

Arctic Economic Security Corridor
Corridor Consensus Summary – Public Release
Tłıchǫ Government and Yellowknives Dene First Nation

Executive Summary

This summary report presents the consensus corridor for the Arctic Economic Security Corridor jointly decided upon by the Tłıchǫ Government (TG) and the Yellowknives Dene First Nation (YKDFN). The consensus reflects a shared commitment to the vision and objectives established in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Nations and the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), and continues the Nations' commitment to an Indigenous-led approach to corridor development that is mutually beneficial for all partners, meeting and balancing all the priorities to the greatest extent possible.

Achieving a consensus between the Nations was not without its challenges. However, both Nations are aligned in their seriousness, commitment, and desire to advance the project and realize the significant long-term economic opportunities it presents for the Nations, the North and Canada. Both Nations have expressed their willingness to host the corridor to support sustainable economic development and prosperity for future generations in a way that is viable from the perspective of caribou protection and compatibility with Indigenous rights.

The consensus corridor is approximately 30 km wide across three distinct regions between the NWT highway system and the Nunavut border:

- Northern region: west of Point Lake towards Izok
- Middle region: between Colomac and west of Wekweètì
- Southern region: starting between Boundary Creek and west of Yellowknife, entering onto Tłıchǫ Lands near Germaine Lake

Each region has unique environmental, cultural, technical, and economic considerations. A 30 km corridor, at this stage, offers options for routing based on location (i.e., access to materials, water ways, and more). More detailed engineering, environmental, and regulatory studies will be required to determine a precise route within the consensus corridor.

The consensus corridor was informed by a robust body of technical analysis, Traditional Knowledge, community input, and economic assessment. Key inputs included caribou movement, geological, socioeconomic, environmental, mineral potential, and cost studies, alongside extensive Traditional Knowledge and community engagement conducted by both Nations.

This decision demonstrates a strong Indigenous-led process, consistent with the MOU and supported by Canada, and establishes a shared foundation for continued partnership with the GNWT. The report summarizes the rationale for the selected corridor and highlights the shared priorities that guided its selection.

Overview of Consensus Corridor Priority Alignments

Caribou: Caribou protection was a core priority in corridor selection, alongside economic development. The consensus corridor reflects both Traditional Knowledge and scientific analysis, avoiding the most sensitive caribou habitat and key migration routes. By remaining west of Wekweètì and west of Point Lake, the corridor avoids important migratory and seasonal movement areas. This represents a significant improvement from previous corridor options, which crossed highly sensitive caribou habitat and were not considered viable. The corridor selected demonstrates a deliberate effort to protect caribou populations and preserve Indigenous rights while advancing long-term economic opportunities. This balance, and holding these two top priorities side by side, is critical to project success. Further mitigations will also be developed through project design and operations, including monitoring programs, wildlife-sensitive road design, traffic management measures, temporary traffic stoppages, and seasonal road closures during caribou migration periods. Based on the consensus corridor, we are confident these mitigations will achieve sufficient protection and will be feasible to implement and be accepted by the permitting regulator.

Economy: Among all viable corridors (i.e. ones that avoid critical caribou habitat), the consensus corridor offers the strongest economic potential. It has the highest mineral prospectivity of any feasible option, making it particularly attractive to both Canada and the GNWT, and our shared economic future. In the southern portion of the corridor, the mean mineral potential score within 30 km is 127.5, reflecting exceptional opportunities for future resource development. The corridor enables direct or nearby access to major projects and deposits, including Discovery, Colomac, Izok, and other critical mineral prospects. This routing will provide access to Discovery and other small-scale gold projects along the Yellowknife Greenstone Belt. By unlocking gold and critical mineral exploration and development, the corridor can generate substantial long-term employment, attract investment, support operations and maintenance activity, and drive significant income for governments from royalties and taxes. The corridor will contribute towards GDP growth through both the transportation corridor itself and the resource projects it enables—directly advancing the core economic objectives of the project. The corridor will also facilitate opportunities for improved ice road access to other projects and high mineral potential areas in the surrounding area.

Communities: The consensus corridor offers transformative opportunities to connect Wekweètì through a reasonably short spur road, creating lasting social, economic, and strategic benefits for the region. Community connectivity for Gamètì remains a priority, and the parties are committed to exploring options with GNWT and Canada. In addition to strengthening connections to Dettah, Ndilo, Behchokò and Yellowknife, the corridor would support critical infrastructure and service hubs in Wekweètì, improving emergency response capacity, public safety, healthcare access, search and rescue operations, and military readiness. Permanent road connectivity is essential to the long-term prosperity of communities. It reduces the cost of travel, improves year-round access to goods and services, enhances safety and mobility, mitigates the impacts of declining winter road seasons, and unlocks new opportunities for economic growth, workforce participation, project development, and national defence. Connectivity also improves road operations and maintenance and reduces overall costs, and importantly safety and logistics for exploration and mining ventures.

Cost: The chosen corridor is a highly cost-competitive option that leverages existing infrastructure, services, and workforce capacity in Yellowknife, Ndilo, Dettah, Behchokò, Wekweètì, Gamètì and Whatì, while a western connection near Point Lake shortens the distance to Grays Bay and could reduce overall project costs. Crossing public, Tłıchǫ, and Akaitcho Interim Measures Agreement area lands, the corridor maximizes opportunities for Indigenous and northern benefits through royalties, business development, employment, and future resource and infrastructure investments. It also supports the growth of Indigenous-owned infrastructure and enterprises beyond municipal boundaries, creating long-term economic opportunities across the region. The starting point between Boundary Creek and west of Yellowknife offers construction and logistical advantages by avoiding major bedrock challenges and large water crossings, while providing access to abundant granular resources along the route and near Colomac. Together, these factors reduce construction and logistical complexity, regulatory risk, and per-kilometre costs. Although not the shortest alignment, the Highway 3 starting point delivers strong value and aligns closely with priorities of all partners for economic growth, community connectivity, and Indigenous participation.

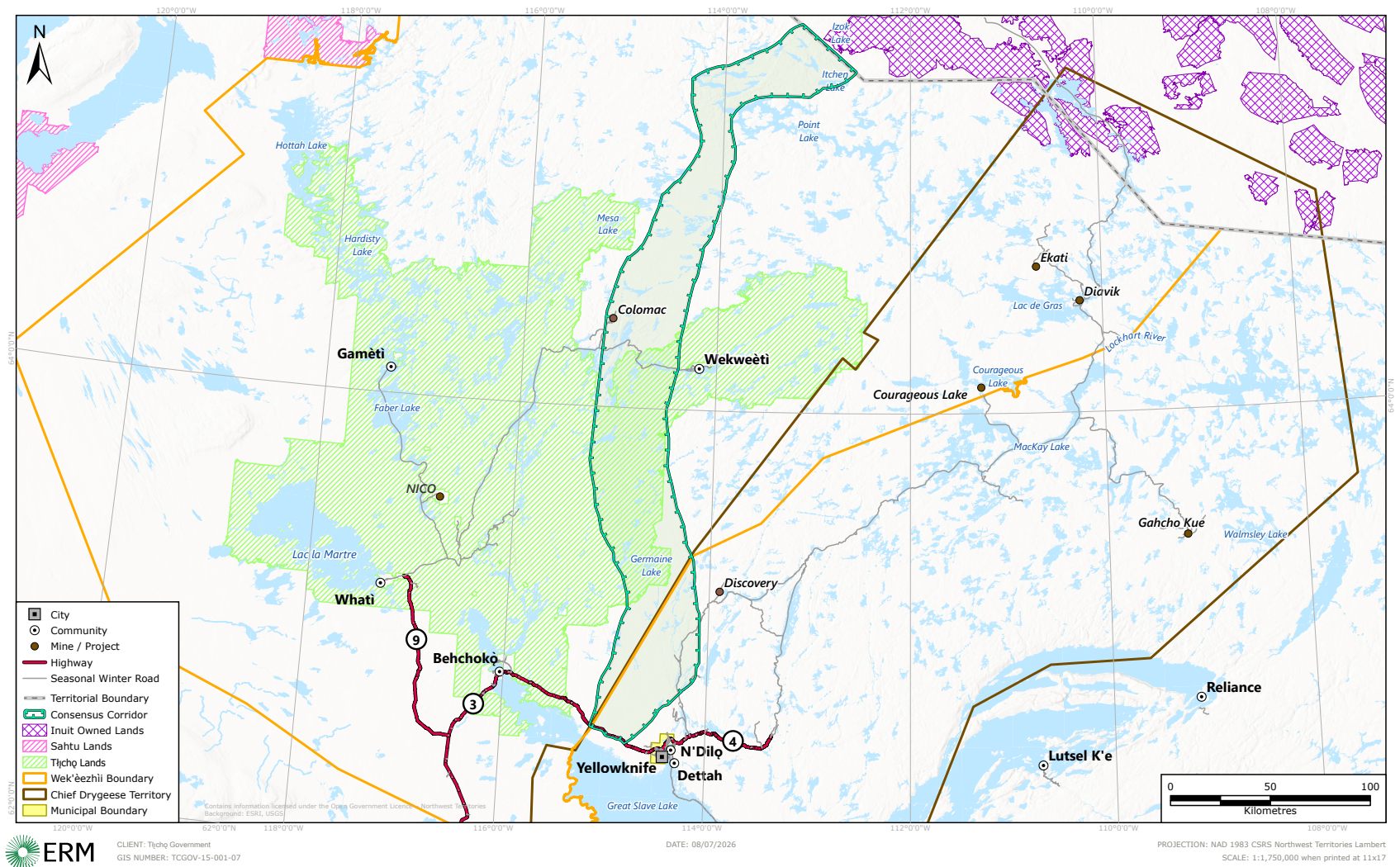
Indigenous-led: The corridor was selected through a consensus-based process between the TG and YKDFN, consistent with the Indigenous-led vision established in the MOU. Engagement with other impacted Indigenous Nations across the NWT is ongoing. The selected corridor balances and supports the major priorities—including economic development, caribou protection, Indigenous rights, economic development, and project viability—while maximizing benefits for Indigenous Nations, governments, industry, and northern residents. By jointly agreeing to a corridor originating west of Yellowknife that meets all major priorities, YKDFN and TG have established a clear and supported path forward for this transformative economic project, reflecting our shared vision and commitment.

August 13, 2026



Consensus Corridor by Tłı̨chǫ Government and Yellowknives Dene First Nation

TL̨CHQ GOVERNMENT AND YELLOWKNIVES DENE FIRST NATION CONSENSUS CORRIDOR



Appendix: Detail on the Consensus Corridor and Alignment with Partner Priorities

1. Northern Portion –west of Point Lake towards Izok

Routing summary:

- Route to align on the west side of Point Lake, heading north and crossing into Nunavut near Izok
- Route to remain east of Mesa Lake and Rawalpindi Lake
- The northern region is the most critical section for caribou protection. The corridor stays away from critical caribou migration corridors, and avoids the limited space for movement on the east side between Contwoyto Lake and Point Lake

Alignment with Partner Priorities:

- Optimal corridor alignment for protecting caribou, which are known to migrate on the east side of Point Lake. This supports both traditional knowledge and scientific data and is the best chance of reducing impacts on already critically affected herds in the region
- Strong mineral potential near border in Izok area, which is a near-term mineral deposit
- To best protect caribou, the corridor must remain east of Mesa Lake and west of Point Lake, and northwest of Wekweètì towards Nunavut
- Geological experts view this route as having good mineral potential, which is closely aligned with route 29 from the Stantec analysis. It is comparable to mineral potential on the east side of Point Lake, as either route intersects greenstone belts

2. Middle Portion – between Colomac and west of Wekweètì

Routing summary:

- Route can connect directly to or close to Colomac
- Route to remain west of Wekweètì, with spur road connectivity
- Opportunity to connect Wekweètì via a spur road, without routing directly through
- This section considers all partner priorities and allows for flexible development of the route, maximizing access to mineral potential, Indigenous benefits, governance, management, and mitigation outcomes

Alignment with Partner Priorities:

- Colomac has high mineral potential, construction material, and road work/camp option. This can support supply for road construction, and is highly advantageous at the midway point along the corridor
- Colomac contains a massive amount of rock that can be used to construct approximately 40 kilometers on either side of the site, which is significant cost savings

- Strong alignment with near-term mineral development opportunities at Izok (north end), Colomac, and connection opportunities to Discovery (south end)
- Community connection to one or more remote communities is possible from this location; Wekweètì can serve as economic development and infrastructure hubs when connected via spur roads and support emergency response efforts through road ambulance and existing GNWT owned Registered Airports for medevac. This supports community long-term viability with a climate change caused shrinking winter road season and high costs of goods and travel
- The proximity to Colomac and Wekweètì makes it easier and cheaper to maintain the road. The exact design specifications (speed, slope, gradient, etc.) must be determined to meet the needs of the road and the users. Reducing max speed can also lead to cost savings
- Staying West of Wekweètì supports caribou data (both TK and scientific data) to reduce potential impacts to migratory routes
- The alignment between near-term mineral development sites and connecting a remote community to the road network serves to maximize revenues and returns for both Indigenous Nations, project partners, governments and developers
- This corridor does not support projects in critical caribou areas, like Lockhart. The preferred consensus corridor is near Discovery (and other small gold and lithium potential) and Colomac, both of which are advanced near-term resource projects, as well as Izok on the Nunavut side.
- Community connectivity options enable tourism, recreation opportunities, cultural experiences that can be Nation-owned and led
- Connectivity options for Gameti remains a priority. This will require the continued support of GNWT and Canada to find a means of connecting Gameti to a permanent road system. This is part of our joint mandate to make this project a success
- Community connectivity was an important consideration in corridor selection, especially given the diminishing viability of winter roads from the impacts of climate change. While environmental and economic factors reduced the likelihood of direct all-season road connections to Gamètì via the AESC, the parties remain committed to exploring options to connect Gamètì to an all-season road in partnership with the GNWT and Canada

3. Southern Portion – between Boundary Creek and west of Yellowknife

Routing summary:

- Corridor to begin between Boundary Creek and some distance west of Yellowknife City limits, extending from Highway 3
 - This distance should be sufficient to maximize the benefits accruing to Indigenous governments rather than the City of Yellowknife. The map included in this document illustrates a minimum setback of 15 kilometres west of the City limits.
- The corridor extends north from Highway 3, slightly eastwards towards Discovery, creating opportunities to connect to the site via a spur road
- It is expected that the road would go onto Tłıchǫ Lands near Germaine Lake, and head northwards between Colomac and west of Wekweètì
- Routing alignment is consistent with advice from engineering advisors and northern infrastructure experts from a terrain, mineral and cost perspective
- Corridor starting point aligns with priorities of GNWT and YKDFN; TG compromised on preferred starting point to ensure project continues to advance

Alignment with Partner Priorities:

- YKDFN and TG have agreed on an origin of the AESC west of Yellowknife city limits, to ensure there is a path forward for this essential economic project that all parties will support
- A route starting outside of, but near Yellowknife will be an advantage for the Military who will likely stage their travel from the area near the airport at Yellowknife. This offers opportunity to stage military travel and supply from Yellowknife, from future potential YKDFN and TG staging areas near the starting point, and future potential staging areas near Wekweètì
- This is a cost-effective option that supports infrastructure in nearby Yellowknife while expanding slightly to ensure there are direct Nation-benefits. It is a mutually valuable option that capitalizes on Nation-driven expansion opportunities. This is what will support benefits being realized by Yellowknife, Nations and residents in the NWT
- To support long-term economic and financial impact of the project, economic activity must be diversified outside the City of Yellowknife, which has historically come at the expense of Indigenous Nations and other communities. There will be many opportunities for Yellowknife businesses and infrastructure to benefit from this project, but there needs to be new opportunities for Indigenous businesses and communities. There is also an opportunity to develop their infrastructure, including at the starting point of the road where TG and YKDFN would like to establish supporting infrastructure connecting to Highway 3

- The departure point will be located near the Yellowknife Airport, reducing congestion within Yellowknife while maintaining access to local services and infrastructure. The location also supports potential rail connectivity while avoiding additional congestion within the city itself
- Evidence indicates that the terrain between Yellowknife and Boundary Creek is well-suited for cost-effective infrastructure development. This strategically located corridor supports both near- and long-term supply chain expansion, improving the movement of critical minerals to market
- The corridor goes slightly eastwards towards Discovery, creating opportunities for connecting to the site via a spur road. It is expected that the road will enter Tłı̨chǫ lands near Germaine Lake, striking a balance
- At 420 kilometers in length, the route is slightly longer than routes from Behchokò or Whatì, but the extra distance is necessary to meet GNWT's preference to have the route start in the vicinity of Yellowknife
- Connection opportunities to Discovery and other small gold and lithium opportunities along the Yellowknife Greenstone Belt are possible from here, with access to Colomac (middle region) and Izok (north region) for ongoing territorial and federal support
- Access for emergency services is made possible from this starting point area, with community connection midway along the corridor for additional support services
- The economic benefits generated through employment and business activity are expected to be felt across the North. During construction of the AESC, employment is projected to exceed the combined workforce of the Diavik, Ekati, and Gahcho Kué mines. Beyond these direct benefits, the corridor is expected to unlock even greater long-term value by enabling private-sector investment in resource development