



Protected Area Names: Use of Dene languages PAS Guideline

Approved January 2009

Intent:

This is an internal NWT Protected Areas Strategy (PAS) guideline regarding promoting the consistent use of meaningful local names, while accommodating need for English spelling of places names. All PAS partners should be able to spell and pronounce the names consistently.

Objectives:

For consistency in use and electronic transmissions:

1. Determine a standard Dene name for each area with consistent spelling in local language
2. Determine standard phonetic pronunciation, written in 'English' spelling.
3. Determine a standard 'English' spelling for the Dene name for each area.
4. For each area, develop an 'electronic picture' of the Dene spelling and a clipboard Word document for quick cutting and pasting of place names.
5. Attempt to get a local recording of the area's name.

Background:

- There is a need for consistency when communicating information about the PAS.
- The Territorial Government promotes the use of Dene languages.
- INAC is moving towards using Dene language names followed by the English version in brackets whenever possible, to promote Dene languages but allow for standard computer uses.
- The PAS in general, along with specific sites, has gained the attention of both territorial and national media.
- Most local and national newspapers and websites do not use specialized Dene fonts
- To produce Dene text, newspapers and magazines often need to use a very labour intensive method to get the right orthography (i.e., alternative keyboard maps, etc).
- While most modern web browsers can display Dene fonts, not all can
- As a result, files sent to media outlets that are in Dene fonts will often appear garbled when printed. The text does not look like the Dene language or English (examples: glottal stops (ʔ) will appear as (æ), barred l's (ł) will appear as (å))

- Converting text to curves/outlines changes the font to a picture and ensures that the font cannot change with each new person who looks at it. Print companies often prefer to receive files with all text converted to curves/outlines because it reduces the risk of an accidental font translation.

Process and responsibilities:

1. Candidate Area Working Groups:

- Working Group agrees to the following items:
 - name and spelling in local language (example: **Edajíla**)
 - name and spelling in 'English' (i.e., standard Roman orthography with no accents) (example: Edaiila)
 - Phonetic pronunciation of name, written in standard 'English' format (examples: **Edajíla** (aa-dying-lah); **Pehdzeh Ki Ndeh** (pay-zay-dayk-ee-n-day))
- This information is recorded as part of the minutes of the Working Group meeting.
- All Working Group members agree to use these official spellings and pronunciations when referring to the Candidate Protected Area.
- Where possible, the Working Groups will also have a voice recording done of the name, so that a properly pronounced recording can be posted on the PAS website

2. PAS Team:

- PAS will use Dene spelling on publications, maps and the website.
- PAS will convert text to curves/outlines to change the font to a picture; this will be checked and approved by the Working Group for accuracy.
- PAS will use Dene spelling followed by the English spelling in brackets in correspondence with the territorial or federal governments.
- PAS will use Dene spelling in paid advertisements, whenever possible, using the 'picture' form for accurate spelling whenever possible.
- PAS will use the English spelling when corresponding with media, and include the 'picture' form of the Dene name with an explanation of the name/spelling in a media advisory/release.
- PAS will use, when possible Unicode standard fonts (rather than language-specific fonts) for electronic transmittals that include Dene spellings. This will lessen the chance of shifting fonts. Unicode standard fonts include Calibri, Constantia and Palatino lintotype has some Unicode standard characters as well.
- **Note:** Arial and Times New Roman are *not* Unicode standard typefaces and result in problems when transmitting Dene spellings. These and similar WinMac SIL series of Dene fonts may continue to be used for printed documents, but are not recommended for electronic messages.
- PAS will assist Working Groups in making a voice recording. The PAS Secretariat, GNWT, has equipment for making recordings (in-house and that can be loaned).

Appendix:

Transcribing Tips

Using Unicode standard fonts will help on newer computer systems. However, Window 95, 98 and me versions do allow users to view Unicode. Unicode works only on recent Mac operating systems.

In the latest edition of system fonts commonly found in Windows and Mac environments, all characters and diacritic marks used to transcribe Dene can be accessed by inserting symbols from the Unicode character set. As transcribing character by character might prove tedious to some, cutting and pasting from a Microsoft Word clipboard document that includes the most commonly used place names can save significant amounts of time. Likewise, the text can be ported to other applications and will appear correct and unaided in web browsers. However care must be taken when transitioning Unicode text through simple text editors like Notepad where the encoding for the special characters will be lost.

Additional Information

A table of relevant Unicode characters and their reference numbers that can be used by team members or sent to publishers is available through the PAS GNWT Secretariat.

A Dene names template is posted on the PAS website. <http://www.nwtpas.ca/guides-dene.asp>

For general information, visit <http://www.languagegeek.com/>