



# NEWS RELEASE

## **GTC Releases Revised Business and Gwich'in Harvesters Assistance Policies**

INUVIK (March 2, 2023) - At its February 2023 meeting, the Board of Directors of the Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC) reviewed and revised the GTC Business Policy that was created in 2004 and last approved in 2009; and the Gwich'in Harvesters Assistance Policy (GHAP), initially developed in 2007/2008 to guide the annual distribution of monies earned from the Gwich'in Harvesters Assistance Trust which was established in 1995.

Key changes were made to the Business Policy in an effort to provide greater clarity for Gwich'in companies, communities, Industry and Governments. These changes include clarification on the criteria for assessment of Registered Gwich'in Businesses and modification to definitions for consistency with the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement (GCLCA) and for clarity for external audiences.

The review of the GHAP noted that the harvesting landscape has changed dramatically over the past 15 years, with a notable decline in 'full-time harvesters'. Key changes to the GHAP include the reduction of the eligibility of applicants to sixteen (16) years of age, and removal of classes of harvesters to a simple benefit not exceeding \$2,500 in a fiscal year. Community meetings to introduce the new GHAP will be underway soon and will occur ahead of the Spring 2023 intake for the Gwich'in Harvesters Assistance Program.

"The GTC Business Policy and the Gwich'in Harvesters Assistance Policy are key documents outlining the support that is provided by our organization to our entrepreneurs and local harvesters" says GTC Grand Chief Ken Kyikavichik. "By updating these policies, we improve the responsiveness of these key programs and ensure that meaningful support is provided to achieve the objectives of improving our business participation on projects and promote harvesting activities and use of the land by our Participants within the Gwich'in Settlement Region."

Established in 1992, the GTC is an Indigenous organization that represents over 3,500 Participants to the GCLCA in the Northwest Territories, some who reside in the communities of Aklavik, Inuvik, Teet'it Zheh (Fort McPherson) and Tsiigehtchic. The Gwich'in are a culturally vibrant and independent Nation that is focused on protecting and advancing its interests through quality work, collaborative approaches and good governance. The GTC strives to increase economic opportunities, develop quality infrastructure, promote the health and wellness of its Participants and preserve the culture and language of the Gwich'in.

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