

Newsletter

VUNTUT GWITCHIN FIRST NATION

DECEMBER 2025

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Vuntut Gwitchin
First Nation



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

HOW WE LIVE & LEAD

These principles shape not only what the Vuntut Gwitchin do, but how we do it.

They embody balance between tradition and progress, self-determination and shared responsibility.

Each value is an active commitment: to care, to teach, to listen, and to lead. Together, they express a Nation defined by integrity and interdependence. One that moves forward in a good way, guided by respect for its people, its culture, and the land it belongs to.

We will go forward in a good way.

We support community like family.

We empower one another.

We care for the land, the water, and the wildlife.

We seek wisdom from our Elders and our Youth.

We revitalize Gwich'in language and traditions.

We exercise the rights of our land claim and self-government agreements.



VISION

WHERE WE'RE GOING

We, the Vuntut Gwitchin, as both a government and a people, are dedicated to instilling in our children the wisdom of the land, of our ancestors, and the Creator, so that future generations may enjoy a life of self-sufficiency and cultural riches.

MISSION

WHAT WE EXIST TO DO

Our mission is to promote wellness, self-sufficiency, and prosperity in our community through cultural teachings and environmental stewardship, and by building and maintaining an accountable government that motivates, inspires, and provides opportunities for the Vuntut Gwitchin.

Quarterly Update for the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation

ISSUE #1 • DECEMBER 2025

MESSAGE FROM COUNCIL

Drin Gwiinzii Shilak Naii,

I am pleased to provide a quick update from Council on our activities since our General Assembly in August. We have two new Councillors – Gladys Netro and Cindy Dickson. In late August we undertook a mandate review of Council and decided upon the following allocations:

- **Chief Pauline Frost** – Executive, Finance, Communications, Negotiations, Intergovernmental Affairs, Arctic Security & Sovereignty and Health & Social Services.
- **Deputy Chief Hal Frost** – Natural Resources, Vadzaih, Łuk Choo, Emergency Management, Housing & Infrastructure (Projects) and Community Services.
- **Councillor Debra-Leigh Reti** – Education & Training, Heritage and Recreation.
- **Councillor Gladys Netro** – Enrollment, Gwich'in Relations, Youth and Elders.
- **Councillor Cindy Dickson** – Justice, Human Resources, Community Safety, Economic Development and Policy.

With the election of Debra-Leigh Reti as Vuntut Gwitchin MLA in the territorial election in November 2025, we will need to re-allocate her responsibilities across the other members of the current Council.

I would like to take this time to congratulate Debra-Leigh on her election to the Yukon Legislative Assembly. I would also like to thank Debra-Leigh for her years of service on Council and know that our community is in good hands and will be represented well at the territorial level in the coming years.

We are currently getting ready for the Christmas break. A number of events and activities are being planned by our staff throughout December. Our goal is once again, to ensure a healthy and joyful season for our Citizens – especially for our young people and Elders.

I hope you are all able to enjoy the holiday season with your family and friends. Take care of one another and feel free to reach out should you require any supports as we know this can be a challenging time of year for some.

I look forward to what the new year will bring which will also be the last year of our term. We will continue to do what we can to advocate and protect the rights and interests of all of our Citizens.

Mahsi' choo,
Chief Pauline Frost



Elections Act Review

The Constitution Review and Legislation Development (CRLD) Committee is currently undertaking Citizen engagement



The Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation (VGFN) is currently reviewing the requirements and process for elections with the goal of enacting a new Elections Law in advance of the General Election in November 2026.

This work is being done by the CRLD Committee who is composed of: Stan Njootli Sr., Linda Netro, Ryan Kyikavichik, Erika Tizya-Tramm, William Linklater, Kris Statnyk, Councillor Cindy Dickson

The Committee has hired an external contractor (Ausenco) and is gathering input for a recommendation to the VGFN Executive by the end of February 2026. This will allow for time for the draft law and any potential Constitutional amendments to be presented to Citizens in advance of the 2026 General Election.

Engagements were held in Old Crow on November 13 & 14 and Whitehorse on November 17. A Zoom session was provided on November 20.

“The way we choose our leaders impacts our community now and for future generations”

Monthly sessions will occur with the next sessions in January and February 2026. An online survey is available on the VGFN website in the Citizens section under ‘Engagement’. Some key questions on this process include:

Should Citizens be able to vote if they live outside of the Yukon?

VGFN law specifies that only Citizens who are resident of Yukon are able to vote in an election.

Should Citizens be able to vote if they are younger than 18?

Citizens must be 18 years of age or older to be able to vote in an election.

When should elections be held?

VGFN law specifies that the General Election occur on the third Monday in November with the term of Council to begin on the second Wednesday in the following January.

How should Citizens be able to vote?

Currently we vote at polling stations in Old Crow and Whitehorse. We need to assess whether we look to offer online voting.

How can you participate?

- Send your comments to comments@vgfn.ca.
- Speak to a Committee Member.
- Join an Engagement Meeting

Stay tuned for dates and locations! More information is available on our website at www.vgfn.ca and will be made public throughout the engagement period.

Staff Additions

The following appointments have been made recently with the VGFN Administration.

Cody Aginas - Associate ED. Cody brings over 20 years experience serving in various capacities for organizations such as the Deline Gotine Government, Gwich'in Tribal Council and the Naut'sa Mawt Tribal Council in British Columbia.

Maria Francis - Community Mental Wellness and Addictions Outreach Support Worker (Old Crow). Maria comes with experience working at Blood Ties Four Directions in Whitehorse, at both the Supervised Consumption Site and as an Outreach Worker on the Outreach Van.

Rony Chakraborty - Director of Education & Recreation. Rony was promoted in the Summer to this new position having previously served as the Recreation Manager.

Jeffrey Peter - Emergency Management Coordinator. Jeffrey also works on the salmon and caribou files with the Yukon River Panel and Porcupine Caribou Management Board.

Lance Nagwan - Manager, Fish & Wildlife. Lance has experience working for VGFN along with Parks Canada, DFO and the Tahltan Central Government.

Sherrie Frost - Events and Recreation Manager. Sherrie has held various casual positions in VGFN over the past 2 years and has worked as an Early Years Program Coordinator for YFNED and is currently a member of the Community Committee for the First Nations School Board.

Kellie Horassi - Family Support Worker. Kellie has a deep connection to the Yukon and is committed to community well-being. Her work will be centered on providing resources and support that promotes cultural connection, family resilience, and community engagement.



Crow Mountain Trail

As part of our 2025-2026 Appropriations Act, we allocated \$1.375 million for construction of the ATV Road on Crow Mountain.

We engaged Porcupine Enterprises in early August to prepare a cost estimate and schedule on the ATV Road for review by our Administration and Council.

An initial test was to be completed by Porcupine for the purpose of confirming a proper estimate and schedule for the work to review with our Citizens and identify any authorizations that may be required for the full project.

This was the work that was conducted on August 14 & 15 by Porcupine which was larger than agreed upon so we issued a stop work order on August 16. We are currently working with Porcupine to develop this larger estimate and schedule for the work.

Our plan is to finalize the estimate and design with Porcupine and have a community meeting on what we expect the full project to look like and what it will cost for public feedback.

The purpose is to upgrade the existing ATV Trail to make travel safer while reducing further impacts to the terrain and reduce some of the unauthorized travel that has occurred in this area.



2025 NATIONAL GATHERING OF ELDERS

In late September 2025, VGFN sent seven (7) Elders from Old Crow, Whitehorse and Alberta to attend the National Gathering of Elders and Cultural Gala Expo in Edmonton, AB. A great time was had by all who attended with a cultural exchange and a good opportunity to meet old friends and other Elders from Nations across the country.

POST SECONDARY EDUCATION FUNDING

In the current year we are funding twenty (21) students under the Post-Secondary Education Financial Assistance Policy providing over \$400,000 of support.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP WORKSHOP

We are finalizing details for an Entrepreneurship Workshop that may occur as early as the week of January 7th. Keep posted to our Facebook and bulletin board in the Sarah Abel-Chitze Administration Building for the final details.

DID YOU KNOW?

At the current time, VGFN has 71 permanent full-time staff of which 72% are VGFN Citizens. There are an additional 3.5% of our staff from other Indigenous Nations.

There are almost 50 active casual workers of which 95% are VGFN Citizens.

PLEASE TIE UP YOUR DOGS!

There continues to be a number of nuisance and dangerous dogs in the community that is posing a risk to residents in Old Crow. As notified in October and November, any loose dogs may be rehomed or euthanized depending upon the level of risk they are presenting to the community.

ENGAGEMENTS AND MEETINGS

- * August 11 - SCAN Presentation
- * August 12 - Staff Meeting at Ti'oo K'at
- * September 3 - Community Safety Assessment
- * September 12 - Natural Resources and Heritage Quarterly Update
- * September 15 and 16 - Bullying, Harassment & Workplace Violence Training
- * September 26 - Monthly Staff Meeting
- * September 29 and 30 - Former Premier Mike Pemberton Visit
- * September 30 - TRC Event
- * October 6 - Housing Warehouse and Assembly Shop Presentation
- * October 17 - DFO Minister Joanne Thompson Visit
- * October 20 and 21 - Theoren Fleury Visit
- * October 31 - Monthly Staff Meeting
- * November 5 - Parks Canada Update
- * November 25 - Dog Management Community Engagement
- * November 26 - Pet Wellness Clinic
- * November 28 - Monthly Staff Meeting



Leadership & Staff Contact List

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COUNCIL MEETINGS

Since July, Council Meetings have been held on:

July 9 and 23

August 4 and 27

September 18 and 25

November 13 and 19

Summaries of these meetings are posted at the Sarah-Abel Chitze Administration Building in Old Crow on the Bulletin Boards.



CURRENT JOB POSTINGS

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ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT

CASUAL POSITION WITH EXECUTIVE OFFICE

MENTAL WELLNESS & ADDICTIONS PROGRAM MANAGER

PERMANENT FULL-TIME POSITION WITH DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

To apply for any of these positions, you can send your resume and cover letter to jobs@vgfn.ca. Applications may also be dropped off at the [Sarah-Abel Chitze Administration Building](#) in Old Crow or Waterfront Station Office in Whitehorse.

Please include the name of the job you are applying for in the subject line of the email or cover letter. The cover letter should be addressed to the Human Resources Director.

While we appreciate all applications, only those selected for further consideration will be contacted.

UPCOMING WORK/LEGISLATION

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The following policies or legislation are currently under development by the First Nation

- * **Revised Housing Policy and Tenancy Agreement** – in part to reflect changes to the Yukon Residential Tenancies Act (2025)
- * **Elections Law** – in preparation for General Election in late 2026
- * **Dog Management Policy** – guidance on how to deal with nuisance and dangerous dogs in Old Crow
- * **Review Council Law** – to establish Review Council for VGFN as outlined in Constitution
- * **Lands and Resources Act** – to govern the management of lands and resources in VGFN Traditional Territory

UPCOMING EVENTS

HEALTH & WELLNESS FAIR

WEEK OF DEC. 9-11

Health, Social Services & Justice Department will be hosting a fair with workshops and presentations about our activities and showcase some of our key partners

VGFN CHRISTMAS BREAK

DECEMBER 22 – JANUARY 2

Office closure for VGFN in Old Crow and Whitehorse for the holiday season

WHITEHORSE CHRISTMAS PARTY

DECEMBER 13

Annual Christmas Party for Citizens to be held at the Sternwheeler Hotel with dinner and prizes provided

ELECTION ACT REVIEW

JANUARY (TO BE DETERMINED)

Constitution Review and Legislation Development Committee hosting sessions in Old Crow and Whitehorse

OLD CROW STAFF CHRISTMAS PARTY

DECEMBER 17

Staff Christmas Party in Old Crow with long service award recognition

YUKON RIVER PANEL 2025 POST-SEASON MEETING

JANUARY 27-29

Hosting of Yukon River Panel delegation to Old Crow for its 2025 Post-Season Meeting. Meals will be provided along with opportunity for Citizens to share testimonials on the impact from the restrictions on the Salmon fishery

COMMUNITY MEETING

DECEMBER 18

Regular monthly update meeting to be held in the evening with dinner provided

ELDER AND YOUTH GATHERING

FEBRUARY 10-12

VGFN is looking to organize an Elder and Youth Gathering in early February. Councillor Netro is taking the lead with the Administration on organizing this event.

CONTACTS

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COMMENTS?

YOUR FEEDBACK IS IMPORTANT!

Please let us know if you would like to let us know how we are doing in relation to a particular policy, program, service or activity undertaken by VGFN Chief and Council, Committees or Administration. You can provide feedback by:

- ✳ Approach our staff directly and if required escalate to our Managers or Directors; or
- ✳ Email us at comments@vgfn.ca;
- ✳ Submit online at our website at www.vgfn.ca.

We aim to respond to comments promptly. If we require more time to respond, we will let you know.

If no resolution occurs by items 1 or 2 above, feel free to approach the Executive Director/Associate ED or a member of Chief and Council.



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