for lifesaving services across the territory.



## REMINDERS

### Housing & Capital Services

#### Fire Extinguisher Testing – August 5 to 15 2025.

Total Fire will be in our community during this time to carry out the annual re-certification of home fire extinguishers. We respectfully ask that all households place their fire extinguishers on their porch by the morning of August 5. They will be collected, tested, and returned to your home once re-certified.

#### Potable Water Tank Cleaning – August 8 to 15 2025.

Our annual safety cleaning of the potable water tanks will also take place during this time. Specific dates for draining and cleaning will be shared soon. We will ensure the process is as smooth as possible and will keep the community informed every step of the way.

We appreciate your cooperation and understanding as we take these steps to care for our homes, if you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out.

#### 2025 Vehicle Removal Program – Now Underway

We are proud to announce the launch of the **2nd year of our Vehicle Removal Program** for 2025!

This initiative began last year and was a great success, thanks to the strong participation from the community. With renewed funding this year, we're able to continue removing and recycling unusable vehicles at no cost to you.

Sitting or broken-down vehicles can become **safety hazards** and **harm the land**. This program is an important step in **protecting our environment, reducing waste**.

If you have a vehicle that is no longer in use, please contact the **Housing Department** to arrange for proper and respectful removal. Our team will also be visiting homes to check in and see if there are vehicles we can help remove.

## EVENTS & WORKSHOPS

### Northern Tutchone Elders Gathering

Join us for three days of connection, teachings, and honouring the knowledge of our Elders. From remembering those we've lost, to celebrating culture through traditional ceremonies, language, and stories, this gathering is a space for reflection, learning, and unity.

#### ★ Highlights include:

- Code of Conduct + cultural projects
- Traditional ceremonies and naming
- Language updates + the NND hologram program
- Traditional games, songs, stories
- Closing prayer and remarks from community leaders
- Afternoon activities, games, and family-friendly fun

### Northern Tutchone Elders Gathering continued

Breakfast daily at 9 AM • Lunch + Dinner provided

Let's gather, share, and strengthen our Northern Tutchone ways.

For more information contact Teresa at [heritagemgr@nndfn.com](mailto:heritagemgr@nndfn.com)

NORTHERN TUTCHONE ELDERS GATHERING 2025 August 5-7, 2025 Mayo, NND Government House		
Tuesday August 5	Wednesday August 6	Thursday August 7
<b>BREAKFAST – 9 AM GATHERING START – 10 AM</b>		
<b>Gathering Opening</b> • Welcome from the 3 Communities <b>Honouring Elders We've Lost</b> • Moment of silence <b>D-Team Update</b> • Background on D-Team, history	<b>May Gathering Update &amp; Highlights</b> • Origins of the May Gathering • Overview main points from 2025 gathering – what was discussed, concerns raised, what's happening on the land	<b>Language &amp; Stories</b> • What's happening with each FN language program <b>NND Hologram Machine</b> • Visit to YukonU building
<b>LUNCH – Games/Activities before starting afternoon</b>		
<b>Code of Conduct</b> – Dan Chi Yet's'olido • Book launch – review what's in it • How to help it get used <b>Other D-Team Projects, Cultural Projects</b> • Growing Up Dan Ki – women • Men's story-telling gathering? • NT Orientation Course – "101" • Family friendly versions of books • Documentary Film Ideas	<b>Traditional Ceremonies</b> • What ceremonies happened throughout people's lives? (First animals, fire/water ceremony, smudge, etc.) • How to do ceremonies well? <b>Traditional Names</b> • How these ceremonies done? Details, like timing, location, use of smudge • Documenting names	<b>Traditional Games, Songs, Stories</b> • Beaded Calendar – how it works? • Play Dice Bingo after lunch <b>Closing</b> • Closing remarks from 1 Leader/1 Elder from each FN (not everyone) <b>Closing Prayer</b>
<b>DINNER – 5PM</b>	<b>DINNER – 5PM</b>	<b>DINNER (Take-Out) – 3:00PM</b>

### Traditional Knowledge - How To Be an Elder

August 17-20, 2025 | VOM Curling Rink - All Meals Provided

#### Agenda

August 17: Welcome Dinner at 4:30pm

August 18-20: How to be an Elder with Cathy Ulmost and Gilda Morgan  
8am - 9pm

Daily door prizes!

For more information, please reach out to Florence Pilon at [elderscoordinator@nndfn.com](mailto:elderscoordinator@nndfn.com)

### Elders Camp at Outpost

August 24-31 | 10am - 4pm everyday

Daily shuttle at 8am, return by 9pm

Daily door prizes. Final day ends with a feast and Indian Bingo!

For more information, please reach out to Florence Pilon at [elderscoordinator@nndfn.com](mailto:elderscoordinator@nndfn.com)

### What's Happening at Ihdzi'

Visit [ihdzi.ca](http://ihdzi.ca) for more events and details.

### Coffee Corner

Coffee, tea, and community conversation is available during Ihdzi' opening hours. Check their website or facebook page for more details.

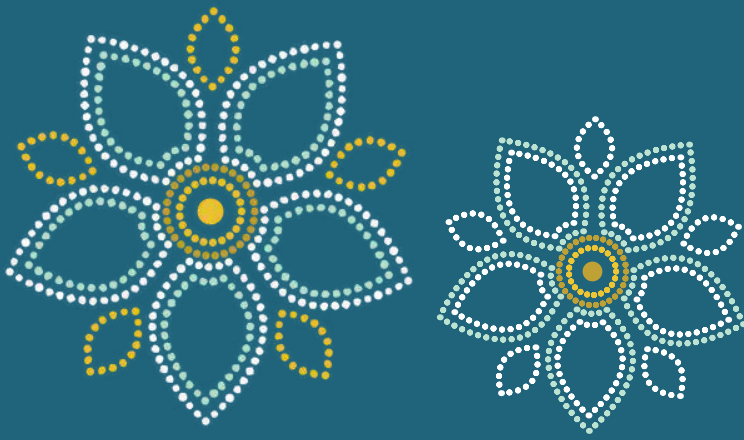
### Velma's Cinnamon Buns

Every Wednesday for sale \$4.00 Each

### Learn How to Butcher a Pig

Make sausage and jerky with Adonika and Jose on August 9-10, 2025





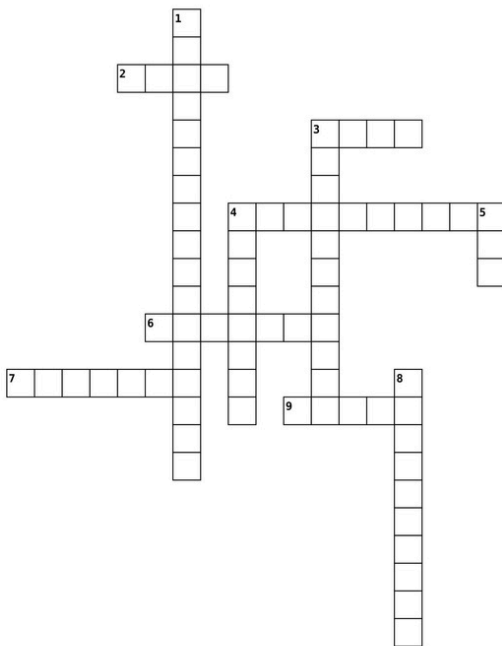
## Language Lesson

This month's crossword theme is all about fire! Do you know these Northern Tutchone translations?

The answers are the translated Northern Tutchone words. So bring a cup of tea to the language speaker in your life and complete the puzzle together!

Want to do it on your own? Download the NND Language App and find the answers for yourself. Available in the Apple App store and Google Play store.

### Fire



Across

- 2. Kindling Wood
- 3. Matches
- 4. Embers
- 6. Smoke
- 7. Ashes
- 9. Charcoal

Down

- 1. Fireplace
- 3. Burning Fire
- 4. Dry Branches
- 5. Firewood
- 8. Wet Wood

## Employment

The following positions are currently open and are accepting applications. For more information, please visit [www.nndfn.com/employment/](http://www.nndfn.com/employment/) or reach out to Ronalda at [hr@nndfn.com](mailto:hr@nndfn.com).

- Community Safety Guardian - Open Until Filled
- Garden Labourer(s) - Open Until Filled
- HR Technician - Open Until Filled
- Water Truck Operator Trainee - Open Until Filled
- Hot Lunch Cook Assistant - Deadline to Apply: August 8, 2025
- Education Advocate - Deadline to Apply: August 8, 2025
- PSE ASETS Coordinator - Deadline to Apply August 8, 2025
- Payroll Clerk- Deadline to Apply August 8, 2025

## Kitchen Corner: Monthly Healthy Recipe from Ava

If you're anything like our team, your freezer is probably full of saskatoon berries fresh off of the harvest. In case you don't already have a favourite family jame recipe, here's a way to enjoy these delicious berries all year long!

### Saskatoon Berry Jam

#### Ingredients

- 1 ½ cups juneberries or serviceberries
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 tablespoons water

#### Directions

1. Combine the berries and sugar in a small saucepan with about a tablespoon of water.
2. Cook uncovered over medium-high heat for 15 minutes until the berries pop (break open). Mash a few with the back of a spoon. Continue to cook until the syrup in the jam thickens.
3. Let cool. Pour the jam into two ¼ cup mason jars. Close the lids and refrigerate for up to a week.

### Safe Canning Practices

What do I need to know about pressure canning?

A pressure canner is a large, cast-aluminum pot with a locking lid and a pressure gauge. By cooking under pressure, you can increase the temperature of boiling water from 100°C (212°F) up to 116°C (240°F). This is the minimum temperature necessary to destroy botulism spores, and the only way to guarantee safe canning for food items such as vegetables, meats and seafood.

Your pressure canner should come with complete instructions. Always follow them carefully. Keep these points in mind:

- Foods can be processed at pressures of 5, 10 and 15 pounds. Consult a chart to determine what pressure is safe for the food you are canning
- Processing time will vary depending on the type of food being preserved and the size of the jar. Never shorten the cooking time or change the pressure recommended in the instructions otherwise botulism bacteria could remain in the final canned food
- Once the right pressure level is reached during cooking, it must be kept constant throughout the cooking step
- Check seals. Ensure the rubber seal on the canner lid is not broken or cracked. Replace if necessary
- Never open a canner when it is under pressure
- Do not cool jars in water, instead allow jars to cool slowly at room temperature
- Do not retighten lids



## First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun

PO Box 220 Mayo, YT Y0B 1M0

+867-996-2265

[www.nndfn.com](http://www.nndfn.com)

[main@nndfn.com](mailto:main@nndfn.com)