

Factsheet #9

Délıne Got'ıne ʔeʔadó (Constitution)

In addition to the rules set out in the Final Self-Government Agreement (FSGA), the Délıne Got'ıne Government (DGG) will have its own Constitution. The Constitution describes principles that the Délıne Got'ıne Government.

To take effect, the Constitution must be approved by the members of the Délıne First Nation Band and the Délıne Land Corporation. It does not need to be approved by Canada or the GNWT.

The Constitution describes:

- *Principles of government*
- *Délıne Got'ıne laws*
- *The structure of the DGG*
- *Who is a Citizen*
- *Official languages*
- *The accountability of the DGG*
- *How the Constitution and FSGA can be amended.*

Pronunciation guide

Délıne [Day-le-nay]

Got'ıne [Go-t'ee-(click sound)-nay]

ʔekw'ahtıdı [E-kw'ah-ti-day]

K'owədó Kə [C'ow-way-doe Kay]

ʔqhdá K'áowə Kə [Own(h)-da C'ow-way Kay]

K'ə Dats'eredı Kə [Kay Da-ts-ay-ray-dee Kay]

Łénats'ehdı Dzené [(Sı-eh)-na-ts'ay-day Dzeh-neh]

ʔeʔadó [Ay-ah-doe]

Here are some highlights of the current draft constitution.

Preamble of the Constitution

The beginning of the Constitution describes principles that guide the rest of the document.

- *We are the Sahtuto'ıne, the descendants of Eht'se Aya.*
- *We honour Great Bear Lake.*
- *We live in harmony with the lands, waters and animals.*
- *We respect the wisdom of the Prophet, our ancestors and our elders.*
- *We respect our traditional knowledge.*
- *We respect our language.*
- *We have negotiated to establish a unified government at the community level.*

Principles of government

Déljné will be governed as one people by the Déljné Got'jné Government.

The Government will:

- *Respect the Sahtu Land Claim Agreement*
- *Observe openness and transparency*
- *Respect our traditions and culture*
- *Collaborate with other Aboriginal people, our neighbours, non-Aboriginal residents and other governments*

As a government, the DGG must:

- *Act with respect, fairness and without discrimination*
- *Consult with all Déljné Citizens on important decisions*
- *Encourage free expression and participation of all Déljné Citizens*
- *Act to protect lands, waters and resources and all living things*

Déljné Got'jné laws

The FSGA describes powers and responsibilities of the DGG. The FSGA will be protected as a Treaty and will give the DGG the authority to pass certain laws. All DGG laws must fit with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The DGG laws must follow the FSGA.

The structure of the Déljné Got'jné Government

The Déljné Got'jné Government will include:

- *The ʔekw'ahtjé (Chief)*
- *The Déljné K'áowé Kə (Council)*
 - *Déljné ʔqhda K'áowə Kə (Elders Council)*
 - *Déljné K'ə Dats'eredi Kə (Justice Council)*
 - *Beneficiaries Board (Land Claim Board)*
 - *Déljné Łénats'ehdé Dzené (Community Gathering)*

ʔekw'ahtjé (Chief)

The ʔekw'ahtjé will serve a 4-year term and will be chosen by Déljné First Nation Citizens. The ʔekw'ahtjé must be a Déljné First Nation Citizen and a resident of Déljné. There will also be a minimum age limit.

Déljñę K'áowədó Kə (Council)

The K'áowədó Kə will be made up of 8-12 members, who will each serve a 4-year term. It will be made up of the ʔekw'ahtjé, an Elders representative and members at large.

The K'áowədó Kə runs the Government and passes laws.

Déljñę ʔq̄hda K'áowə Kə (Elders Council)

The ʔq̄hda K'áowə Kə will be made up of all Déljñę Elders. It gives advice to Council and appoints a representative to Council.

Déljñę K'ə Dats'eredi Kə (Justice Council)

K'ə Dats'eredi Kə will be made up of 3-5 members, who each serve a 4-year term.

It will be an independent body that will handle dispute resolution, violations of DGG law and appeals from DGG decisions.

Beneficiaries Board

The Beneficiaries Board will be made up of 3-5 members, who each serve a 4-year term. It will be elected by resident and non-resident land claim beneficiaries.

The Beneficiaries Board manages land claim monies and lands, and gives direction to Council on land claim matters.

Déljñę Łénats'ehdė Dzené (Community Gathering)

The Łénats'ehdė Dzené will meet at least once a year. It will be made up of all Déljñę First Nation Citizens and all residents of the Déljñę District. It will receive reports from the DGG, including reports on land claim matters.

Déljñę First Nation Citizens

All members of the Déljñę First Nation (DFN) Band and all members of the Déljñę Land Corporation will be Déljñę First Nation Citizens. A person who is a Citizen under another self-government agreement is not eligible to be a DFN Citizen.

Duties of Citizens

All DFN Citizens have a duty to:

- *Work together, to seek consensus and harmony*
- *Help each other and respect one another*

- *Help the community*
- *Respect our elders and leaders, and support the youth*
- *Live in harmony and protect the land, the environment, the waters, the animals and plant life*

Official languages

The official languages of the DGG will be North Slavey and English. All persons may communicate with the DGG in either language.

Accountability

The DGG is accountable to Déljné First Nation Citizens and to residents of the Déljné District.

The DGG must give annual reports to the Déljné Łénats'ehdǎ Dzené (Community Gathering) about its work and the administration of the land claim.

Amendments

Amendment of Déljné Got'jné ʔeʔadó (Constitution)

Any amendments to the Constitution will be done by secret ballot. For an amendment to pass, it must have the support of at least 60% of the people who vote, and at least 25% of Déljné First Nation Citizens have to vote.

Amendment of FSGA

Amendments to the Final Self-Government Agreement (FSGA) will be done by secret ballot. For an amendment to pass, it must have the support of at least 60% of the people who vote, and at least 25% of Déljné First Nation Citizens have to vote.

Minor amendments to the FSGA can be approved by Déljné K'owədó Kə (Council) provided the amendment has been discussed with the Déljné Łénats'ehdǎ Dzené (Community Gathering).