



DEHCHO FIRST NATIONS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JIM ANTOINE, FORMER NWT PREMIER, JOINS DEHCHO NEGOTIATING TEAM

FORT SIMPSON, NT – March 31 -- The Dehcho First Nations has announced the appointment of a well-known and widely experienced leader to the Dehcho Process negotiating team.

Jim Antoine of Fort Simpson, former premier, long-time cabinet minister and former chief of the Liidlii Koe First Nation here, joined the DFN team at last week's negotiating session in Yellowknife (March 25-27) with Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT). The appointment was announced by the Dehcho Process chief negotiator, Georges Erasmus.

Antoine will have special responsibilities for Treaties 8 and 11, communications with the 10 Dehcho communities, internal and external overlap issues between communities and with other First Nations in the NWT, and implementation strategies. He will be responsible to, and take direction from, the chief negotiator and advise the legal team.

Antoine said in an interview after his first negotiating session that he was accepting the position because of "a deep commitment to my people and a desire to work for all Dene descendants of the Dehcho.

"I think I bring a lot of experience, integrity and knowledge of the Dehcho and the political process."

Antoine, who was born at Rabbitskin River in the Dehcho, has a long history of public service. He first elected chief of Liidlii Koe in 1974, again in 1979 and, after attending the University of Lethbridge, served a term from 1989-91, resigning when he was first elected a Member of the NWT Legislative Assembly for Nahendeh in 1991. He held the seat until leaving politics in late 2003.

In addition to serving as premier in 1998 and 1999, he held a number of cabinet portfolios including aboriginal affairs, public works, safety and public service, justice, and resources, wildlife and economic development.

Since leaving government in 2004 he has headed Jim Antoine Consultants based in Fort Simpson where he has lived most of his life.

The next formal negotiating session is scheduled for Ottawa, April 22-24.

For further information please contact the Dehcho First Nations.