



# July 2024 Bulletin

Ta'an Kwäch'än Council - 117 Industrial Road , Whitehorse, YT



**Adrianna Smith**

**Sarrah Telep and Arlow**

**Brooklyn Massie**

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# EVENTS & COMMUNITY NOTICES

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## **New Documentary Film is Seeking Frank Slim Family Members**

Shakat Media Inc. is producing a documentary film (The Wooden Pearl) about the Yukon River and its history, with Captain Frank Slim being a part of this project. We are seeking interviews with Frank Slim's grandchildren or Elders to gain deeper insights into his legacy. While the interviews will not be used directly in the film, the stories shared will help build his character. If you have stories or wish to be interviewed, please contact Nishka at (867) 333-9219 or email [nishka@shakat.ca](mailto:nishka@shakat.ca).



## **Summer Day Camp Now Open!**

TKC's Summer Day Camp registration is now operating and open to ages 7-13. This year's camp will run from June 24 to August 1, 2024. This year's camp will include daily activities four days per week (Monday to Thursday). For more information contact Adrianna Smith, Summer Camp Coordinator at [educationstudent@taan.ca](mailto:educationstudent@taan.ca).



## **Laberge Renewable Resources Council has Immediate Openings**

TKC is currently looking to fill two vacancies: one Full Member and one Alternate Member to sit on the Laberge Renewable Resources Council (LRRC) for a five-year term. As a full member of the LRRC, you are expected to attend monthly meetings, as well as the Annual General Assembly and working group meetings. \$300 honoraria is paid to members for each meeting, \$400 if meetings are more than four hours. Interested persons are requested to submit a letter of interest outlining their qualifications (template available upon request) and a copy of their resume. A list of persons meeting the requirements will be submitted to Chief and Council and once Chief and Council have selected their nominees, their names will be sent to the Minister of Environment for acceptance. Letters of interest should be sent by 4:30pm no later than July 5, 2024. Full notice is available at [www.taan.ca](http://www.taan.ca) or contact Kate Andre, Natural Resources Coordinator at (867) 668-3613 ext. 602 or email [resources@taan.ca](mailto:resources@taan.ca).

## **Summer Culture Camp – July 9-12**

Summer Culture Camp will be July 9-12 at TKC Fish Camp and Long Ago Peoples Place in Champagne. Full activities schedule to follow. Contact Debbie Burns at (867) 668-3613 ext. 702.



## **Community Meeting—July 17, 2024 TKC Fish Camp**

Citizens are invited to a special Community Meeting focused on the C-9B Master Plan and TKC's Capital Plan. The community meeting will be held at TKC's Fish Camp. Dinner will be served. Citizens can also attend virtually. More information will be posted to TKC's website and Facebook page shortly. Contact Aashna Jhunjunwala at (867) 668-3613 ext. 203.



## **Family Well-Being Gathering July 20, 2024 – TKC Fish Camp**

TKC Citizens are invited to a full day gathering on July 20 that will include cultural activities and sharing ideas on how to enhance child and family well being. The event will include knowledge sharing with rounds of small group conversations about how TKC can best support our children, youth and families. There will be food, gift cards, and door prizes provided. Transportation and registration can be arranged by contacting Natalie Hare at (867) 668-3613 ext. 402 or email [adminassist@taan.ca](mailto:adminassist@taan.ca).



## **Fishing Fridays Coming This July!**

Fishing Fridays coming this July! L&R is excited to announce 4 consecutive weeks of afternoon fishing for our Youth and Elders this July! Citizens can sign up for any of the scheduled times on July 5th, 19th or 26th. Our Wildlife Monitors will provide boat access, fishing gear and their wealth of fishing knowledge! Some sights may be restricted to shoreline access due to group size. Please register in advance so that we can prepare our site locations and access accordingly! Contact Brandon Crawford, Supervisor of Fish & Wildlife at [fishandwildlife@taan.ca](mailto:fishandwildlife@taan.ca) or 867-334-9443.



Deputy Chief Kristina Kane offered TKC's support at this year's annual RCMP community BBQ held on June 6 at the Whitehorse Detachment. Here, Deputy Chief Kane is joined with Constable Nikki Perro.

### Emergency Services—Summer Operation

If Citizens are unable to contact 911 in an emergency when phone lines are down, emergency vehicles and first responders will be posted at the following Whitehorse locations:

- Both Whitehorse Fire Halls; RCMP Station; Canada Games Centre; Kwanlin Mall; Whistle Bend Roundabout; Rest stop at the top of South Access;
- Security guards will be posted at Superstore, Cornerstone Building at 7th on Main and at the Yukon Inn front desk.

Remember that being prepared ahead of time is crucial. It's important to know your risks, and understand the types of emergencies possible in your area. It's important to make a plan with your family to prepare an emergency kit with essential supply. Stay safe and be proactive in emergency situations! The latest forest fire information is available at Yukon

Wildfire Hub at [www.yukon.ca](http://www.yukon.ca). To report a forest fire please call 1-888-798-FIRE (3473). For non-emergency wildlife questions you can email [yukonfireinfo@yukon.ca](mailto:yukonfireinfo@yukon.ca) or call (867) 393-7415. Updates are posted at Yukon Protective Services Facebook page.



### Avian Influenza is Circulating

TKC Lands & Resources would like to remind citizens that avian influenza is still circulating across Canada, with territorial and federal monitoring efforts still ongoing to track this disease. With the return of our beloved swans and other migratory birds, there are some helpful resources available of how you can help monitor this disease, keep domestic birds safe and contribute to this monitoring effort through samples collected during waterfowl harvests. Get up-to-date information at your local Conservation Office. Or visit [canada.ca/avian-flu-arctic](http://canada.ca/avian-flu-arctic).

## SPECIAL REPORT



# Reclamation Efforts Earns TKC Prestigious Award

TKC's four-year project to restore a contaminated, former placer mining site near Horse Creek Road has earned Canada-wide recognition with the Brownie Awards for builders, innovators and visionaries who are committed to the restoration of contaminated sites. Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, with the support of Yukon Government and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, completed the project in 2023. The team won the Best Small Project, under the Reach Out category for supporting a community's competitiveness and long-term sustainability.

Restoration work, conducted between 2019–23, included an environmental site assessment to determine contamination levels, the development of a restoration plan to remove surface debris, structures and hazardous materials; and a long-term program with education and training opportunities for Ta'an Kwäch'än Council's Citizens to take on managing and decommissioning the site's monitoring wells.

The Horse Creek Road contaminated site had numerous issues, including ground and water contamination, surface debris, and structures that had to be removed

and disposed of at licensed facilities inside and outside of the Yukon.

The remediation work took place during the COVID-19 pandemic and was completed in July 2022, just before the site was impacted by the collapse of a beaver dam at Mud Lake. The collapse released more than a million tonnes of water several kilometres upstream and washed thousands of tonnes of organic debris across the site. Groundwater monitoring and sampling indicated that the remediation work was successful in removing hydrocarbon contamination, reducing the likelihood of the flood having spread surface waste and contamination more widely. The flood also removed roads and clearings, and the site now appears natural, like the land has healed itself.

Chief Amanda Leas who attended a special presentation of the award on May told those gathered that this recognition couldn't have happened without the dedication of TKC's Lands & Resources staff and TKC Citizens.



*Partners and their representatives involved in the reclamation of a former placer mine site located on TKC Settlement Land, met on site on May 28, 2024, to review the cleanup process and celebrate the national recognition brought to the parties for the unique and successful cleanup.*



Chief Amanda Leas noted “This site was once a historical harvesting site for our Citizens and has become a priority for our community due to the magnitude of contamination left on the abandoned property. Thanks to the huge support of our partners, the restoration work is proof that when we all share a commitment towards remediation great progress can be made. We were also fortunate that Mother Earth herself got involved in this work with the collapse of the Mud Lake Beaver Dam. This helped cleanse the site, a testament that nature itself continues to provide harmony within our Settlement Lands and Traditional Territory.”

Yukon Environment Minister Nils Clarke said “the remediation of this contaminated site through collaboration and partnership is another step our government is taking to support reconciliation.”

“Cleaning up contaminated sites is not an easy task, but these projects protect our health, land, water, and air. We are reducing environmental liability and ensuring a healthier environment for future generations. I am proud of the work our team was able to accomplish.”



*Yukon Minister of Environment Nils Clarke with Chief Amanda Leas with the Brownie Award which recognize the innovative efforts of professionals who rehabilitate sites that were once contaminated, under-utilized and undeveloped by remaking them into productive residential and commercial projects that contribute to the growth of healthy communities across Canada.*

# NEIGHBOURHOOD NEWS



## Annual General Assembly

Weather cooperated nicely for TKC's Annual General Assembly held at TKC Fish Camp on May 24-25, 2024 at TKC Fish Camp. Delegates gathered both in person and virtually for the event.

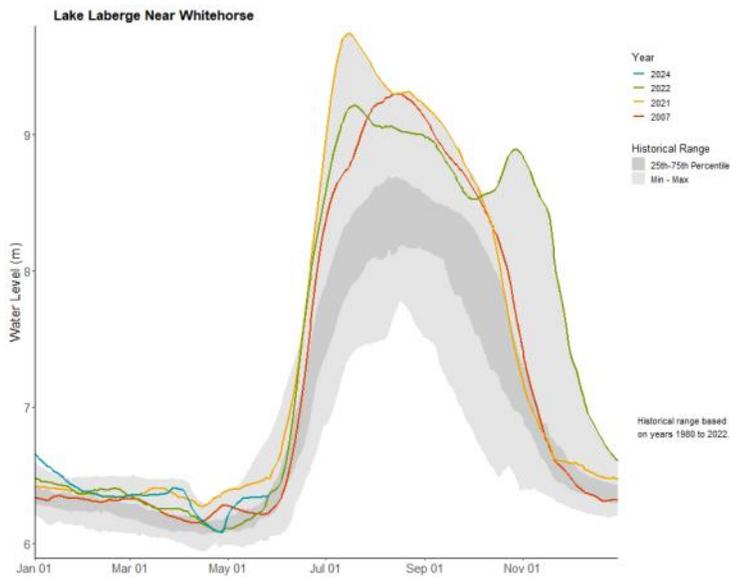


## Healing Today for Our Children Tomorrow

On May 28 a special workshop *Healing Today for Our Children Tomorrow* was held by the Yukon Residential School Missing Children Project, and was well attended by First Nation leaders, Elders, health care providers and community caregivers in Whitehorse. From right: Chief Amanda Leas, Champagne Aishihik Chief Barb Joe, former Tr'ondek Hwëch'in Chief Roberta Joseph and Debbie Nagano, Director of Heritage for the for Tr'ondek Hwëch'in Government.

## Water Level Update

Yukon government data shows Lake Laberge water levels are within their average range (2024 illustrated in blue). Lower lake levels and exposed sand bars might be your main concern later this summer since we have already seen a pretty good depletion of the headwater snowpack relative to previous years. The headwaters of Marsh Lake and Tagish Lake are also right around average levels; Atlin Lake is on the higher side of average and Bennett Lake is on the lower side of average. The snowpack was much lower this year than during those previous flood year. Barring major rainstorms lasting quite some time, lake levels on Lake Laberge should remain within average to low average this summer.



## Heart Shaped Commemorative Garden

A light rain didn't hinder those dedicated from planting this year's Reconciliation Garden at the RCMP Headquarters on June 4. Both Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and Kwanlin Dün First Nation create the heart-shaped garden each year with RCMP to promote community unity and provide a beautiful symbol of summer!



## POST SECONDARY STUDIES



**Amy Asp**  
**Culinary Arts**



**Brooklyn Massie**  
**Northern Outdoor Studies**

## HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES!



**Kiawna Leas**



**Coral Blanchard-Tizya**



**Nataley Anderson**



# Welcome to the Ta'an Team!

*Meet TKC's newest  
staff members!*



**Lori Graham**  
**Heritage Technician**

Over the last three years Lori has worn many different hats at TKC, using her knowledge and skills to assist in Office Management, Education and Development, Income and Social Support, but always striving to work towards the preservation of Ta'an Kwäch'än Council historical documents and artifacts. Her passion for the history of Ta'an was realized when Lori successfully applied for and secured the Heritage Technician role back in November. We are so pleased that with staff back in their formative positions, that Lori can focus 100% of her attention on the preservation of all that TKC holds valuable. Lori is a mother, a grandmother and a member of the Maggie Broeren Traditional Family. You can reach Lori at (867) 668-3613 ext. 704 or email [heritage@taan.ca](mailto:heritage@taan.ca).

After retiring from Government of Yukon early this spring, where he dedicated more than 30 years building his skillset in legislation, regulation and policy, Mike has welcomed the chance and opportunity to bring his experience to TKC as a Legislation and Policy Analyst. Originally from Ottawa, Mike has lived up north for over 35 years working and living in Yellowknife, Inuvik and Nunavut before moving south to Whitehorse in 1993. Focused on land and resource management, Mike has completed the development of several regulations including the ORV Management area regulation, the resource roads regulation and in legislation with early work on a new Public Lands Act. Mike's experience, his interest in helping strengthen First Nation governance structures, along with his passion for the North makes him a welcome addition to our staff. Mike hopes to get a chance to meet everyone over the next while as he settles in. You can reach Mike at (867) 668-3613 ext. 206 or email [legislation@taan.ca](mailto:legislation@taan.ca).



**Mike Draper**  
**Legislation & Policy Analyst**



**Kate Andre**  
**Natural Resources Coordinator**

Kate is descended from Saskatchewan immigrants from the Ukraine, and Zimbabwean immigrants from Croatia and Ireland. Kate has been living and working with Yukon First Nations in various environmental stewardship capacities for over 20 years. It began in 2001, when she started her first job counting fish for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans on the Taku River. Kate has worked for various governments: as an Environment Officer for Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada CIRNAC for 10 years, the Yukon government in various policy capacities, and more recently as a Natural Resources Manager for the Government of Carcross/Tagish First Nation. Teaching Climate Change and Fish and Wildlife Health at YukonU last Fall inspired Kate to pursue opportunities for community climate action, and she's excited to be with TKC in her new role as the Natural Resources Coordinator. When Kate is not at her Quartz Road office, she can be found chasing after her young daughters, or lying down with a book. You can reach Kate at (867) 668-3613 ext. 602 or email [resources@taan.ca](mailto:resources@taan.ca).



## WELCOME TO THE TA'AN TEAM

### **Frances Van Kessel Elders Coordinator**

Francis Van Kessel's Tlingit name is Wat.si. She was born in Yukon and has strong roots in the territory. Francis is a descendant from her mother who is Tlingit and Scottish. Her father who is Irish. She belongs to the Teslin Tlingit Council and is a member of the Dakhl'awedi Clan. Her mother is Isabelle Dewhurst and carries the name Tningidoo. Francis grandmother is Grace Dewhurst who Francis was named after Wat.si. Her Great Grandmother Virginia Smarch who carried the name Gadzooza who was renowned Elder for negotiating land claims for Teslin Tlingit Council and also coined the phrase 'Part of the Land, Part of the Water'.

Francis strives to be busy. She never has a spare moment as she dedicated her time to Yukon community. She is an active citizen of Teslin Tlingit Council representing her Dakhl'awedi Clan on her Investment committee.

She is the indigenous representative on the board for Yukon Registered Nurses Association and serves as the vice president of the Victoria Faulker Women's Centre. These are just to name a few of her official roles she holds within Yukon. She has countless organizations that are dear to her heart, and she has volunteered hundreds of hours in the community for different events that include Whitehorse Connects, Food drives, and non-profits that are aimed to help people with disabilities.

Her home life is quite simple, she lives with her dedicated husband, and one dog and three cats and a person who she calls her son. On family, she calls many people that are close to her family. Yes, they may have been friends, but she knows in her heart that these are family and have made a healthy impact on her life. A big part of her life is that she has a huge heart and is willing to help anyone in need. She also admits that people are just people so being a little eccentric is the spice of life. She has dived into her traditional values with her Tlingit cultural and in her spare time she is learning her Tlingit Language. She practices Her Tlingit cultural daily by dancing, preparing food, acceptance, gathering wild food like moose and berries and storytelling. You can reach Frances at (867) 668-3613 or email [elderscoordinator@taan.ca](mailto:elderscoordinator@taan.ca). Please join us in welcoming Frances to the Ta'an team!





**YOUR INPUT  
MATTERS**

Please join us for  
**A Gathering for TKC Child, Youth and  
Family Well-Being**

July 20, 2024  
9am to 3:30pm  
TKC Fish Camp  
Cultural Activities!  
Food & Door Prizes!

Join us for a full day gathering for cultural activities and sharing ideas about how to enhance child and family well being.

All TKC Citizens and their loved ones are invited, especially children, youth and families.  
Transportation and registration can be arranged by contacting **Natalie Hare at (867) 668-3613 ext. 402 or email [adminassist@taan.ca](mailto:adminassist@taan.ca)**

### Why is this happening?

TKC is working to improve how children, youth and families get support when they need it. This gathering seeks your input on this work so future family supports reflect what citizens know will work best for programming and resources and places for activities. You can provide your feedback by completing this survey.

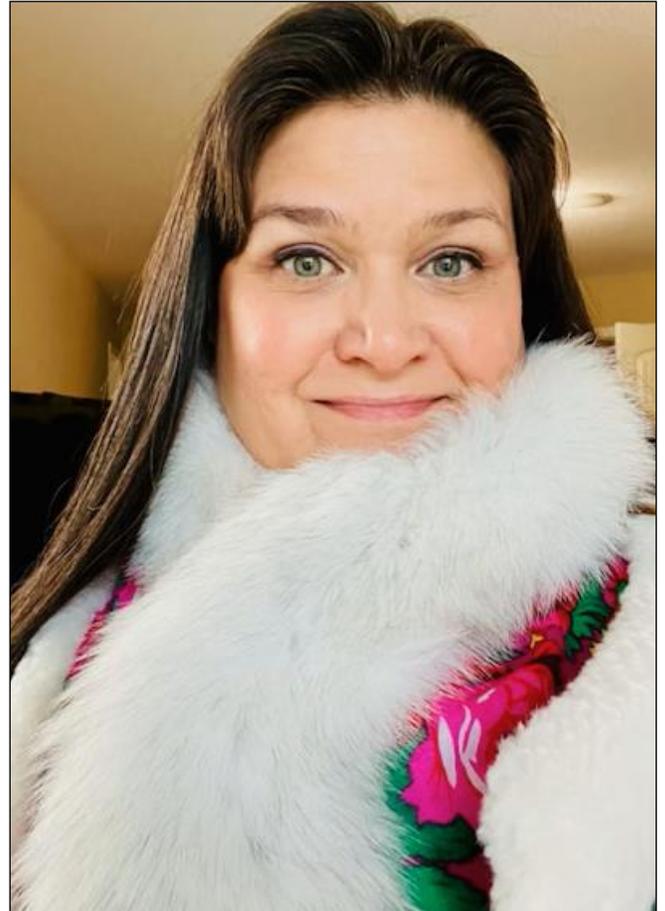


# IN THE SPOTLIGHT...

## New Registrar at TKC Judicial Council

Chantal Genier has taken on the role of Registrar with the Ta'an Kwach'an Council Judicial Council. Chantal is a Citizen of the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and a descendant of the Maggie Broeren family line. She was born and raised in the Yukon and has been actively working in the area of justice since she received her diploma in Justice and Criminology in 2009. She has since obtained a BA in Justice Studies from Royal Roads University and is currently pursuing her Masters in Justice Studies.

The Judicial Council was established pursuant to section 11 of the *Constitution of the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council*. The Judicial Council is composed of three judges, including one Elder, appointed by the Elders Council. The appointments of judges to the Judicial Council are for a term of five years. The powers and responsibilities of the Judicial Council are described in the Constitution of the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, the Elections Act (Ta'an Kwäch'än Council) and the Government Administration and Interpretation Act. More information about the Judicial Council is available at [www.taan.ca](http://www.taan.ca) or email [registrar@tkjc.ca](mailto:registrar@tkjc.ca). Congratulations Chantal and we wish you all the best in your new position!



**Chantal Genier**

## Congratulations Class of 2024

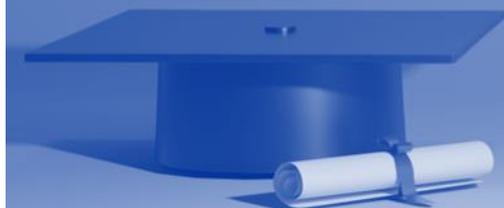
### High School Grads:

Coral Blanchard-Tizya  
Kiawna Leas  
Nataley Anderson

### ISETS Grads:

Amy Asp  
(Culinary Arts Program)

Brooklyn Massie  
Northern Outdoor Studies Program





*Ta'an Kwäch'an Council Chief Amanda Leas, joins Carcross Tagish First Nation Deputy Kaa Shaadé Hení Darla Jean Lindstrom and Kwanlin Dün First Nation (KDFN) Chief Sean Smith for the official signing of the How We Walk with the Land and Water Charter agreement on May 30 at an historical KDFN Settlement Land site outside of Whitehorse.*

## **Historical Charter Signed to Continue FN Efforts to Preserve and Protect Resources**

Several TKC Citizens, including Elders and youth gathered on the afternoon of May 30, to help celebrate the signing of the *How We Walk with the Land and Water* Charter agreement. The event took place at the beautiful site of John Joe's trapline at Kettly's Canyon on Marsh Lake.

The event included prayer, storytelling and special recognition ceremonies to the families of ancestors from all three nations that were instrumental in creating a historical footprint attached to the many sacred and traditional land and water sites throughout the shared traditional territory.

Through this protocol Ta'an Kwach'an Council, Carcross Tagish First Nation and Kwanlin Dun First Nation will be able to continue efforts to recognize, preserve and protect these sites from the modern day impacts of development and also play a role in the land use planning process.

It was in 2017 when the three First Nations signed

its project charter to start this journey to prepare for Land Use planning as entitled to under Chapter 11 of each final agreement. Elders from the three Nations gathered at Tàa'an Män to name this initiative *How We Walk with the Land and Water*.

This saw the establishment of a Citizen-based Elders and Youth Advisory Committee, which has done an incredible amount of work to properly document and map our land use of this region of the Yukon. The Lands & Resources team, Elders and Youth have worked tirelessly on this project. We wouldn't be here today without your careful research and efforts to document our historical footprint. Thank you!

This charter will allow all three First Nations to establish a governance committee with leadership that will provide the political and strategic guidance to move forward to implement land and water planning, to set out to solve inter-governmental matters related to overlap and Chapter 11 commitments. For more information go to [www.howwewalk.org](http://www.howwewalk.org).

# Happy Summer Everyone!

All of us at *The Next Thread* want to wish everyone a safe and wonderful summer! Betsy and I want to thank all our sewing enthusiasts, especially our new sewers, who helped us have our best season yet! It's because of you that we can keep our Ta'an traditions alive, and have some good old fashioned fun, too.

We will see you in the fall with a new lineup of sewing creations and lots of workshops to help you take your craft to the next level!

Shāw Nithän, everyone, and don't forget to

## *Keep on Sewing!*

**Debbie Burns**

**Cultural Programs Coordinator**  
(867) 668-3613 ext. 702 or email  
[heritageprograms@taan.ca](mailto:heritageprograms@taan.ca).

