



## PROPOSED EXPANSION OF NAHANNI NATIONAL PARK RESERVE

### Boundary Options

Since 2004, the Nahanni Expansion Working Group (NEWG) has been overseeing feasibility studies for the proposed expansion of Nahanni National Park Reserve. This work will culminate in a formal recommendation for a new park boundary to Dehcho First Nations and Parks Canada. Prior to making a formal recommendation on a final boundary, NEWG will consult with First Nations, local communities, third party stakeholders and the general public. The Nahanni Expansion Working Group needs to know what people think, and the feedback received will go a long way to helping NEWG prepare a formal final park boundary recommendation.

Many of the park expansion feasibility studies conducted on behalf of the Nahanni Expansion Working Group have been directed towards learning more about various conservation values such as the distribution of grizzly bears, the presence of bull trout, or the extent of karst features and landforms.

At the same time, Natural Resources Canada, on behalf of Parks Canada, conducted an extensive and detailed Mineral

and Energy Resource Assessment (MERA) study in an effort to gain an understanding of the existence and distribution of non-renewable resources that may have important economic potential.

It will be a challenging task for the Nahanni Expansion Working Group to reach a decision and ultimately recommend a final boundary for Nahanni National Park Reserve. Significant amounts of information must be carefully reviewed, and the opinions of numerous people, with diverse points of view, must be considered.

To elicit discussion and feedback, the Nahanni Expansion Working Group is presenting three boundary options for consideration. These three options are not formal proposals. NEWG wants to know what people think, or if there are other issues not identified here that need to be considered before a final park boundary is recommended.

*Below: Autumn colours blanket the landscape of the Greater Nahanni Ecosystem. Photo: Douglas Tate, Parks Canada.*



*Left: With no official name, this 2773 metre peak in the Ragged Range is the highest point of land in the Northwest Territories. Photo: Douglas Tate, Parks Canada.*



Parks  
Canada

Parcs  
Canada

Canada

## 'PLANNING UNIT' BASED ANALYSIS

As prescribed by the approved park management plan, Nahanni National Park Reserve has adopted an ecosystem-based approach to park management. In this context, maintenance of the ecological integrity of Nahanni National Park Reserve must focus on activities, or potential activities, within the watersheds of the South Nahanni River, and the Nahanni North Karst as the areas with the greatest potential to impact the ecological integrity of the national park reserve.

The Nahanni Expansion Working Group continued the theme of watershed management when considering potential boundaries for an expanded national park reserve. Within the Greater Nahanni Ecosystem, many smaller sub-watersheds exist, and it was decided that any future boundary recommendations should follow the natural watershed, or sub-watershed, boundaries within the larger Greater Nahanni Ecosystem. A detailed mapping effort created 414 sub-watersheds, or planning units, within the Greater Nahanni Ecosystem. Planning

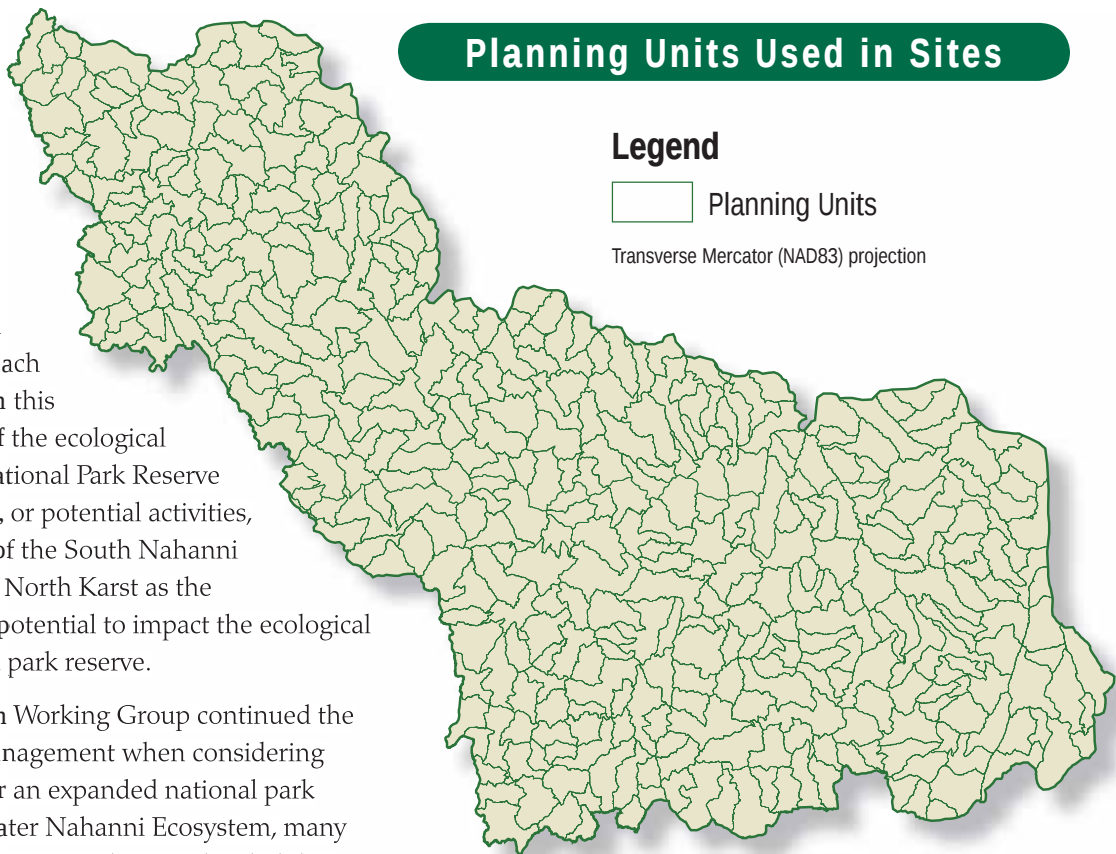
## Planning Units Used in Sites

### Legend



Planning Units

Transverse Mercator (NAD83) projection



units have a minimum size of 4,000 hectares, and a maximum size of 20,000 hectares. The boundary options presented here all follow the boundaries of these sub-watersheds, or planning units, within the larger Greater Nahanni Ecosystem.



*Bologna Creek empties into the South Nahanni River as it meanders by Island Lakes. Photo: Douglas Tate, Parks Canada, 2006*

# NAHANNI EXPANSION BOUNDARY OPTIONS



## BOUNDARY OPTION #1

This option includes the entire Dehcho portion of the Greater Nahanni Ecosystem, except for lands immediately upstream of the community of Nahanni Butte, and the areas adjacent to current mineral claims, leases or prospecting permits in the Prairie Creek, Tungsten and Selena Creek areas.

Including the existing national park reserve, Boundary Option #1 contains about 30,837 square kilometres in area. This encompasses 93% of the Dehcho portion of the Greater Nahanni Ecosystem, and 77% of the entire Greater Nahanni Ecosystem.

## BOUNDARY OPTION #2

This option was created with the assistance of a computer analysis program called Sites to choose planning units to meet certain conservation goals at the lease 'cost' to mineral potential. The Mineral and Energy Resource Analysis (MERA) data developed by the Geologic Survey of Canada (GSC - NR Can) in a major study was used to determine the mineral and energy potential, or favourability. Conservation value data came from several studies that were completed as part of the overall park expansion feasibility studies. The analysis only included the Dehcho portion of the Greater Nahanni Ecosystem. The Sites program was not permitted to select planning units in the Sahtu Settlement Area.

### Boundary Option #1

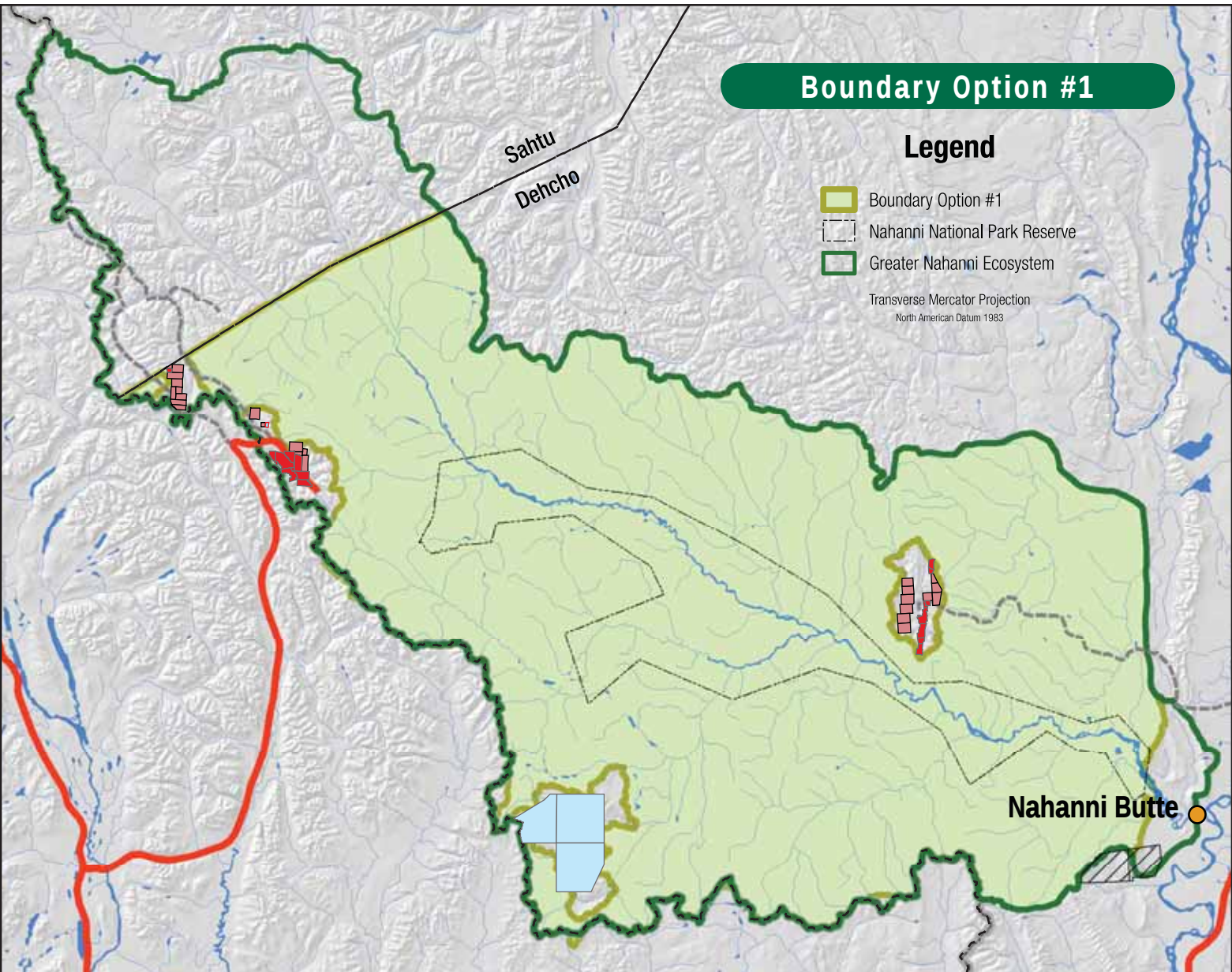
#### Legend

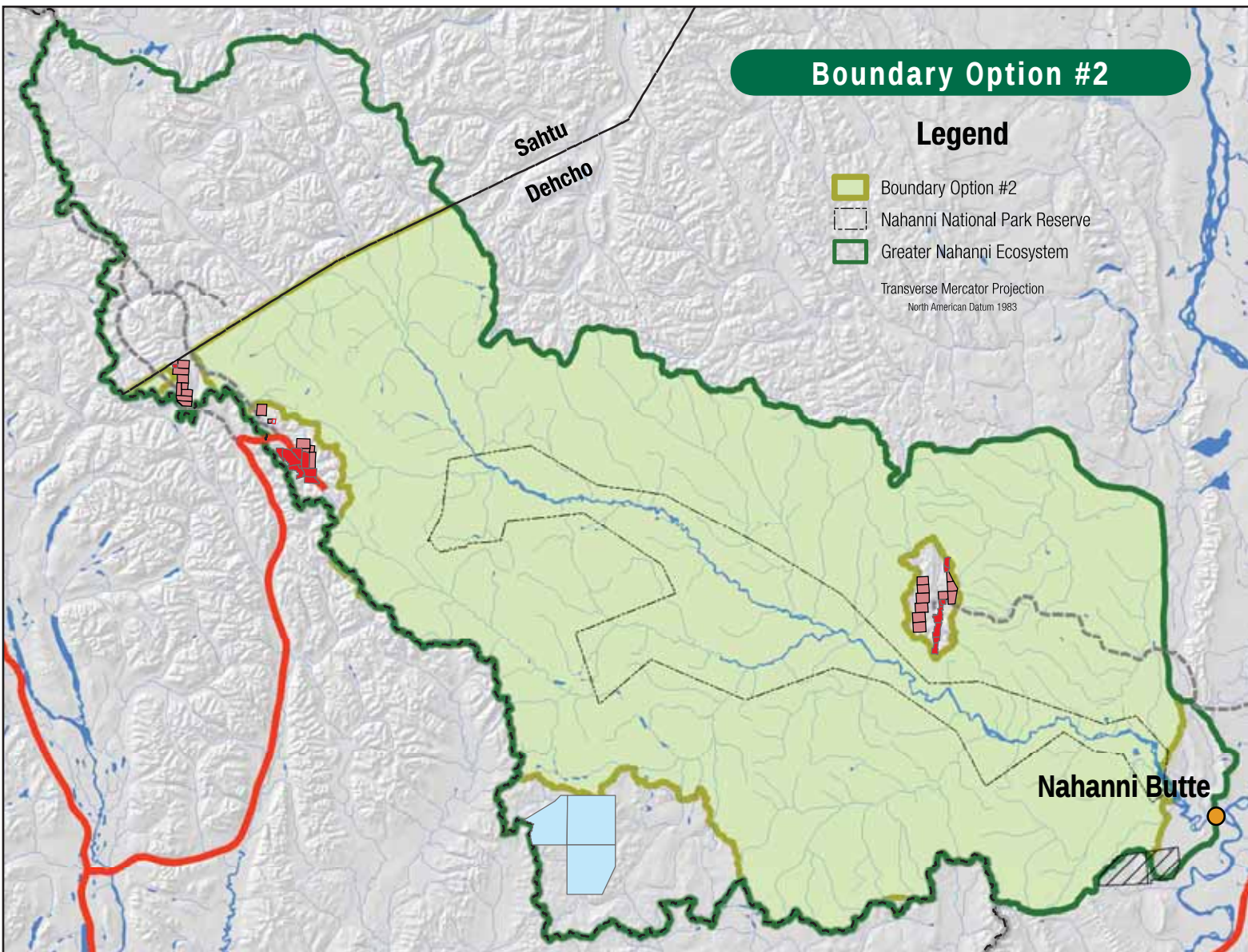
-  Boundary Option #1
-  Nahanni National Park Reserve
-  Greater Nahanni Ecosystem

Transverse Mercator Projection  
North American Datum 1983

Nahanni Butte

Sahtu  
Dehcho





Conservation targets were set at:

- 1) Woodland caribou:
  - a. Upper Nahanni Herd (100% of known locations and migration routes, and 75% of potential summer and winter habitat)
  - b. Lower Nahanni Herd (50% of known locations and migration routes, and 75% of potential winter habitat)
- 2) Grizzly bears - habitat to support a population size of 500 grizzly bears
- 3) Dall's sheep habitat – 50 % of known ranges, and 50% of potential habitat
- 4) Nahanni North Karst – 75% of known karst landscape features
- 5) Tlogotsho Plateau – 75% of the extent of this important plateau

- 6) Ragged Range – 75% of the extent of this mountain range
- 7) Ecoregion representation – 30% of each ecoregion occurring within the GNE

Including the existing national park reserve, this park expansion option includes about 29,295 square kilometres in area. This represents 89% of the Dehcho portion, or 74% of the entire, Greater Nahanni Ecosystem.

### BOUNDARY OPTION #3

As in Boundary Option #2, this option was created using Sites to choose planning units to meet specified conservation goals at the least 'cost' to mineral potential. The Mineral and Energy Resource Analysis (MERA) data developed by the Geologic Survey of Canada (GSC - NR Can) in a major study was used to determine the mineral and energy potential, or favourability. Conservation value

data came from several studies that were completed as part of the overall park expansion feasibility studies.

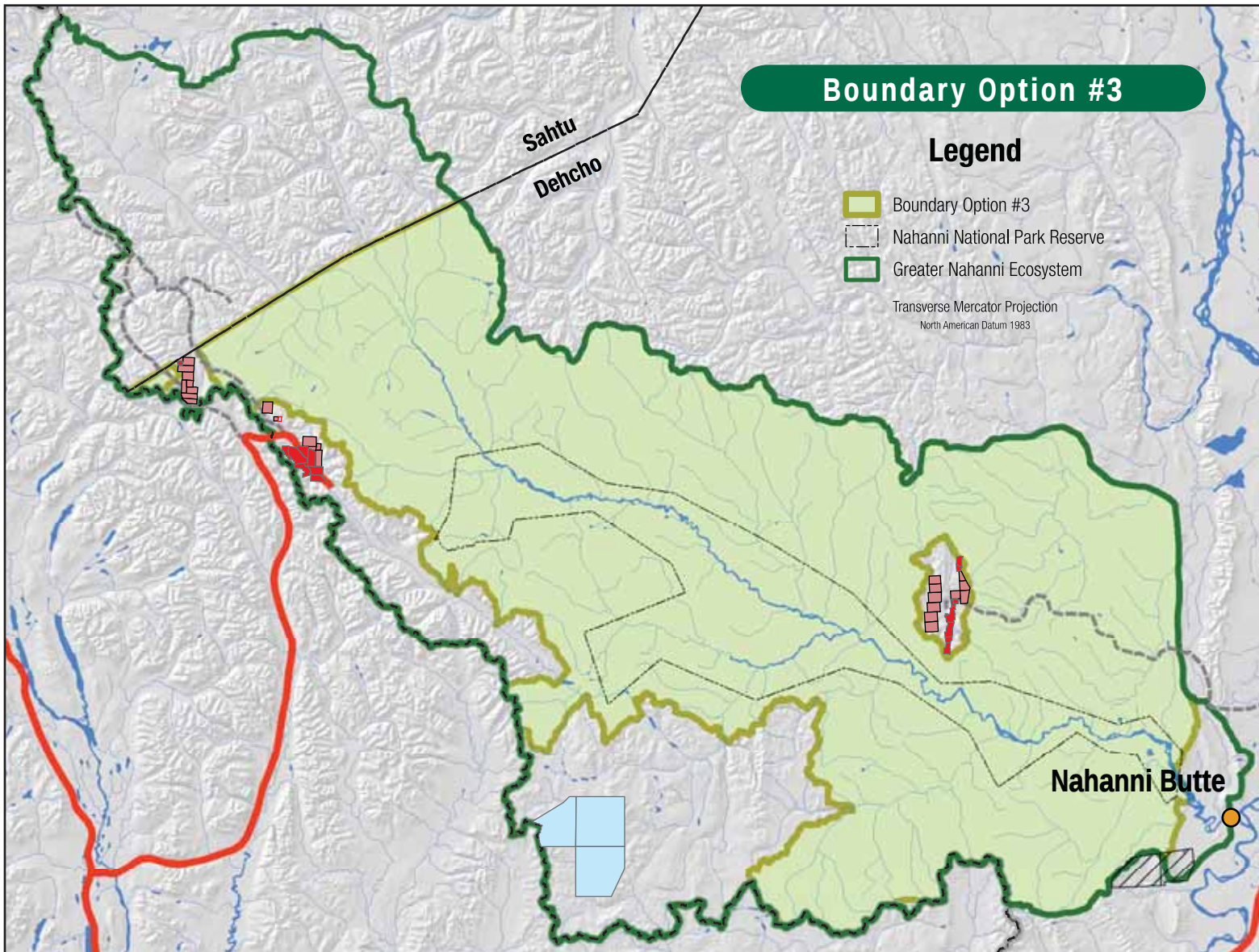
Boundary Option #3 analysis was conducted on the basis of the entire Greater Nahanni Ecosystem, not solely the Dehcho portion of the GNE. Thus, the conservation targets and the overall areas of habitat and ranges include both the Sahtu and Dehcho portions of the GNE, and the analysis resulted in some planning units being selected within the Sahtu portion of the GNE. As presented here, Boundary Option #3 does not include any planning units within the Sahtu portion of the GNE.

Conservation targets were set at:

- 1) Woodland caribou:
  - a. Upper Nahanni Herd (100% of known locations and migration routes, and 75% of potential summer and winter habitat)
  - b. Lower Nahanni Herd (50% of known locations and migration routes, and 75% of potential winter habitat)

- 2) Grizzly bears - habitat to support a population size of 500 grizzly bears
- 3) Dall's sheep habitat – 50 % of known ranges, and 50% of potential habitat
- 4) Nahanni North Karst – 75% of known karst landscape features
- 5) Tlogotsho Plateau – 75% of the extent of this important plateau
- 6) Ragged Range – 75% of the extent of this mountain range
- 7) Ecoregion representation – 30% of each ecoregion occurring within the GNE

Including the existing national park reserve, Boundary Option #3 includes about 25,997 square kilometres in area. This encompasses 79% of the GNE within the Dehcho, or 65% of the entire Greater Nahanni Ecosystem.





## COMPARISON OF THE OPTIONS

|                   | Area (square km) | % of Greater Nahanni Ecosystem | % of Dehcho Portion of Greater Nahanni Ecosystem |
|-------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Boundary Option 1 | 30,837           | 77                             | 93                                               |
| Boundary Option 2 | 29,295           | 74                             | 89                                               |
| Boundary Option 3 | 25,997           | 65                             | 79                                               |

## WHAT ABOUT THE SAHTU PORTION OF THE GREATER NAHANNI ECOSYSTEM?

Boundary options are not yet being proposed for the Sahtu portion of the Greater Nahanni Ecosystem. Parks Canada continues to work with organisations and communities in the Sahtu Settlement Area with respect to future expansion of Nahanni National Park Reserve in this area.

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Following public consultations, a public comment period will allow interested people to provide their comments to the Nahanni Expansion Working Group. Comments received during the comment period will be considered by NEWG in the course of developing a final boundary recommendation to Dehcho First Nations and Parks Canada.

## DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS?

**Please contact us! Your questions, views and opinions are very important. Your voice will be heard.**

### For more information, please contact:

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Above: Mount Wilson looms over the Mooseponds near the headwaters of the South Nahanni River. Photo: Douglas Tate, Parks Canada, 2006  
Inset: Canal Canyon is a striking feature of the Nahanni North Karst. Photo: Steve Catto, Parks Canada, 2006.

