



**University
of Victoria**

Graduate Studies

**Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Arts**

of

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BSc (University of Alberta, 2012)

**“Tłıchʔ Women and the Environmental Assessment of the NICO Project
proposed by Fortune Minerals Limited”**

Department of Anthropology

Monday, August 22, 2016

9:30AM

Cornett Building

Room A319

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Margo Matwychuk, Department of Anthropology, University of Victoria (Supervisor)

Dr. Brian Thom, Department of Anthropology, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:

Dr. Leslie Saxon, Department of Linguistics, UVic

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Dr. James McDavid, School of Public Administration, UVic

Abstract

This thesis reviews the participation of Tłıchǫ women in the environmental assessment (EA) of the NICO project proposed by Fortune Minerals Limited. Undertaken in 2012 in the Northwest Territories, this particular EA saw a precedential engagement between traditional knowledge and western science. Although this EA did not take a gendered approach, Tłıchǫ women's stories and participation in the EA supported the Tłıchǫ Government's interests throughout the review process and in the final mitigation measures. Popular scholarship does not typically cast Indigenous women as participants in or beneficiaries of EAs and resource extraction projects. Results from this thesis support more recent scholarship that urges for an ethnographic and contextual analysis of each scenario. Ethnographic methods helped me to reveal the culturally specific, diverse and complex ways Tłıchǫ women participated and shared their stories in the Fortune Minerals EA. Tłıchǫ women's stories, I found, were important and relevant to the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board's assessment of the potential social and ecological impacts of the NICO project. I conclude that this review is exemplary of Indigenous women's agency within a regulatory process and offer suggestions for how to incorporate a gender-based analysis into future EA processes.