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**MESSAGE:**

Here are the news stories I have seen on your project.

Joe

**FAXED**  
23/10/02

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## **Northern News Services – July 12, 2002**

### **Protecting a lifeline**

Norwegian says seismic company violating Dene law

Derek Neary

Fort Simpson (July 12/02) - Seismic activity isn't welcome on the Mackenzie River, and future drilling is out of the question, according to Herb Norwegian.

Norwegian, assistant negotiator for the Deh Cho First Nations, said the DCFN, through self-government negotiations, is striving to create a buffer to prevent development along the Deh Cho portion of the Mackenzie River.

"If anybody is out there siphoning this kind of (seismic) information, it's a violation of Dene law," he argued. "They should be taken to the Dene Hague or something. They don't have the damn right to do that."

Steve Whidden, an account manager for WesternGeco, said representatives from his company have met several times with Deh Cho leaders to explain their intentions. He described the meetings as "positive."

WesternGeco has already signed a broad memorandum of understanding with the Acho Dene Koe in Fort Liard.

The company hopes to sign similar agreements with other communities in the region, Whidden said. He added that First Nations would be granted access to the seismic data and the project would create two to six jobs for local people in each community, he added.

"We're not the type of company to come into an area, create some bad feelings and not going to be back the following year. We want to be back year after year after year," said Whidden. "Anytime you can move forward with an MOU, and even further with joint partnerships, it does create a feeling of trust."

Even though the proposed seismic activity wouldn't involve drilling, the data could generate interest among oil and gas companies, which may want to conduct exploratory drilling. The prospect makes Norwegian cringe.

"Our banks of the Deh Cho here are just rich with culture and heritage. We don't want (industry) driving any shafts in the river or tampering with the shorelines," he said. "The Deh Cho, the river itself ... that's the pulse, that's what keeps us all alive. If you go for the heart, we'll go for the jugular."

Deh Cho Drum – July ??, 2002

## **Running upstream**

Derek Neary

Seismic company WesternGeco had the foresight to anticipate regulatory delays for their two-dimensional seismic program on the Mackenzie and Liard Rivers. Therefore executives are not enraged or threatening to pull the plug on the project, contrary to the reaction of some companies in the past.

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the National Energy Board certainly don't deserve criticism for referring WesternGeco's proposal to environmental assessment. So long as the project is reviewed in a timely fashion, it's always better to be safe than sorry. As environmental assessment officer Joe Acorn said, there are different species of aquatic life in the Mackenzie and Liard Rivers than there are in other bodies of water. There's a good chance the proposed seismic method will prove harmless to fish and other mammals, but at this point it's just a chance. Once it is a proven fact, then the project will merit regulatory approval.

The real difficulty will apparently be soliciting political approval, at least in the Deh Cho. Herb Norwegian, assistant negotiator for the Deh Cho First Nations (DCFN), was unequivocal in expressing opposition to development on the rivers. There's too much at risk, he argued.

The DCFN already has an Interim Measures Agreement in place with the federal government, which offers some level of environmental protection. A buffer zone to safeguard the Deh Cho portion of the rivers is also in the works.

If WesternGeco is, as Steve Whidden suggested, a company that plans to come back year after year, it will have to reach an understanding with the Deh Cho First Nations. Otherwise, the company's plans may take on water.

### Menicoche-Moses VP

Lorayne Menicoche-Moses, of Fort Simpson, is the new vice-president of the Status of Women Council of the NWT. Gerri Sharpe-Staples, of Inuvik, was chosen as president. Other members of the executive elected last week are: Lynn Brooks and Natasha McCagg of Yellowknife, Fort Resolution's Dolly Lafferty and Betty Tsetso of Deline.

### Register all firearms

The Fort Liard RCMP are trying to organize a week at the end of October to assist community members with licensing and registering their firearms, which federal legislation requires by Jan. 1. Volunteers are needed, especially to help with translation for the elders.

Everyone who registers their firearms must first be licensed, but a submitted licence application doesn't automatically register a gun, Cpl. Craig Seafoot noted. The gun must be registered separately.

Licence applications are available through the Fort Liard detachment or via a toll free phone number. Registration can be done toll-free by phone or via the Internet.

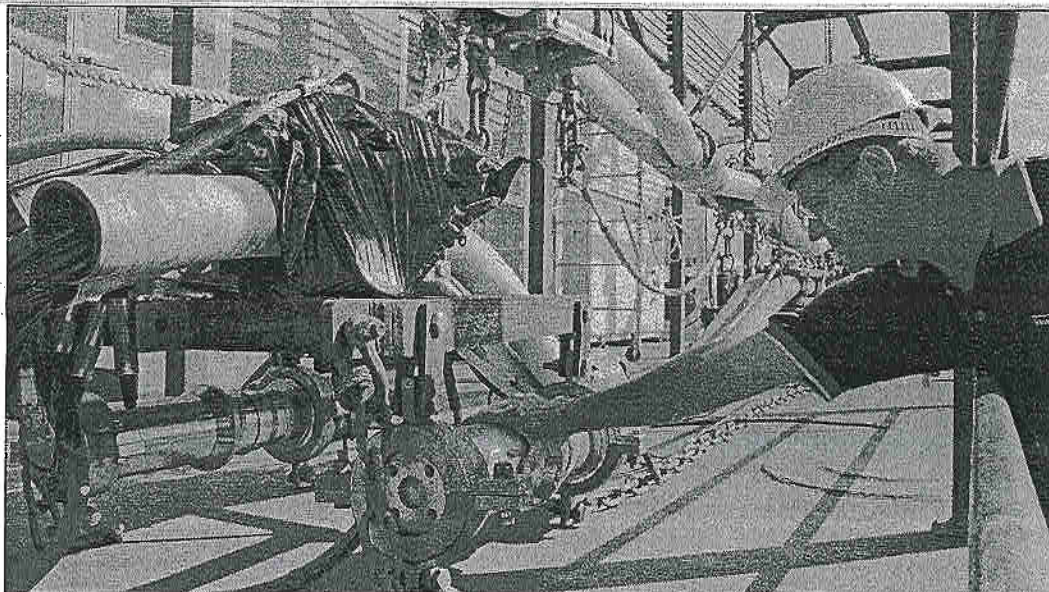
### Time to read

NWT Literacy Week will be marked around the Deh Cho from Sept. 29-Oct. 5. The Read for 15 challenge will be held on Oct. 1. The NWT Literacy Council encourages everyone to pick up a book, a newspaper or a magazine and read.

### 'Not bound by old deals'

Jim Antoine, Minister of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, says Canada is not bound by treaties, agreements and statutes from 25 years ago. Federal Minister of Natural Resources Herb Dhaliwal has told American lawmakers who support subsidies for an Alaskan natural gas that a pipeline will not pass through Canada without the support of the Canadian government. They have suggested Canada must abide by the 1977 agreements.

"We are by no means restrained from responding to an ill-advised measure proposed by the American Congress," Antoine said.



Paul Blodford/NWS photo

**WesternGeco is proposing** to conduct a \$20 million seismic project next summer over the length of the NWT's Liard and Mackenzie Rivers; approximately 1,800 kilometres. The technology, which underwent environmental assessment several weeks ago, involves releasing oscillating bubbles of compressed air that create recordable sound waves. The Liidlii Kue First Nation has indicated that it supports the seismic project, contrary to the Deh Cho First Nations' stance on the issue.

# Seismic dissension

*Liidlii Kue leaning toward Mackenzie program; DCFN negotiator critical*

by Derek Neary  
Northern News Services  
Liidlii Kue/Fort Simpson

The Liidlii Kue First Nation may sign in support of a seismic program on the Liard and Mackenzie rivers.

In a letter to seismic company WesternGeco in July, the LKFN stated that it plans to sign a memorandum of understanding pending the outcome of an environmental assessment. Chief Rita Cli said last week that seismic technology has vastly improved since the days when dynamite was used.

"There's seismic that's happened on other traditional lands and you wouldn't even know it happened. There's no devastation," Cli said, adding that band members would get jobs from the Mackenzie river seismic project.

Because seismic programs are often a precursor to exploratory drilling for oil and gas, Cli would not rule out the possibility of drilling on the rivers if the

LKFN is involved in the regulatory process and "as long as it meets all the guidelines."

Approval of band members would be a key and other affected First Nations would have to be in favour, she added.

The LKFN's letter to WesternGeco rebuked Deh Cho First Nations assistant negotiator Herb Norwegian, who had unequivocally condemned the proposed seismic program in a recent *Drum* article.

Cli, who was on leave when the letter was written, said Norwegian should not have spoken against the project publicly before consulting the Liidlii Kue First Nation.

"It might be his opinion and not ours," Cli said. "I guess there's a fine line you tow."

Norwegian said he had every confidence in his posture. "That has been a long-held position right from the chiefs and the harvesters time and time again," said Norwegian. "The whole (Deh Cho) declaration was actually based on protecting the waters

... it's a pillar of what we believe in. I'm not going to flex on that, of course not."

The Deh Cho First Nations have been trying to establish a buffer zone on the Mackenzie and Liard rivers through self-government negotiations. Cli said she would like the buffer zone to allow for development if it is approved by First Nations.

Norwegian argued that a buffer zone would have to be all-inclusive or it would essentially be rendered meaningless.

"You can't really say, 'We'll just do a little bit here and there' ... when you do open-heart surgery you don't do a little bit of an operation. You open it right up, and that's the way development has always been done," he said. "Maybe people need to take a trip up to Norman Wells and see these man-made islands. That's what we're dealing with."

A decision on the proposed river seismic program is expected from federal regulators later this year.

*Deh Cho Drum Sept 26/02*

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**Chief Rita Cli Gives Update On Development In Simpson Area  
CBC Special Report, October 2, 2002, 7:40 a.m.**

CBC: Rita Cli has been chief of the Liidlil Kue First Nation in Fort Simpson for five years. A lot has happened in the region over that span of time and Randy sat down with her to chat about some of the issues she's faced as chief.

HENDERSON: Chief Rita Cli, this is your second term in office now as chief. I am wondering what it's like being chief now compared to when you first became chief of the Liidlil Kue First Nation.

CLI: Well, to begin with, it was a challenge because I was the first female chief for this community. Because you are female, it's a fight all the way to prove to everybody that you can do the job. So in that essence, I am always fighting. The one thing that I found is that it's a challenge and if you are honest and you are not in it for personal gains, you can do things for your people.

HENDERSON: Now that you have had a few years under your belt is it any easier for you?

CLI: It has gotten easier whereas just about everyday, I get calls from my peers, not only in my region but outside my region running things by me to see what kind of advice I would give them, giving them direction. You know, having been involved in politics not only as chief, but previously as a councillor and sub-chief with Jim Antoine, I have gained quite a bit of experience and I am one that tends to do their homework, so if I don't have an answer, I will get back to that individual so I always get calls from people wanting feedback on some kind of issue.

HENDERSON: Now, Chief, what is the biggest challenge facing you as chief right now?

CLI: I guess the thing that I find, the challenge, like I talked at one of the meetings last week is reaching the youth. The challenge that we have is we have been saying we are doing things not for us to gain today but for the future generations. They have to start listening. What we, as leaders today, have is the challenge of facing the video games and the TVs and all these conveniences that are so available for our kids. That sort of supercedes your education. So in that way, you have a challenge everyday to try

to make them realize that education is so critical for them to move ahead. We want development to happen, but at the same time we have to ensure that our people are educated to venture into that avenue.

HENDERSON: You mentioned development. Are you satisfied that you can go ahead with development in your region but remain loyal to the Deh Cho process at the same time?

CLI: Yes. We know the Deh Cho process is in place and we know our interim measures are in place to protect us while we talk at the negotiating table, but you can still have development happen providing that you adhere to the Deh Cho process and it's got to be paralleled to whatever you do in development. If you know your Deh Cho process, your interim measures, and you do your homework, I can't see it going backwards. You have to go forwards. There are people that do read and write and know that if you follow all the stuff that's in place, I can't see it failing because the interim measures protects us as we do development.

HENDERSON: What is your position on the seismic testing proposal for the Mackenzie River?

CLI: Well, I wasn't around this summer when it took place, I was on leave. But from the feedback that I got, there was one of our hunters and trappers that was involved with what happened out there and his report...like he saw it first hand. There was no devastation that was done because our elders have always said the most important resource we have on our land is the water and for it never to be devastated. He went out there with some seismic group and the feedback we got is that there was nothing negative about it. He was there to oversee what is happening. As a hunter and a trapper, he didn't think there was anything bad about it.

HENDERSON: What do they do now to do seismic testing?

CLI: I think it has to do with air guns and that. The hunter that was out there with them was indicating that all the fish that they handled, only one was dead. Other than that, there was no devastation that was done. In the past, like I said in the paper, there used to be dynamite. Well, it's not like that anymore. Nothing can be done without First Nations consultation and participation. So industry knows they have to have First Nations people on site. So that's what is starting to happen and we see it happening. I can't see it failing. It will if we don't participate, but by us participating, I can't see it failing.

HENDERSON: Thank you very much.

CLI: Mahsi cho.

CBC: Rita Cli is the chief of the Liidlíi Kue First Nation.

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**Herb Norwegian Describes Land Protection In Nahanni National Park Reserve  
CBC Special Report, October 2, 2002, 7:50 a.m.**

CBC: Herb Norwegian is a former chief of the band. He's now the assistant chief negotiator for the Deh Cho First Nation and he joins us now.

HENDERSON: Good morning, Herb.

NORWEGIAN: Good morning.

HENDERSON: We just heard from Chief Rita Cli on the issue of seismic testing on the Mackenzie River. She says it's safe. What is your position?

NORWEGIAN: The position all along right from the beginning, especially back in '93 when the Deh Cho declaration was tasked in Kakisa, made it very clear that waters had to be protected as well as land. Then that whole discussion developed and then it went into the harvesters, the elders and they continued to take the position that the might Deh Cho had to be protected and for those reasons, land withdrawals, land had been identified on both sides of the entire Deh Cho, to have it withdrawn. Our position, the position of the chiefs, the position of the Deh Cho team and, of course, the whole position is based on protecting the entire watershed, or at least being in the corridor of the might Deh Cho.

HENDERSON: So is it the seismic testing itself that you are against or what it could lead to, which would be drilling underneath the river?

NORWEGIAN: I think the worst-case scenario is that in the event that something is detected, that they did find some resource like maybe oil and gas below the Mackenzie, what you would end up with in the future, right away, could be something equivalent to what's happened in Norman Wells. Islands could be built on the Mackenzie and all along the fear has always been the tampering of the might river. Because of that, remember about a year ago, the GNWT was talking about damming the rivers and there was a political outcry throughout the whole valley just people tampering with the river. That's no different from people just actually going out there and doing that type of work along the river. The



traditional harvesters and ourselves have done a lot of work and identified some very crucial areas along the rivers that need to be protected. So the position all along is to protect the rivers and to withdraw lands alongside the rivers.

HENDERSON: Now, Herb, on the issue of protecting the land, you've been at meetings this week with Parks Canada on extending the boundaries of the Nahanni National Park to protect the mining shed from mining development. What transpired from that meeting?

NORWEGIAN: Well, this has been an ongoing thing. We have been at this for almost two years. As a result, we started up negotiations and from that a side table was set up. A consensus team for the park was set up and from there, we then looked at a whole series of things. One of them was to take a look at the ecological integrity of the park which means will the park survive in about 30 to 50 years from now. The answer as no. In order for the park to survive, we need to take a look at the entire watershed to protect the entire watershed. So that's the direction we are headed. We had a negotiation session in Nahanni Butte last week and the people there had reiterated their support to continue to protect the water shed. So what will happen is that you will see a series of areas that will be withdrawn and it could very well mean that the whole park system, at least within the Nahanni, will be fast-tracked. Because of the prime minister's statement in Johannesburg on parks, the throne speech, there's a whole series of things that sort of reinforced the need to move a lot faster on the things that are taking place within parks. For us, the crucial question is the treaty and aboriginal rights. What we want to do is take something totally different from what presently exists in Wood Buffalo and other parks...

HENDERSON: Just so I am clear on it, you want to extend the boundaries of the park, but at the same time maintain your hunting, fishing and traditional rights.

NORWEGIAN: That's right. That's the main pillar for this discussion.

HENDERSON: Parks Canada doesn't have a problem with that?

NORWEGIAN: No. Parks Canada is onside. As a matter of fact, they are searching and looking at ways of how to get around that whole problem. So that's where we are at right now. If things go well, we could start making some major moves here within the next few years at least, maybe even by December as we speak.

HENDERSON: Really? So if all comes the way you would like to see it come out, when do you think we would see bigger boundaries around Nahanni National Park?

NORWEGIAN: Well, the first step is to actually look at agreements between ourselves and Parks Canada. The boundaries itself, well we will have to have a good session into actually look at these



boundaries because there are a couple of mines and we also have big game outfitters that are right within the Nahanni watershed, so there will have to be some discussion as to what we should do with these mines. Do we expropriate them or do we just donut them or how do we go around dealing with these things? There are some really sensitive areas within the watershed that needs some protection right away. In the event that development, the way it's been creeping up on us, we could very well see a whole series of mines around the park, then what? Right now, we only have two, so this is a good time to do business.

HENDERSON: Alright. Well with that, thanks very much for coming in and joining us this morning.

NORWEGIAN: Mahsi.

CBC: Herb Norwegian is the assistant chief negotiator of the Deh Cho First Nations.