



**YUKON  
REGION**

A Yukon that Leads

## **AFN Yukon Regional Office**

### **Regional Chief Kluane Adamek**

**Friday May 5, 2023**

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Whitehorse, Yukon – Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Yukon Regional Chief Kluane Adamek and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council Chief Amanda Leas offer condolences on the passing of Elder Shirley Adamson - Zhürá.**

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Yukon Region offers condolences on behalf of the AFN to the family and friends of Shirley Adamson - Zhürá - of the Ágünda (Wolf Clan); an esteemed Ta'an Kwäch'än Council Matriarch, Elder and Leader. Elder Adamson passed away peacefully on April 26, 2023, in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, surrounded by her family. Friends and colleagues throughout Whitehorse, Ta'an Kwäch'än Nation, territory and country continue to extend their condolences and share reflections on the impact Zhürá has had on so many.

Chief Amanda Leas of the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council shared, “the passing of Auntie Shirley is an immense loss for our community, as she was a highly respected Elder of the Nation. We share our condolences and send her close family support during this very difficult time. As Ta'an Kwäch'än Council's first Spokesperson, she was integral in advancing Ta'an Kwäch'än Council's journey towards self-government and advancing our collective rights as the first peoples of this land. She fought for Indigenous rights and justice while keeping all of her work grounded in our cultural teachings, honouring our protocols.”

Chief Leas continued, “Shirley was a dedicated advocate and tireless worker in preserving and promoting her Southern Tutchone - Dän K'é - culture, language, customs, tradition, respect, and dignity. She gathered, kept and held her traditional teachings and was generous with sharing her experiences, knowledge, and wisdom with everyone she met and worked with throughout her life. She inspired us all, and we will steadfastly carry her strength and leadership in our work and personal lives going forward. Her commitment to sharing language, culture, and teachings

will be greatly missed, and we know that we have a responsibility to continue her good work for our children and grandchildren tomorrow.”

AFN Yukon Regional Chief Kluane Adamek reflected, "on behalf of the Assembly of First Nations, we join with the family and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council in acknowledging the profound loss of Elder Shirley Adamson - Zhürá. Shirley was a deeply respected leader who made an immense impact in the Yukon community, across Canada, and beyond. She served as former AFN Yukon Regional Chief and CYFN Grand Chief, among other notable appointments, and we honor her life and her work in advancing the rights of First Nations people locally and nationally. She witnessed and lived through some truly remarkable moments, and her teachings and leadership will carry on through the lives of the future generations. Zhürá was a truly remarkable leader. She was fearless in the face of challenges, and she blazed the trail for the future, especially for women.”

Regional Chief Adamek went on to say, “Shirley’s dedication and time spent preserving and revitalizing traditional values and teachings, celebrating language, culture and the arts have all left their mark in the region and the country. Through all her work, she maintained her steadfast commitment to holding up young people and creating opportunities for them to learn and grow. She led with integrity, and when she spoke about the future, she proudly shared her life’s work with emerging leaders.”

"We were privileged and humbled by Elder Adamson's presence at the first gathering of the Reconnection Vision with the Yukon First Nation Climate Action Fellows. Her cultural knowledge and esteemed teachings have provided invaluable guidance and support for our journey forward," Regional Chief Adamek concluded.

***Funeral services for the late Shirley Adamson - Zhürá - will be held on Sunday May 7th at 1:00pm at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre in Whitehorse. A potlatch will follow the services at the same location. All are welcome to attend.***

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