

Gwich'in Council  
International



# About Gwich'in Council International

- Established in 1999 as a not-for profit organization to ensure all Gwich'in members of the GCI are represented at the Arctic Council Forum
- GCI's mandate provides a means for the Gwich'in to protect, perpetuate, strengthen and enrich the social, cultural (language & traditions) political and economic fabric of Gwich'in communities

- The Gwich'in Council International founding members represent approximately 9000 Indigenous People of Gwich'in descent.
- The GCI permanent office is located in Inuvik in the Alex Moses Greenland Building.
- The Executive Director, Bridget Larocque can be reached by phone at 867-777-3782, by fax 867-777-3783 or via email [blarocque\\_gci@northwestel.net](mailto:blarocque_gci@northwestel.net)
- The GCI webpage is [www.gwichin.org](http://www.gwichin.org)

# *GCI Members*

The Gwich'in of the United States of America and Canada acting through the Council of Athabascan Tribal Governments (CATG) in Alaska, The Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation (VGFN) in the Yukon, and the Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC) in the Northwest Territories.

GCI receives its mandate from Leadership decisions at the Biennial Gwich'in Gathering and from the Annual Assemblies of the Gwich'in Tribal Council, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and Tanana Chiefs Council.

# GCI Communities

- Alaska
  - Arctic Village (Vashraii K'oo)
    - Neets'aii Gwich'in (residents of the north side)
    - Nomadic lives before 1950
    - Traditional Gwich'in community maintaining a subsistence lifestyle
  - Chalkyitsik (fish hooking place)
    - Draan'jik Gwich'in (black river Indians)
    - Seasonal fishing site for Gwich'in
    - Traditional Gwich'in community with a subsistence lifestyle
  - Fort Yukon (Gwichyaa Zhee)
    - Gwich'yaa Gwich'in (people of the flats)
    - Traditional Gwich'in community maintaining a subsistence lifestyle



# GCI Members Continued

- Alaska continued
  - Birch Creek (Deenduu)
    - Dendu Gwich'in (foothill mountain people)
    - Traditional Gwich'in community maintaining a subsistence lifestyle
  - Circle (Dan Zhit Haainlaii)
    - Danzhit Hanlaih Gwich'in (water flowing out of the mountains)
    - Traditional Gwich'in community with a subsistence lifestyle
  - Venetie (Viihtaii)
    - Gwichyaa Gwich'in (people of the flats)
    - Home to the descendants from the Neets'aii and Dihaii Gwich'in



# GCI Communities Continued

- Vuntut Gwich'in First Nation, Yukon
  - Old Crow, Yukon
    - Vuntut Gwitchin (people of the lakes)
- Gwich'in Tribal Council represents all participants enrolled in the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement and its four communities within the Gwich'in Settlement Area:
  - Fort McPherson
    - Teetl'it Gwich'in (people of the headwaters)
  - Aklavik
    - Edhiitat Gwich'in (delta people)
  - Inuvik
    - Nihtat Gwich'in (mixed nations)
  - Tsiigehtchic
    - Gwichya Gwich'in (people of the flats)



# *GCI Funding*

- GCI is a permanent participant of the Arctic Council and receives its funding from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT)
- These funds allow for management of a Secretariat and travel for GCI members to the Arctic Council and its affiliated working group meetings
- The US State Department in Alaska provides funding through the Indigenous Peoples Secretariat to support Gwich'in who are US citizens to participate in the Arctic Council meetings
- Supplemental funds are provide by the Gwich'in Tribal Council and Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation



# Arctic Council

- The Mandate of the Arctic Council is to undertake a broad programme to include all dimensions of sustainable development and its objective is to address the environment, social and economic concerns
- The Arctic Council is made up of 8 member states; Canada, Denmark (including Greenland and the Faroe Islands), Finland, Iceland, Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden and the United States
- The Arctic Council through its Permanent Participants provides for the active participation and full consultation with the arctic indigenous peoples:
  - Gwich'in Council International (GCI)
  - Arctic Athabaskan Council (AAC)
  - Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC)
  - Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON)
  - Aleut International Association (AIA)
  - Saami Council (SC)

# Working Groups

- Sustainable Development working group (SDWG)
- Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Program (AMAP)
- Protection of Arctic Marine Environment working group (PAME)
- Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF)
- Emergency Prevention Preparedness and Response working group (EPPR)
- Arctic Contaminants Action Program (ACAP)

## Special Interest Assessments:

- The Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA)
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

# GCI Priorities

**Strategic Plan**-Identify ways to alleviate weaknesses; share strengths; maintain unity within the Gwich'in Nation; build upon and strengthen partnerships; broaden networks

**Capacity Building**-Develop with ACAC a youth delegation work plan; young leaders participate at Arctic Council symposiums; young leaders participate at in the work of GCI at all levels

**Climate Change**-commit capacity to the ACRC project; participate in the local regional climate change initiative; participate in the Arctic Oceans Conference; disseminate information throughout the Gwich'in Nation