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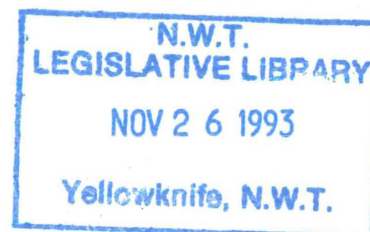
**YELLOWKNIVES (WULEDEH)
TREATY 8
ENTITLEMENT**

P R E S S K I T

Wuledeh Traditional Lands

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1993

**BAND COMPLEX BOARD ROOM
NDILQ**



PRESS RELEASE

The Yellowknives Dene First Nation wishes to clarify certain misinformation that has been circulating about our lands. We hope that, in future, people who want accurate details will contact us to get it.

Not a Land Claim ... Not Treaty 11

We wish to correct statements by Ed Hornby, of the DIAND district lands office, referred to by Bill Braden in Friday's Yellowknifer (page 12). No one can say what kind of land management will exist once Treaty Entitlement is settled. That is one subject of negotiations, which have not yet started. There is no "Dene/Metis claim" for the Ingraham Trail area; negotiations on the Dene/Metis claim were stopped by the federal Cabinet in November 1990. The Ingraham Trail is not within the Dogrib comprehensive land claim; neither is it under Treaty 11, which was made in 1921. This area has for generations been part of the Wuledeh or Yellowknives lands, and we made Treaty 8 in 1900.

Yellowknives Council Resolutions

In July 1993, the Yellowknives Council passed resolutions 94-462 and -464. These two resolutions outline the traditional and current lands used

by the Wuledeh, who were called Yellowknives by the Europeans. Resolution 93-462 states that we wish our lands to be protected against alienation until Treaty Entitlement is resolved. Resolution 93-464 states that activity on our lands must be authorized by the Yellowknives Dene First Nation. We sent copies of our resolutions to all relevant officials, with maps to show our traditional and current land use. We have had no invitation from any officials to discuss and implement our resolutions.

Research into Yellowknife Lands

During the summer, we were conducting research into lands for the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. In September, we presented the Commission with a final report on Yellowknife, as one of several urban lands case studies. Our report offered 22 policy recommendations. Half of them were about ways to settle jurisdictional and land issues without jeopardizing our aboriginal and Treaty rights.

Treaty Entitlement

Since 1990, we have been pursuing the settlement of our jurisdictional and land issues through Treaty Entitlement. Along with four other Dene First Nations, we have been seeking negotiation of our entitlement under Treaty 8. For many years, officials in Ottawa and now Yellowknife have mistakenly placed us under treaty 11. But the "Yellow Knife River" (or Wuledeh) Dene were clearly among those who made Treaty 8 in 1900 in Fort

Resolution. Old Man Drygeese was chosen to speak for the Wuledeh in 1900, and is among the names listed as Chiefs or Headmen on the government's version of Treaty 8. Chief Joseph (Susie) Drygeese, who remade the Treaty in 1920, represented our people for treaty meetings until the 1928 epidemic took his life, along with many of the Yellow Knife River Dene.

Ingraham Trail Lands

Recently, newspapers in Yellowknife have carried articles about the Ingraham Trail. A hunting ban has been imposed on Dene lands and Dene traditional activities without our consent, as guaranteed by the Royal Proclamation and without consideration of the 1990 Sparrow ruling.

Last week, our Chiefs sent a letter to the Management Committee for the Ingraham Trail planning study. They told the Committee they would not participate actively in this latest study. Our experience with such studies since 1975 has been that our views are not taken seriously. Our concerns are not reflected in any of the three planning options proposed by the study consultants. The Management and Steering Committees of the Ingraham Trail study are proceeding as if our concerns do not exist. When we take action, such as through our two Council resolutions, we get no response from officials, but they expect us to sit on their committees even though we don't benefit from them. We have many matters to look after for our people, and we do not think that participating in this study is a good use of our time.

We also feel it is unsuitable for news reports to refer to our entitlements under our Treaty as "deals". The Dene have been making treaties for generations, for example, the peace treaty reached between Akaitcho and Edzo. To us, Treaties are sacred. They are peace and friendship pacts, which include certain understandings about our land, about protecting and enhancing our harvesting rights, and about our ability to remain self-reliant. Our understanding of Treaty 8 differs from the government's, as was made clear in the 1973 court case, Re Paulette et al. We believe our Treaty Entitlement negotiations will explore some exciting new dimensions to the impasse that has marked northern land issues for the past 93 years.

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Please refer to our information kit, or call us for further details.

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Treaty Entitlement Office, 669-9004