



Ducks Unlimited Canada
Conserving Canada's Wetlands

Active by nature.

Ducks Unlimited Canada in the Northwest Territories

Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) has identified the western boreal forest as one of its most urgent conservation priorities. Using science as the foundation, DUC's programs focus on supporting the establishment of permanent, wetland rich protected areas and world-leading sustainable development that includes improved management practices that protect and sustain wetlands, water and watershed health.

As an original signatory to the Canadian Boreal Initiative's Boreal Forest Conservation Framework, DUC is working with Yamona Land Corporation (YLC), other aboriginal groups, governments, industry, academic institutions, foundations and conservation organizations to implement ecosystem-based sustainable development, best management practices, and an extensive network of large, wetland-rich protected areas in the boreal.

DUC has been working toward this vision in the NWT since 1988. In 1998, DUC began partnering with federal and territorial governments, aboriginal groups and other conservation organizations to advance its conservation goals through existing land management processes, specifically the NWT PAS and regional land use planning.

DUC's Commitment

Chronology of Events Leading to Interim Land Withdrawal

1997-98 Recognizing the area's importance for waterfowl, DUC conducted extensive helicopter and ground based surveys to determine distribution and abundance of breeding waterfowl, loons, and other waterbirds in the Ramparts River Wetlands Complex located within Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta. A 910 km² study area was selected based on interviews about key breeding areas with hunters from Fort Good Hope. Surveys indicate 1 per cent of the estimated Canadian populations of scaup, scoters, and Pacific loons inhabit the area.

August 2001 DUC and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) co-host PAS workshop to identify important regions in the Fort Good Hope area including the Ramparts River and Wetlands Complex.

June 2002 DUC and INAC co-host second community meeting to discuss the PAS and the cultural and ecological reasons to protect the larger area known as Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta.

July 2002 The Fort Good Hope Renewable Resources Council passes a motion formally entering Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta into the PAS.

March 2003 Initial draft proposal for interim land withdrawal completed with funding from INAC and review by DUC. The community still needs to reach consensus on a final boundary.

May 2003 DUC and INAC co-host community workshop to review work to date, confirm boundary and options for protection. The community is still unable to agree on a final boundary.

July 2003 DUC conducts earth cover classification on the middle Mackenzie Valley area which includes the Ramparts River and Wetlands and most of Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta. Image analysis completed in February 2006 results in an accurate digital inventory of wetland and upland habitats throughout the project area. CWS is using this classification to determine habitat use by forest birds within Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta to inform the future management plan for the National Wildlife Area.



September 2003 Yamoga Land Corporation takes over from Fort Good Hope Renewable Resources Council as lead agency for the Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta PAS initiative.

DUC assists Yamoga Land Corporation with a proposal to INAC that requests PAS funding to hire PAS community coordinator in Fort Good Hope.

Fort Good Hope Renewable Resources Council sends a letter to INAC PAS stating the importance of protecting the Ramparts River, Wetlands and Ramparts Canyon prior to the pipeline and/or other developments.

With support from DUC, Fort Good Hope community coordinator submits summary report of work to date on Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta.

April 2004 PAS workshop results in unanimous resolution that outlines interim boundary and requests that CWS be the sponsoring agency and begin work on interim land withdrawal immediately. Yamoga Land Corporation, Metis Local #54, the Chief and three respected elders sign the resolution. Workshop co-hosted and co-funded by DUC and INAC and organized by DUC, INAC and Yamoga Land Corporation.

DUC funds completion of workshop report and assists Yamoga Land Corporation to complete and submit deliverables for INAC contract.

May 2004 With assistance from DUC, Yamoga Land Corporation sends letters to all local, regional and territorial organizations informing them of the community's efforts to protect Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta. A letter of support is requested from all groups as required by INAC guidelines for interim land withdrawal.

2004 – 2006 Letters, motions, and resolutions of support from required organizations and departments received by Yamoga Land Corporation.

2005 – 2006 DUC through Yamoga Land Corporation funds PAS community coordinator position and pays for meeting to update stakeholders on Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta progress.

With assistance from DUC, Yamoga Land Corporation sends letters to holders of existing land rights informing them of the community's efforts to protect Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta. This is required by INAC guidelines for interim land withdrawal.

Fall 2004 Federal and territorial staff submit known ecological, physical, hydrological and economic information about Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta to DUC to be compiled into updated Interim Land Withdrawal proposal.

At request of CWS, DUC incorporates results of 1997-1998 Ramparts River and Wetlands Survey into "rationale for protection" to document that the area meets the guidelines for status as "Key Migratory Bird Terrestrial Habitat Site". This strengthens the justification for CWS to protect Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta.

Spring 2005 DUC funds contract to compile and synthesize all known information about Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta into a "rationale for protection" as required by INAC guidelines for interim land withdrawal.

September 2005 Yamoga Land Corporation, K'asho Got'ine Dene Band, and Métis Local #54 approve rationale and send letters to CWS officially requesting that they act as sponsoring agency for Ts'ude niline Tu'eyeta.



2005 – 2006 DUC and the Yamoga Land Corporation assembles 300 page “Proposal for Interim Land Withdrawal” required by INAC guidelines.

April 2006 Yamoga Land Corporation submits “Proposal for Interim Land Withdrawal” to CWS and requests that CWS submit it to INAC on their behalf.

June 2006 CWS submits “Proposal for Interim Land Withdrawal” to INAC.

With funding provided by DUC, Yamoga Land Corporation and DUC co-host community meeting to announce that “Proposal for Interim Land Withdrawal” has been submitted to INAC and provide an update on next steps.

January 2007 Representatives from Fort Good Hope travel to Ottawa to meet with federal politicians including the Honourable John Baird, Minister of the Environment.

November 2007 Federal Government announces interim protection for Ts’ude niline Tu’eyeta.

Next Steps Comprehensive cultural, ecological, renewable resource and economic assessments are now underway. Specific partners have a lead role in the assessments: DUC – renewable resource and cultural, CWS - ecological, and INAC - economic.

DUC’s earthcover classification products have been used by the Government of the NWT to document the importance of specific habitat types, particularly wetlands, for boreal woodland caribou. These data are also being used to gain a better understanding of how songbirds use all habitats.

Information from these assessments will take approximately three years to complete and will be used by a working group to make informed decisions about final boundaries and long-term management of Ts’ude niline Tu’eyeta as a National Wildlife Area.

Following this, public input and recommendations will be taken into consideration and a management plan will be produced by CWS. This will be packaged into a final proposal for permanent protection by CWS to INAC for a permanent land withdrawal via Order-in-Council.

Ts’ude niline Tu’eyeta will be permanently protected as a National Wildlife Area within five years.