



## Updates

June 2020

This newsletter provides an update from the Edézhíe Management Board on progress made so far on the establishment of the Edézhíe Dehcho Protected Area and National Wildlife Area.

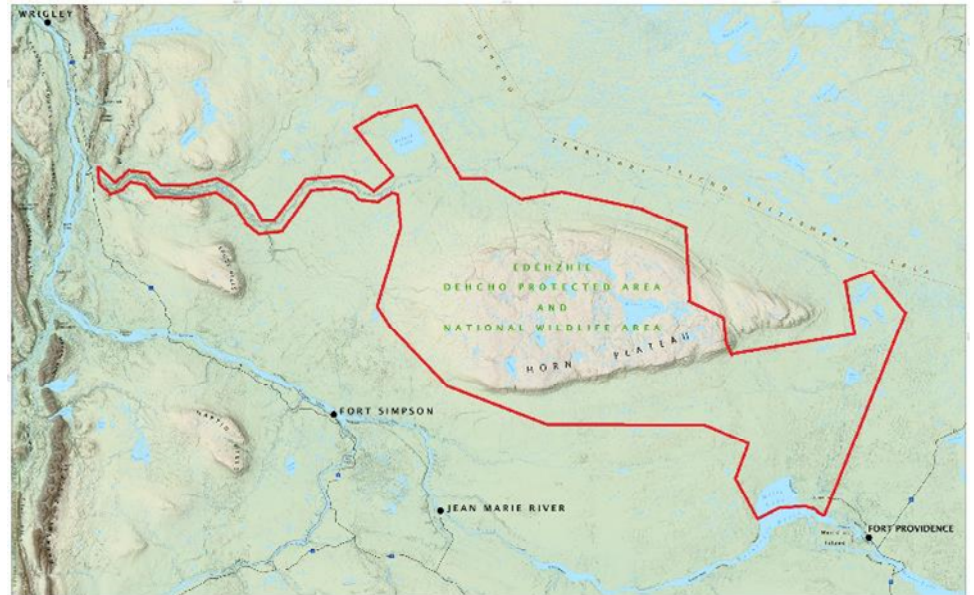
On June 4<sup>th</sup> 2020, the Government of the Northwest Territories signed into effect a land withdrawal order with no expiration date, ensuring the protection of Edézhíe for generations to come.

The COVID-19 pandemic will affect the summer 2020 field season. The Canadian Wildlife Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service cancelled their monitoring activities for Edézhíe. However, other programs are utilizing the AAROM and Edézhíe Guardians will continue.

# Edézhíe Annual Report

## Progress to date

During 2019 and the first half of 2020, parties significantly progressed towards the establishment of the Edézhíe Dehcho Protected Area and National Wildlife Area. Community Coordinators from all four communities work with Dehcho First Nations and hired two Edézhíe Dehcho K'éhodi Guardians in each of the four communities (Wrigley, Fort Simpson, Jean-Marie River and Fort Providence).



## Edézhíe Management Board

The Edézhíe Management Board is the mechanism that drives the management activities for the Edézhíe Protected Area.

- Priscilla Canadien, Deh Gáh Got'ie / Fort Providence
- Margaret Ireland, Tthets'éhk'edél / Jean Marie River
- Tim Lennie, Pehdzeh Kí / Wrigley
- Eric Menicoche, Dehcho First Nations
- Gilbert Cazon, ɁııɁıı Kúé / Fort Simpson
- Lindsay Armer, Environment and Climate Change Canada
- Heidi Wiebe, Management Board Chair

## Next Steps

### Draft management plan

-The Board will start working on a draft management plan for Edézhíe.

### Fire management regime

-The Board will discuss the fire management regime for Edézhíe.

### Proposals for On-the-Land projects

-Community Coordinators provided proposals for their OTL programs to the June Board meeting and will be implementing initial OTL programs this summer.

### Designation as a National Wildlife Area

-The Canadian Wildlife Service is moving forward with a full designation under the Canadian Wildlife Act. This is expected to be completed by Spring 2021.

The Edézhíe Management Board was established by Dehcho First Nations (DFN) and Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) under the authority of the Edézhíe Establishment Agreement in the fall of 2018.



The Board meets in-person quarterly, with teleconferences in between to advance essential administrative business. More recently, the Board has moved to videoconference meetings due to the COVID-19. An in-person meeting is scheduled for the fall of 2020.

The Board spent most of its first year getting established as an organization and ready to plan. The EMB's start-up activities and accomplishments consisted of:

- Appointing Board members;
- Learning the Edézhíe Establishment Agreement and the roles of the Board vs. the Parties (DFN and ECCC);
- Hiring essential staff (Regional Coordinator and Community Coordinators);
- Working with the communities to establish Elders Harvesters Committees;
- Finalizing the Board's own procedures, code of conduct and conflict of interest policies;
- Developing the 2019-20 and 2020-21 Work Plan and Budget; and
- Initiating communications work to develop a logo and website.

In its first year, the Board began reviewing and commenting on research applications within Edézhíe, and notifying government organizations and departments that grant such licenses that the Board should be added to their distribution lists. The Board has standardized an interim approach and criteria to guide its review of research applications during the period before the Edézhíe Management Plan is developed. And finally, the Board has nearly completed development of the process the Board and Parties will use to develop the Edézhíe Management Plan.

## Elder Harvester Committee

The Elder Harvester Committees (EHC) are key to the establishment of Edézhíe. EHC are focused on recording stories for the Edézhíe protected area and mapping out existing trails, cabins, and desired future trails.

- Fort Providence held its first EHC meeting in December 2019. Members showed interest in meeting with the Chief and Council and the Metis office. They also asked that more outreach be done to reach more families.
- Jean-Marie River held its first EHC meeting in January of 2020. Discussions identified two trails leading up to the plateau in need of mapping. Community members also expressed interest in having joint meetings with Jean Marie River First Nations and the Board.
- Fort Simpson held its first EHC meeting in February of 2020. The participants appreciated the meeting, and suggested that more outreach be done to include families that are tied to the Edézhíe area.
- COVID-19 resulted in restrictions to in person EHC meetings, but as the NWT moves into phase 2 in the public health response we expect to be able to host EHC meetings in the summer/fall of 2020.

## Budget 2020 approved

The Board passed a consensus decision to support the 2020-21 budget on June 10th. Dehcho First Nations is now moving forward with transitioning Community Coordinators from part-time to full-time positions. Guardian's job offers have been posted in all four communities with hiring of these positions intended to take place this summer (2020). Securing subsurface protection for Edézhíe allows Dehcho First Nations to also apply additional outside funding and further secure the Edézhíe budget for 2021 and 2022.

## Community Coordinators

All Community Coordinators are now onboard and working full-time at the establishment of Edézhíe:

- Ashley Menicoche as Łıdłıı Kúé First Nation Community Coordinator in Fort Simpson.
- Jason Horesay as Pehdzeh Ki First Nation Community Coordinator in Wrigley.
- Ariel Sanguéz as Tthets'éhk'edélı First Nation Community Coordinator in Jean-Marie River.
- Trisha Landry as Deh Gáh Got'îê First Nation Community Coordinator in Fort Providence.

## Guardians Hiring

Dehcho First Nations posted job openings for two Guardians positions in each community. Interviews will be carried out by Dehcho First Nations and Community Coordinators. Once hired, Guardians will help with the

day-to-day operations of Edézhíe. Training priorities for Fall 2020 will be identified and workshops offered as soon as possible under the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic response.

## Subsurface Withdrawal Order

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, the Government of the Northwest Territories signed into effect a subsurface withdrawal order without expiry date, opening the way for long-term protection of Edézhíe. This satisfies Section 2.4 of the Edézhíe Establishment Agreement and opens the door to full designation as a National Wildlife Area under the Canadian Wildlife Act (expected to occur spring 2021).

## Dene Chair

The Board agreed on a potential transition where the present Chair, Heidi Wiebe would support a new Board Chair in her capacity as a professional planner and facilitator. Transitioning her role to a planning support role maintains continuity, while allowing a new Indigenous person to take the Chair role. A notice of interest for the Chair role was posted by Dehcho First Nations. The Board will discuss the potential nominees before a new Board Chair is officially appointed by the Parties.

## Website under Development

Dehcho First Nations is working on a website for Edézhíe. This exercise will allow greater exposure for the area and its unique management regime. Each Board member will be featured on the website along with a short description of the Establishment Agreement and other useful information. The website will also be used for outreach and education opportunities. The platform is expected to come online this summer.

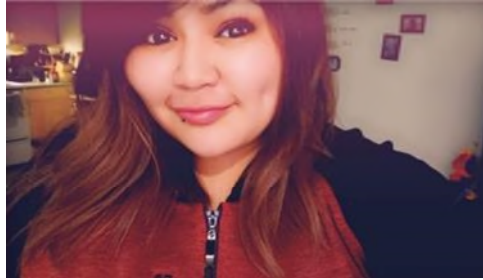
## Establishment Agreement Plain Language Summary

An initial draft of the plain language summary was completed in May 2020 and was shared with the Board. Work to complete it is in progress. Once the Board has reviewed the plain language summary, it will be translated into Dene Zhatíé.



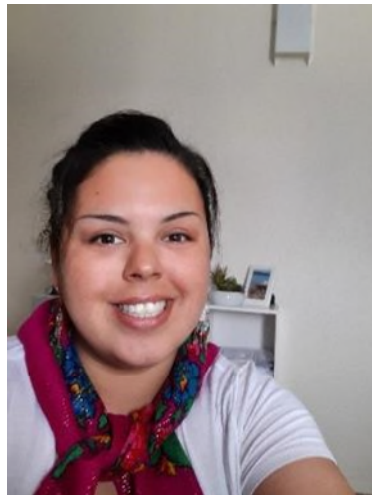
## Meet the staff leading Edézhíe for their communities.

### Community Coordinators



I am **Arial Sanguez** a Dene of Ttsets'éhk'edéí (Jean Marie River, NT). My parents are Stanley and Gail Sanguez. Growing up in Jean Marie River, hearing stories from my late grandfather William Sake, as well as many knowledge holders. They have shared their teachings,

their knowledge, and personal experiences. Memories like this make me appreciate to be able to go out on the land, to camp, harvest and just spend time outside. Bringing what I have learned from experiences and teachings I have built myself up to shape me. I am very grateful to be able to work in my home community, and to continue to learn from our elders and harvesters.



I am **Ashley Menicoche** and I recently started working as LKFN Edézhíe Community Coordinator in Fort Simpson.

I grew up here in Fort Simpson, enjoy being out on the land and listening to stories from our elders about why our land must be protected for our future generations.

I have 2 children, E'tonda and JC Arden. My son is being taught all the traditional ways of living off the land, and how important we must work together to keep our land and water safe.

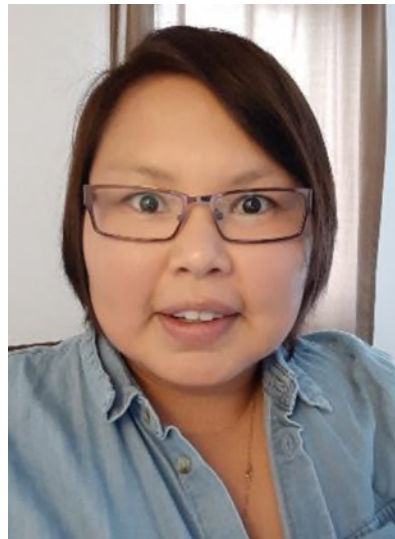
My grandparents are Phillip and Lucy Bonnetrouge (Menicoche). They lived and trapped at Bulmer Lake area that is in the Edézhíe Protected Area, many stories are told by my uncles and mom of living out on the land. My grandmother Lucy was known for her great traditional skills, having her own trap line and running her own dog team, shooting moose, tanning and making beautiful Jackets. I look forward to work closely with our Edézhíe Guardians, also with our Elders in our community.



I am **Jay Horesay** from Pehdzeh Ki (Wrigley). Raised in Pehdzeh Ki Ndeh by grandparents (Frank and Margaret Horesay) and they taught me to respect the land and water. Being raised by a big family with lots of aunties and uncles, I learned about my culture, traditions, and my Dene Zhatié (language). Knowing my language makes me proud as I can converse with elders and listen to their stories and oral histories.

Working as an environmental monitor/guardian is a passion and not just a job. The land and water have sustained since time immemorial, so in return we need to protect it for future generations.

“Best job on earth”



I am **Trisha Landry** (Bonnetrouge); I am from Deh Gah Got'ie (Fort Providence) I am married to Henri Landry and we have 2 boys Dawson (17) & Landon (2). My Parents are Theresa & Philip Bonnetrouge. And my grandparents are Archie Minoza (93) & Christine Minoza and Elise & Gabriel Bonnetrouge.

As the Edézhíe community coordinator gives me the opportunity to connect with my community members and share traditional land and knowledge. Also working closely with the elders and listen to their stories of traditional knowledge and pass it on to my boys.

## Edézhíe Guardians



I am **Freddie Lennie** from Pehdzeh Ki (Wrigley). I have had the privilege of being an environmental monitor for years now and have enjoyed all the experiences and knowledge gained from those jobs on the land. Each job had a different experiences and challenges along with gaining and learning new skills from various environmental groups that have joined the job sites. The job is interesting and fun and also goes along with the culture I have grew

up with by being on the land while doing my part to help protect what is most precious to us all, the land.



I am **Darcy E. Moses**, born and raised in Pehdzeh Ki (Wrigley). I have been a traditional land user since and early age and continue to do so. I have been up the Willow Lake River system many times and know some of its culturally significant sites. I have been to Bulmer Lake many times, which is in the Edehzhie Protected, for harvesting or trapping. I have trapped all my life until recently and it will be great to see the area through my job as Edehzhie Guardian. Most of all my land use

experience I have learned from late uncles, and they have taught a wealth and knowledge about the area.



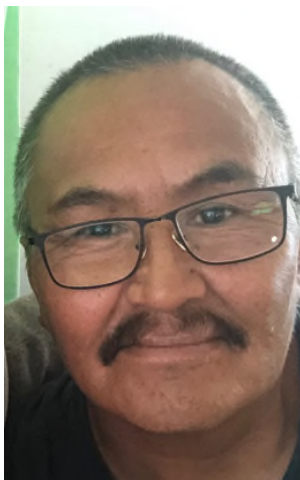
I am **Michael Minoza** from Deh Gah Got'ie First Nations and I was born and raised in Fort Providence. My parents are Albert & Ruby Minoza and I have 3 brothers Cory, Sheldon and Nathaniel. My Grandparents are Archie & Christine Minoza and David & Anastasia Bonnetrouge, each summer and fall I spend time with both of my grandparents out on the land to hunt and fish.



I am **Henry Sabourin** from Deh Gah Got'ie First Nations (Fort Providence) and my parents are Fred & Veronique Sabourin. They lived in the bush all their lives. I am married to Leonie for the past 25 years and I have 2 daughters Murina & Shiana, also have one stepdaughter and 6 grandkids. I have worked for evergreen forestry for the past 36 years and retired in 2013. I still hunt and trap in the Edézhíe Protected Area, I have been trapping in the area for the past 30 years. I look forward to go back to Edézhíe to fish, trap and to hunt.



I am **William Alger**, I have been living in Łııɫıı Kúé (Fort Simpson) for all my life and been learning all about the Dehcho and my people's history for as long as I can remember. I am very excited that this program is moving forward, I cannot express how important it is to monitor and protecting Edézhíe. All my life I have been told on how important our land use areas are not just for harvesting purposes but for our history, our traditions, our very livelihood. As a guardian I believe it is our responsibility to pass along the torch to future generations, ensuring our thriving way of life. I will keep moving along with the guardianship and help shape the Dene future for generations to come.



I am **Richard Sanguéz**, I was born and raised in Jean Marie River. I learned how to trap with my late father Jimmy Sanguéz. We travelled by dog team and sometimes go for 5-6 nights to set traps and wolf snares. Caught wolves and lynx in traps and learned how to use dene medicine for cuts and rat root for colds. My uncle Johnny Sanguéz taught me how to make drums and snowshoes. I learned how to take care of the water and the land and to hunt for elders. If you take some of the land, you must pay back with tobacco to the creator.





I am **Kody Hardisty-Sangris** – Edehzhie Guardian, from Jean Marie River, NT. Working as an Edehzhie Guardian, means so much to me, because I can learn traditional knowledge from other knowledge holders. With this knowledge I would be able to pass on this knowledge to the next generation, so they know these stories and experiences. To keep the Dene way of life strong in our people.