



# Ross River Dena Council

## NOTICE TO THOSE HOPING TO HUNT IN THE ROSS RIVER DENA AREA

The Ross River Dena Council (RRDC) requires that, effective August 1st, 2018, any non-Kaska hunter wishing to hunt in our ancestral and unceded lands must first obtain a hunting permit from RRDC.

We are very worried about the caribou and moose populations in our territory. Our people have always governed human activity, including hunting, on our lands. We have inherited the duty to look after our home according to Dena A' Niz̄in (our Dena laws). This is the only home we have.

Due to our deep concern for caribou and moose in our homeland, we hereby require that any non-Kaska hunters wishing to hunt in our territory must obtain a permit from RRDC. This permit will be subject to our Dena laws.



In accordance with our Dena laws, caribou and moose hunting will be closed on September 15. Also, due to the tremendous pressure felt in certain important places in our territory, we hereby impose a moratorium on hunting in the following places:

Łubeh (often confused as **Keele Peak**)  
Takadení'a / Pekadení'a (often confused as **Sheldon Mountain**)  
Shúta Dene Kó (often confused as **Sheldon Lake**)  
Tuetset'i (often confused as **Dragon Lake**)  
Tse Leda (often confused as **41 Mountain**)  
Tse Zul (often confused as **Mt. Mye**)  
Tu Desdes (often confused as **Pelly Lakes**)  
Łegaenjoji (often confused as **Finlayson Lake**)  
Egha Da Oli (often confused as **Blind Lake**)  
Tu Desdes Tue (often confused as the **Pelly River**)  
Takadení'a Tue (often confused as the **Ross River**)

This notice was drafted and approved by the Ross River Dena Elders Council and supported by Ross River Dena Council.



**ROSS RIVER DENA COUNCIL  
ROSS RIVER, YUKON  
YOB 1SO**

PHONE: (867) 969-2278 OR 969-2279  
FAX: (867) 969-2405

**Who are the Ross River Dena?**

Welcome to our land. For thousands of years, our ancestors have cared for this land and today we are the people that have inherited that important responsibility. We have learned from our elders and those that came before us that if we take care of the land, the land will take care of us. This land is our home, it is our sustenance, and it is our culture. Being the traditional land stewards we are, we have inherited the duty to guard and care for this land in a good way. We hope you hunt safely and enjoy the time you spend on our land.



### **Talking About Animals and Fish:**

It is important to always speak about animals and fish in a respectful way. You should not swear about them or brag about how many fish you will catch or animals you will hunt. If you do these things, it is disrespectful to the animals and they may go away. If you wish to hunt or fish on our land, we ask that you please respect this law. It is important to us. Respecting this teaching honours the land, the animals, and our Dena way.



### **After Successful Harvest:**

After harvesting an animal it is important to give thanks. Our elders have taught us that after a successful harvest it is good to put down tobacco as an offering to the Creator, the land, and the spirit of the animal. With big animals like moose, caribou, and sheep, we cut off the head and move it away from the body before beginning to skin out the body, as a sign of respect to the animal. In another sign of respect, some people will hang up the throat of the animal in the trees or willows. Also, after having cleaned your fish or animal it is a good to return the unused parts (i.e. bones, fish skin etc) to the land and water. The elders say that doing this is also good for the spirit of the animal. Do not leave these unused parts lying around your camp and avoid throwing them into the garbage or the dump. Please take the time to venture out to the land and respectfully return these parts to the land from where they came.

## **Gud-zih (Caribou)**

*Hunting Season: August 1 - September 15 (Bulls Only)*

Caribou have always been critical to the health of our Dena way. They have sustained our people for time immemorial. We use every part of the caribou. We eat all the meat, the fat, the organs, the head, the blood, some of the guts, and the bones. Caribou leg



bones are made into various tools necessary in the process of cleaning and tanning hides. Caribou brain is used for curing hides when making leather. Some of our people today earn much of their money through carvings they make from caribou and moose antlers. Most of our old clothing and some modern clothing as well is made from caribou hides. We make babiche from caribou skins and use it to sew clothes, stitch wounds, and make boats, sleds and tools. And our drum, the one who gives music, prayer, dance, and hand games, comes from caribou skins.

We believe over-hunting of caribou is playing a role in their disappearance. So we must reduce the harvest of caribou. In the responsible stewardship of our land, we will reduce our own harvest of caribou. But what is also essential is that visitors to our land reduce their harvest. And there are places in our country where we must impose a ban on caribou harvest by outsiders all-together, given the crisis the animals are facing. In our territory, the caribou hunting season closes on September 15. This is because after this the bulls begin rutting in preparation for the breeding time. During the time when bull caribou are in the rut, they stop eating food and their meat is full of hormones. The elders say that while bull caribou are rutting their meat is virtually inedible. Furthermore, if given the choice, we encourage you to avoid from hunting the big bull caribou as they are important to the overall health of the herd, through breeding and protection.

If you wish to hunt caribou on our land, you are required to come see us and apply for a permit. The map below indicates which areas are closed to caribou hunting and which areas are open through a permit hunt.

## **Ked-ah (Moose)**

*Hunting Season: August 1 - September 15 (Bulls Only)*

Moose are also one of our most important foods. Their hide provides us with clothing and fuels our contemporary economy through the vests, moccasins, mitts and other clothes that our people make with this hide. Aside from eating moose bones, we use some of them to make important tools for processing hides.

Moose hunting in our territory is only open via a permit hunt. During the past ten to twenty years, some parts of our territory have experienced very unsustainable amounts of moose hunting. Most of these places are on road corridors where our people have sustained themselves and their families from moose meat for thousands of years and where nowadays newcomers from far and distant places are coming into our land to hunt moose. Like the caribou hunt, moose hunting in our territory will close on September 15. Furthermore, if given the choice, we encourage you to avoid hunting the big bull moose as they are important to the overall health of the herd, through breeding and protection.



If you wish to hunt moose on our land, you are required to come see us and apply for a permit. The map below indicates which areas are closed to moose hunting and which areas are open through a permit hunt.

## **De-beh (Sheep)**

*Hunting Season: August 1 - September 30 (Rams Only)*

Sheep have been a fundamental part of our diet and our culture for time immemorial. Like other big game, we use most all parts of the sheep. We eat most of the meat and we make sleeping pads and blankets from sheep skins. The horns were used in the past to make important hunting and fishing tools, such as fishing gaffs and spear and arrow heads. Today the horns are used in our First Nation art economy.

Please do not roll sheep down the side of a hill or mountain. The elders say this is disrespectful and so we ask that you refrain from doing this and instead pack the meat down on your back.

Sheep hunting in our territory is only open via a permit hunt. If you wish to hunt sheep on our land, you are required to come see us and apply for a permit. The map below indicates which areas are closed to sheep hunting and which areas are open through a permit hunt.

## **Reporting your Harvest**

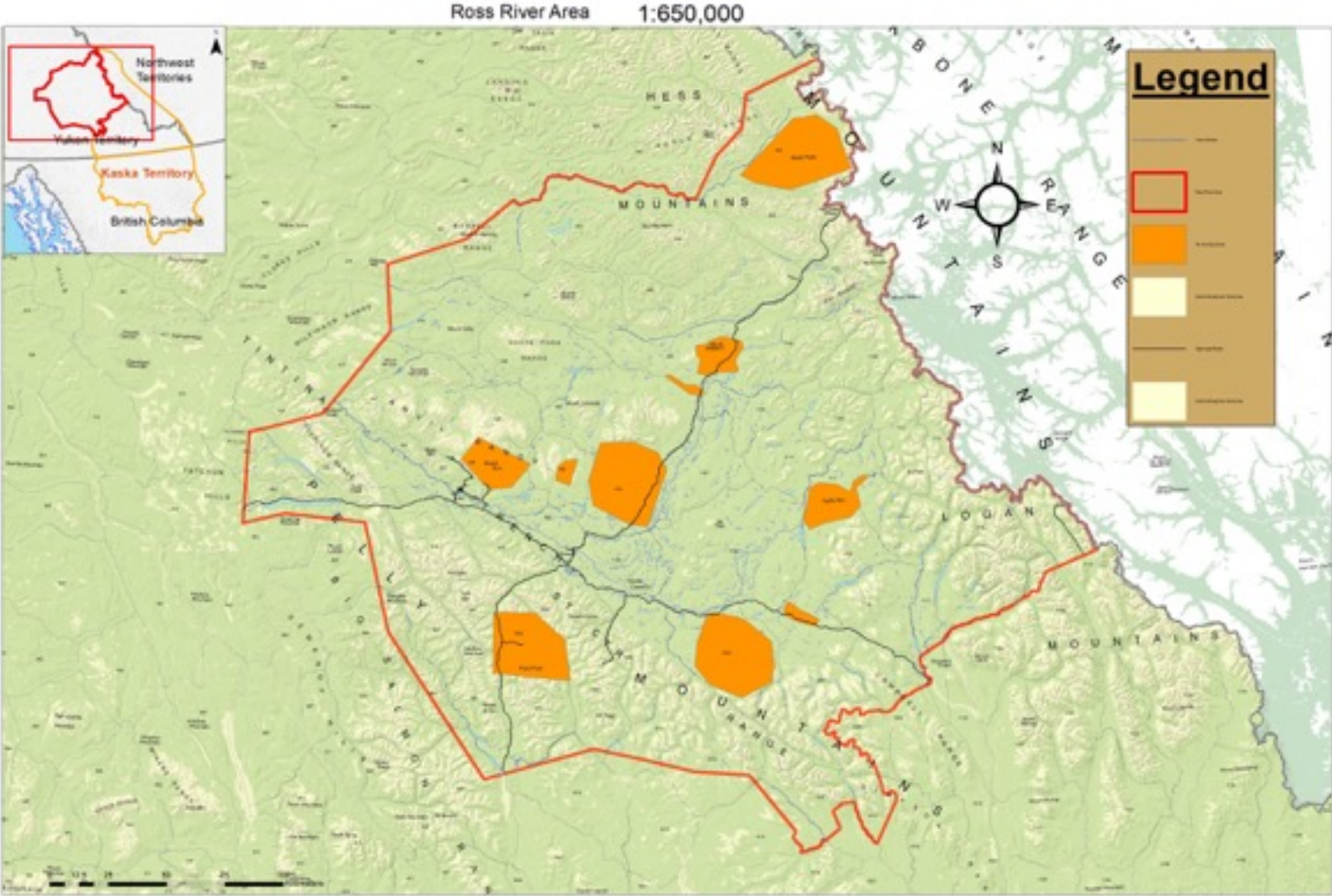
After a successful hunting or fishing trip in our territory, you are required to report your harvest to the Ross River Dena Land Stewardship Department. We ask that you return the attached Hunting Report Form to us, either through dropping it off at the Ross River Dena Council, or scanning and emailing the form to [rossriverdenalands@gmail.com](mailto:rossriverdenalands@gmail.com). If you have any further questions, feel free to contact the email above or call RRDC Councillor Derrick Redies at 867-. Souga Sénlá. Máhsi. Thank You.

## **Summary of Dena Laws:**

- 1) No Caribou or Moose Hunting after September 15
- 2) No Sheep Hunting after September 30
- 3) No Hunting in Areas Closed (see map below)
- 4) Do not shoot through a herd of animals
- 5) If you have a choice, please do not shoot the largest bulls, who are the breeding stock
- 6) No Hunting with Drones
- 7) No Hunting with Helicopters
- 8) No Hunting within 1 km a dwelling
- 9) Do not travel with a bullet in the chamber of your rifle
- 10) If being dropped off with a Plane, you must wait 48 hrs to hunt from the time you arrive
- 11) Take all the meat and bones from the kill site - what you don't want, drop off at the Margaret Thompson Centre in Ross River
- 12) Hang up the wind pipe in the trees or willows
- 13) Do not put your finger in the bullet hole of the kill
- 14) Do not roll sheep down the mountain
- 15) Cut off the head of the animal and face it away from the body while you butcher the animal
- 16) Flag off the kill site and if possible GPS it
- 17) Do not hang the entire body of the animal in one piece
- 18) Speak Respectfully of and to all the animals
- 19) No trucks/SUV's/ATV's off-road
- 20) Fill out and return the attached Hunting Report Form
- 21) If you will also be fishing on your trip, we remind you that catch-and-release fishing is against our Dena Laws and is not permitted anywhere on our territory



**AREAS THAT ARE CLOSED TO HUNTING**



## HUNTING REPORT FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Residence: \_\_\_\_\_

Where did you go hunting (general area)?: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate if you successfully hunted any of the following on our land:

Gūdzih (Caribou):	Yes	No
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Kedā (Moose):	Yes	No
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Debē (Sheep):	Yes	No
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If you hunted any of the above animals on our land, please describe below the general health of the animal:

If you have any further reports you would like to share with us, or questions for us, feel free to email us at [rossriverdenalands@gmail.com](mailto:rossriverdenalands@gmail.com). We thank you very much for respecting our land, our people, and our culture through acquiring this permit to hunt in our homeland.

Souga Sénlá!