

<b>65. Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta (Ramparts River and Wetlands)</b>		
<b>Designation</b>	Proposed Conservation Initiative	
<b>CRs &amp; Prohibitions</b>	CRs# 1-14 Prohibition: Bulk water removal; Mining E&D; Oil and Gas E&D; Power Development; Forestry; Quarrying	
<b>Map #</b>	13	
<b>Area</b>	14,701 km <sup>2</sup>	
<b>Land Ownership</b>	<b>Sahtu Subsurface Ownership</b>	<b>Sahtu Surface Ownership</b>
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<b>Location &amp; Boundaries</b>	Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta is located north of the Mackenzie Mountains and west of Fort Good Hope in the K'asho Got'ine District.	

The Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) is sponsoring the Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta Candidate Protected Area as a National Wildlife Area (NWA). It is seeking permanent protection of the area through the *Canada Wildlife Act*.

### Reason for Establishment

"Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta is a sacred place and harvesting area of the Fort Good Hope Dene and Metis. For generations it has been used for trapping, hunting, fishing and camping. It has many archaeological, burial and historic sites. The Ramparts River watershed is a critical wetland that filters millions of gallons of water per day. As a key migratory bird terrestrial habitat site, the wetlands provide excellent nesting, brood rearing and staging habitat for ducks, geese and loons. Six species at risk – peregrine falcon, grizzly bear, mountain caribou, wolverine, short-eared owl, and boreal woodland caribou – are also found within the Candidate Protected Area."<sup>345</sup>

The Ramparts River meanders "through critical wetlands and has been an important hunting, trapping and fishing area for Fort Good Hope families for generations...It is known as an excellent place to begin teaching young hunters the rules and behaviours necessary for a successful hunt."<sup>346</sup> Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta encompasses a number of named places including a sacred site, Thunderbird Place, and Fee Yee, the Ramparts, a canyon-like area along the Mackenzie River.

**Values to be Protected:** Archaeological, burial and sacred sites, historic and cultural sites.

**Values to be Respected:** The zone is habitat for boreal woodland, mountain and barren-ground caribou, moose, mountain goat, muskox, Dall's sheep, black bear, grizzly bear, wolverine, marten, beaver, muskrat, mink, red fox, wolf, lynx, snowshoe hare, peregrine falcons and numerous species of waterfowl. The zone is part of the Bonnet Plume mountain woodland caribou herd migration path and range. Grizzly bears inhabit the mountains and the valley tends to be more used by the black bears. Important Wildlife Areas<sup>347</sup> for mountain woodland caribou, Dall's sheep, moose and furbearers are documented.

The wetlands and the Ramparts River support high densities of moose including the Alaska-Yukon subspecies and the Northwestern moose subspecies (some of the highest Northwest Territories density populations have been recorded in the zone).

<sup>345</sup> <http://www.nwtpas.ca/area-tsudeniline.asp>

<sup>346</sup> Prepared by The Sahtu Heritage Places and Sites Joint Working Group. January 2000 (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). "Rakekée Gok'é Godi: Places We Take Care Of. Written by Tom Andrews. P. 68

<sup>347</sup> Haas, C.A., & Wilson, J.M., Important Wildlife Areas in the Western Northwest Territories, 2012, Manuscript Report No. 221, Environment and Natural Resources, Government of the Northwest Territories, Yellowknife, NT

The wetland is quality beaver habitat and has been called “the best beaver habitat north of Fort Simpson” (Wooley 1974). Surveys in 1989, 1997, and 2001 found densities from 58 – 86 active beaver lodges per 100 km<sup>2</sup> for a portion of the wetlands.<sup>348</sup>

The wetlands are critical habitat for thousands of nesting, brood-rearing and staging waterfowl of numerous species. The Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) has identified the wetlands as a Key Habitat Site as the zone is habitat for more than 1% of the Canadian population of scaup, scoter and pacific loons and other species of waterfowl and birds.

Since 1970 surveys held every 5 years have observed nesting Peregrine falcons.<sup>349</sup> This zone is one of three high density sites in the Mackenzie Valley believed to support at least half of the valley’s population of nesting peregrine falcons.<sup>350</sup> CWS and DUC have identified the entire wetlands as a key waterfowl, bird habitat site and important breeding duck habitat<sup>351</sup>. The area is also a critical waterfowl breeding site, critical raptor nesting area and a CWS key migratory bird terrestrial habitat<sup>352</sup> site.

Most of the lakes in the wetlands contain pike and a few of the larger lakes are known to have whitefish. The Ramparts Rapids are a spawning area for cisco and river whitefish.<sup>353</sup>

Harvested species include waterfowl and birds, furbearers (amongst one of the highest concentrations throughout the SSA), fish, bears, caribou, and particularly important, moose, beaver and muskrat. There is a Special Harvesting Area for fish as per the *SDMCLCA*. Plants and berries are also harvested.

Ecologically significant features include karst, eskers, wetlands and glacial refugia.

**Values to Take into account:** Many named places including a sacred site, the Thunderbird Place<sup>354</sup>, traditional trails lead into the Ramparts Wetlands, outpost camps, fish camps, cabins, camps and tent sites, cabins currently in use, log timber harvesting are all found in the zone. Within the Fort Good Hope/Colville Lake Group Trapping Area. Within Fort Good Hope’s community drinking water source catchment.

**Economic Importance:** Oil and gas potential: 76% high; 14% moderate high. Gravel and sand deposits. In an outfitting region with two active outfitters.

#### **Additional Information: Sacred and Special Places<sup>355</sup>**

##### **Thunderbird Place**

The Thunderbird Place is located on a sharp bend in the Ramparts River. For a long time it was a dangerous place where a giant Thunderbird lived and killed travellers. One day an elder with powerful medicine killed the Thunderbird, making river travel safe again. “There are several place in the Sahtu Settlement Area where other water monsters live or have lived and these places are always considered dangerous, requiring special rituals or practices when travelling nearby.” To this day, people still feel uneasy when travelling past the Thunderbird Place.

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<sup>348</sup> *ibid*

<sup>349</sup> Haas, C.A., & Wilson, J.M., Important Wildlife Areas in the Western Northwest Territories, 2012, Manuscript Report No. 221, Environment and Natural Resources, Government of the Northwest Territories, Yellowknife, NT

<sup>350</sup> *ibid*

<sup>351</sup> Ducks Unlimited Canada. Comments on Draft 2 SLUP, July 31/09. <http://www.sahtulanduseplan.org/website/web-content/index.html>

<sup>352</sup> Latour, P.B, Leger, J, Hines, J.E., Mallory, M.L., Mulders, D.L., Gilchrist, H.G., Smith, P.A., & Dickson, D.L., 2008, *Key migratory bird terrestrial habitat sites in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut*, 3rd. Ed., CWS Occ. Paper No. 114.

<sup>353</sup> John T’seleie, Draft 2 Comments available at: [www.sahtulanduseplan.org](http://www.sahtulanduseplan.org)

<sup>354</sup> Prepared by The Sahtu Heritage Places and Sites Joint Working Group. January 2000 (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). *Rakekée Gok’é Godi: Places We Take Care Of*. Written by Tom Andrews.

<sup>355</sup> *ibid*

### **Fee Yee, The Ramparts**

"The only canyon-like feature on the Mackenzie River, the Ramparts is a unique and important landmark. Called Fee Yee in Slavey, it is the location of an important domestic fishery. In historic times Fee Yee was also used as a refuge for local people to defend against raiding parties of Inuit travelling upstream from the coast."

Many of the topographic features at the Fee Yee were created by a giant, an important legendary hero for the people of Fort Good Hope. A number of places within or near the Ramparts are named or have stories associated with them. "The Ramparts rapids were created when Wichididelle threw rocks at a giant beaver. There's also a place where he laid down for a nap – his head and footprints can still be seen today. The small waterfall is where he had a pee... His boat is located above the rapids (Spruce Island is said to be his overturned boat)... His boat is still there."

The reports *Rakekée Gok'é Godi: Places We Take Care Of*<sup>356</sup> and *Mapping Our Future, Report on Community Surveys and Workshops April – May, 2001*<sup>357</sup> recommend a combination of the following actions:

### **Fee Yee, The Ramparts**

- Designate a National Historic Site
- Protect the site by extending Fort Good Hope's community boundary to encompass area and provide for a local management regime. Designate as Commissioner's Land.

### **Ramparts River and Wetlands**

- Designate a Heritage River
- Designate the wetlands a Migratory Bird Sanctuary to protect waterfowl nesting and staging areas
- Designate the river and wetlands a Critical Wildlife Area to protect subsistence and trapping species
- Oral history and archaeological research to document and protect heritage resources and burials
- Surface protection of documented sites

### **The Thunderbird Place**

- Undertake oral history research and give special consideration in the land use planning process

### **Conservation Initiative Status**<sup>358</sup>

The Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) is sponsoring the Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta Candidate Protected Area and is seeking permanent protection for the area through the *Canada Wildlife Act*. The Yamoga Land Corporation is the local lead.

### **Other Documentation:**

Phase 1 and 2 Socio-Economic, Non-Renewable and Ecological Assessments have been completed as a requirement of the PAS process. A Hydrocarbon Potential report, Cultural Documentation and a Draft Renewable Resource Assessment have also been completed. Readers are referred to the NWT PAS website for full reports.<sup>359</sup>

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<sup>356</sup> Prepared by The Sahtu Heritage Places and Sites Joint Working Group. January 2000 (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). "Rakekée Gok'é Godi: Places We Take Care Of. Written by Tom Andrews.

<sup>357</sup> Mapping Our Future, Report on Community Surveys and Workshops, April – May, 2001, Sahtu Land Use Planning Board, prepared by Jennifer Blomqvist

<sup>358</sup> PAS website: <http://www.nwtpas.ca/area-tsudeniline.asp>

<sup>359</sup> <http://www.nwtpas.ca/area-tsudeniline.asp>