

Newsletter

FALL 2024 - VOL.2



Announcement

The proposal we submitted in early May was Approved!

Our Letter of Approval States:

A contribution in the amount of

\$1,821,425 will be awarded to help your organization carry out its activities, under the Indigenous Languages and Cultures Program, Indigenous Languages Component.

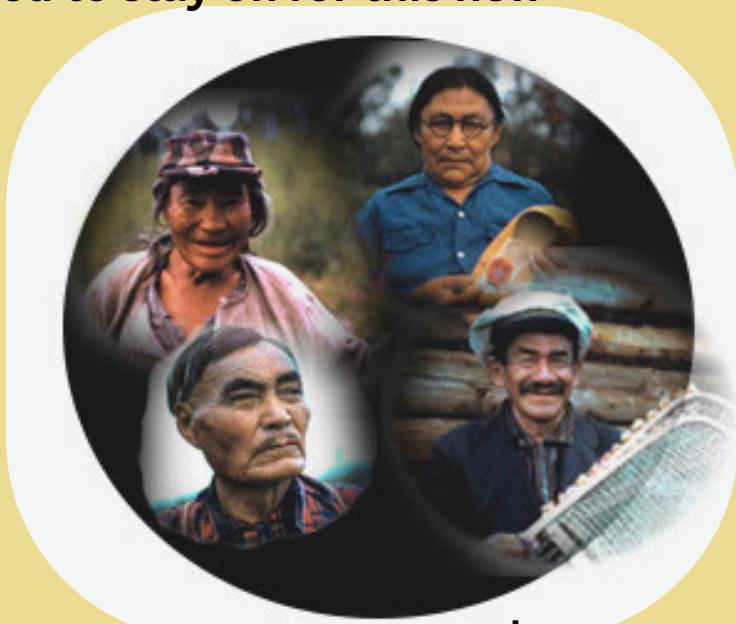
This funding will be allocated over five (5) government fiscal years 2024-2029 and will be subject to certain terms and conditions, the appropriation of funds by Parliament, and the budget levels of the Program.

WE ARE APPROVED!



What is in our NEW language funding agreement:

- \$1,821,425 Over 5 years - divided evenly
- \$364,285 Annually for all expenditures(see below):
 - \$195,000 Annual professional Fees - this includes all staff, all honorarium to speakers/learners & all contractors
 - \$75,000 Events, Venues, Catering Annually
 - \$39,642 Travel, Accommodations & Per diems
 - \$54,643 WRFN administration Fee = 15% of annual budget
- Our staff have agreed to stay on for this new agreement
- We have to produce 1 new language learning material annually for each language group
- We have a goal of fluency, that will be our focus, how to build fluency
- This is a flex agreement, a new component to the agreement, meaning we do not have to go crazy spending the funds annually. We can plan for 5 years



Your Language Needs you to survive.. it will take your personal time & practice everyday!

Project Goals

1. Increase the number of speakers of Northern Tutchone - Snag Dialect and Upper Tanana - Scottie Creek Dialect, of all ages wherever WRFN members reside.
2. Document and preserve Northern Tutchone and Upper Tanana language.
3. Increase the use of Northern Tutchone - Snag Dialect and Upper Tanana - Scottie Creek Dialect in WRFN meetings.
4. Increase the visibility of Northern Tutchone - Snag Dialect and Upper Tanana - Scottie Creek Dialect through signage, labeling of objects and place names.
5. Locate and make available existing language resources.
6. Support the involvement of Elders as resources, teachers and mentors.
7. Support the development of Northern Tutchone - Snag Dialect and Upper Tanana - Scottie Creek Dialect teachers.
8. Provide opportunities to hear and speak Northern Tutchone - Snag Dialect and Upper Tanana - Scottie Creek Dialect language on a daily basis.
9. Track and show evidence of language development and milestones throughout the project.
10. Build capacity to continue to support language programming in the future.

This Section is from the White River Language Strategic Plan

**IT'S UP TO ALL OF US TO REVITALIZE OUR LANGUAGES...
WE MUST WORK TOGETHER TO LEARN, SHARE & GROW**





photo credit - Yukon First Nation Cultural Tourism Website

Some Projects that need your help

- **Dance Group formation** - there is a dream to start drumming and learning our songs - we need a facilitator for this. If you are interested you are welcomed to contact us & there are options for zoom lessons with the people. I am hopefully we can find interested people who want to share their cultural knowledge and honorariums can be provided
- **Traditional Laws and Protocols book** needs someone to take this on as a project.. hopefully we can get a book developed on this soon.

Our Team Consists of
Fluent Speakers, Language Learners ,
Steering Committee, Contractors for project learning material
development & Linguists.

We look forward to further engagement with all of you
It takes all of us to revitalize a language.

To contact us please email:
whiteriverlanguage@gmail.com

Join our Facebook Group for updates and class links

STAFF AGREED TO STAY ON WITH OUR LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION PROJECT

Deb Enoch - Language Coordinator

Deb's ancestry is Northern Tutchone and Upper Tanana and is a member of White River First Nation. Her maternal grandfather, Joe Tom Tom, originates from Hutchi and maternal grandmother Sarah Tom Tom (nee Jack) originates from Alaska. Her paternal grandfather, Solomon Charlie, originates from Champaigne/Aishihik and paternal grandmother Jessie originates from Carmacks. Deb grew up in Snag with her adopted parents Jimmy and Lena Enoch, then moved to Burwash Landing to attend elementary school. Deb lives in Whitehorse with her son, daughter and partner.

Deb worked at NorthwesTel from September 1984 until she retired in December 2020. Since retiring Deb participated in the Aboriginal Business Entrepreneurship Skill Training on Zoom and started her own business, iBead with Deb E.

Deb's language journey began in 2021 when she took Northern Tutchone level 1. She has since completed NT level 2, Phonetics and Grammar. She's also a board member of White River Development Corp, on the steering committee for White River Language Revitalization and on the White River Constitution committee. She currently accepted the position of Northern Tutchone Language Coordinator at White River First Nation. In her spare time. Deb likes to bead, travel, play softball in the summer and curling in the winter.



Jolenda Benjamin(Johnny) - Language Coordinator

Jolenda's ancestry is Ahtna and Upper Tanana and is a member of White River First Nation her Maternal Grandmother is Glenda Ewan (Neeley) and her Maternal Grandfather is Roy S Ewan. Her paternal Grandmother is Sicily or Cecelia and her paternal grandfather is White River Johnny or little John.

Jolenda started her language learning Journey in 2014 and started to learn to read, write and speak the language and now teaches at Nelnah Bessie John School, she also is the Upper Tanana programs coordinator for White river First Nation where she helps to revitalize Upper Tanana Language.



Brenda Asp - Project Lead

Ts'éki yehlaan īhtī - I am Raven Family (Clan) and a WRFN member. My Maternal Grandma is Agnes Nieman (Jack) and my Maternal Grandpa is Paul Nieman Sr. My mom is Liz Asp (Nieman) and my dad is Roland Asp. I am Northern Tutchone from the Snag area of the Yukon and Tahltan from Northern BC with ancestral lineage to the Upper Tanana, Atna as well as Tlingit from the coasts of Alaska. My Paternal Grandmother is Thelma Norby (Edzerza) and Phillip Asp. My step Grandfather is Vern Norby.

I am the mother of 3 beautiful boys. This is my most important job in this world, to be their mother. I have formal education in Fashion Design, Environmental Monitoring, Business Administration and Family Support Work. I have worked with both Yukon First Nation Governments and Federal Governments within diverse levels and capacities. Observing negotiations and working with Chiefs on varying lobbying efforts. I have always been interested in law, and spent many years working at the Federal Crown Prosecutors Department. I've worked within community wellness, family support, proposal writing, project monitoring / reporting / management as well as event coordination, logistics planning and minute taking within varying levels of governments.

I enjoy learning in general, including my languages, creating fashion & regalia, various forms of art and beading and elements of our ways to be well spiritually, mentally, emotionally, physically, this helps me to connect to my culture, our history, genealogy & learning about my ancestors.



Where have we been?

As most of you know our funding ended March 31st, 2024. This agreement funded our last 3 years. Ended in perfect timing, as we were all very burnt out and tired from the endless amount of hours we were working to create and have inclusive learning programs & events on-going over 3 years. We all needed a long overdue rest and time with our families. Thank you for your patience & understanding as we all have children and other responsibilities that needed our time as well.

Wellness within is important!

COMING SOON



- The book is near completion. This work continued on over the Summer months since last March. It has taken longer than anticipated as some additions needed to be vetted, some formatting needed to take place. Now we need a couple people from each language group to review this book from front to back and read all the content.
- Medicine book with languages from the June 2023 gathering is near completion.
- The video Series & documentary are on their last stages of editing - soon we will mail out all these videos as learning aids for your language journey - there are A LOT of videos here so it is definitely taking some time to get these ready for you.
- Paul Creek Curriculum is being developed still & Fluent Speakers will be needed very soon as we have lost time with them while waiting for the approval of the proposal.
- Dictionary & pocket book learning material development will start up again.
- Immersion Camp - Tentative Dates soon, held in Whitehorse - this will be a recording session as well as an immersion camp. We will look at the topics from the past. If you are interested in attend please contact us. All contacts remain the same as in the past. There will be some changes - If you are not a fluent speaker, we will be doing recordings with fluent speakers & therefore if you want to attend you will also be asked to help us as support staff in exchange for your travel etc. We have a lot of work here and all hands on deck is our solution to minimizing the burnout we were facing. Thank you for helping us all be successful.
- Bingo.. saved the best for last - bingo will be starting up again very soon, working on a review video to study with & then have a few review bingos before the new words start for a new bingo sheet etc. Kits will be available for the new one.

You should still have your old bingo sheets, we will use these to start with for the review sessions.
If you need a sheet let Deb know please.



MAKE SURE WE HAVE YOUR MAILING ADDRESS FOR KITS

Our VISION

It is through our language that we preserve, understand and share our unique worldview and identity as the Northern Tutchone and Upper Tanana people of White River First Nation.

Our language...

- ~ Is the foundation of who we are. It is our identity;
- ~ Lives in our names and our place names;
- ~ Connects us to our ancestors, our ancestral history and our ancestral lands;
- ~ Is an open window into our worldview;
- ~ Is the legacy our grandparents have left us;
- ~ Connects us to our elders and how they lived;
- ~ Was taken away from us but we are bringing it back and this will be our healing;
- ~ Makes me feel good to learn;
- ~ Connects us to our future

This Section is from the 2018 White River Language Strategic Plan



According to Google:

Depending on the language you want to learn, becoming fluent can take 400 to 2,200 hours of studying plus real-world practice. One of the easier language programs (i.e., Spanish) can take about 400 hours and requires 100 days of studying for four hours daily.

How
many
hours did
you study
your
language
this
week>