

**JUDGMENT OF INQUIRY**

Into the Death of Shane Glada-Dick  
Address: Ross River, Yukon

I, Kirsten Macdonald, Chief Coroner in and for the Yukon Territory have inquired into the death of the above stated which was reported to me on October 18, 2015 and as a result of such inquiry have determined the following facts:

Age: 22 years	Sex: M <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/>	Ethnic Group: First Nation
Date of Birth: March 26, 1993	Estimated Date of Death: October 15, 2015	
Place of Death: 150 meters east of #150, Kaska Road		
Estimated Time of Death:		
Place of Injury:	150 meters east of #150 Kaska Road	
Date & Time:	Unknown	
Type of Premises:	Outdoors, rural community, near a creek	
Identification Method:	Visual	
Body Released to:	Next of Kin	
POST MORTEM EXAMINATION: Yes	Date: October 26, 2015	
Conducted by:	Dr. Matthew Orde, Forensic Pathologist	
TOXICOLOGY EXAMINATION: Yes	Date: November 12, 2015	
Conducted By:	BC's Provincial Toxicology Centre	
Relevant Findings:	Use of diphenhydramine, acetaminophen, and metoprolol. Specimen sample unsuitable for ethyl alcohol analysis.	
<b>MEDICAL CAUSE OF DEATH:</b>		
(1) Immediate Cause of Death:	(a)	Multiple Injuries
		Due to or as a consequences of
Antecedent Cause if any:	(b)	Probable Dog Attack
		Due to or as a consequences of
Giving rise to the immediate cause (a) above: Stating the underlying cause last	(c)	
(2) Other Significant Medical Causes Contributing to Death:	Schizophreniform disorder; global developmental delay; anorexia; cachexia; recent decline in physical/mental wellness	

BY WHAT MEANS: Unnatural  
CLASSIFICATION OF THE EVENT:

Natural  Accidental   
Homicide  Suicide   
Undetermined

Dated this 9<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2016

  
Kirsten Macdonald  
Chief Coroner

**Circumstances and Recommendations as a  
Result of the Inquiry**

Into the death of

**Shane Glada-Dick**

**CIRCUMSTANCES:**

Mr. Glada-Dick was last seen alive in the community of Ross River on Wednesday, October 14, 2015.

He was reported missing at 21:30hrs on Saturday, October 17, 2015. A search was planned for Sunday, October 18, 2015. Human remains were located on October 18, 2015 east of Kaska Road, Ross River.

The remains were identified as 22 year old Shane Glada-Dick of Ross River, Yukon.

**INVESTIGATION:**

In the hours and days following Mr. Glada-Dick's death, there was concern that a bear attack was the cause of death. The investigation conclusively ruled out a bear attack as related to cause of death.

Community of Ross River

Ross River, Yukon is an unincorporated rural community located 360 kilometers northeast of Whitehorse near the junction of the Campbell Highway and the Canol Road. The population of Ross River is approximately 350 (2011 census data), 290 of which are First Nation.

Shane Glada-Dick

Mr. Glada-Dick was a 22 year old First Nation male and a resident of the community of Ross River, Yukon.

During the day, Mr. Glada-Dick would walk around town, visit with people in their homes and use the computers at the college. When no one had seen him for several days, he was reported missing.

Mr. Glada-Dick had a complex history of global developmental delay. Various assessments reviewed through the investigation indicate that Mr. Glada-Dick had a "schizophreniform disorder" with "mild to moderate mental handicap." Mr. Glada-Dick was 22 years old at the time of his death, but experts who assessed Mr. Glada-Dick found that he functioned at a mental age of around 10-12 years.

Mr. Glada-Dick also had a history of anxiety, anorexia, dysphagia, and cachexia. It was reported that Mr. Glada-Dick was observed to have a marked deterioration of his mental and physical wellness prior to his death. He was not eating solid foods for months before his death. He was only consuming fluids such as juice, broth, soup, and meal replacement drinks. He was observed to be vomiting in the weeks before his death. He had complained that it felt like something was stuck in his throat. He was physically unkempt, had been wearing the same soiled clothing for weeks, was distant and socialized less.

Mr. Glada-Dick was known to drink alcohol and use marijuana. He lived part-time with his father and part-time with his grandfather. He had extended family in the community which he was close with and who would often care for him.

Chronology of Events

Mr. Glada-Dick was last seen on October 14, 2015. He was reported missing on October 17, 2015 at 21:30hrs. A search was planned for October 18, 2015. At 15:34hrs on October 18, 2015, RCMP in Ross River received a report from a community member that the remains of Mr. Glada-Dick had been located.

## Scene Findings

The remains of Mr. Glada-Dick were located not far from where he lived. The area is marshy and adjacent to a small stream. The remains were located approximately twenty (20) meters from a gravel road, down a small embankment.

The standing water in this area is approximately five inches deep. This stream fills with water in the spring and dries in the summer. Given that it was October when the incident occurred, any change in water level would have been negligible.

There was a thin layer of ice covering the water beside where the remains of Mr. Glada-Dick were located. According to locals, the ice had been on the water for at least two weeks. There were small voids in the ice close to the shore which was attributed to dogs breaking through the ice, as opposed to Mr. Glada-Dick entering the water.

There is a foot trail near where the remains of Mr. Glada-Dick were located. According to community members, this trail is used as an "out of sight" way through town.

Mr. Glada-Dick was found supine (on his back), with his head slightly downhill. There was one shoe in the stream, the left arm reached upwards towards the water. He was partially dressed, and a pile of clothing lay in close proximity and slightly uphill from the remains.

## Clothing

The scene findings related to the pile of clothing was inconclusive. A definitive answer for how and why the clothing was piled up in this way could not be determined.

Mr. Glada-Dick was still wearing a black t-shirt, which was found pulled up and covering his face. The t-shirt had multiple punctures located at the collar, sleeve, and chest region. Black boxer shorts, black denim jeans with a leather belt still fastened, and one black sport sock were also worn.

The pile of clothing included outerwear including a red hoodie with zipper, quilted jacket, multi-colored blue/grey hoodie. There were rips, tears, and puncture marks in the clothing with blood staining present. The rips, tears, and punctures were observed primarily on the wrist, upper arm areas of the clothing and the back, with scattered punctures throughout.

The red zippered hoodie had punctures at the sleeve. The quilted button up coat had what appeared to be vomitus on the left side of the chest extending downwards and over the chest pocket. The blue/grey hoodie with white and striped patterning on the chest had blood staining and puncture marks on the sleeve.

The evidence suggests that Mr. Glada-Dick removed part of his clothing after being attacked. Piling of clothing in this manner is uncharacteristic of an animal attack and has been ruled out. It is also generally inconsistent with paradoxical undressing in the context of hypothermia, but cannot be ruled out.

## Weather from October 14 - 18, 2015

According to Government of Canada weather data, the weather in the community of Ross River between October 14 and 18, 2015 ranged from a maximum temperature of 10.6C to a minimum temperature of -5.7C (October 15, 2015). There was snow reported on October 14, 2015.

## Post Mortem Examinations

Postmortem examinations of the remains of Mr. Glada-Dick were performed on October 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015 at Vancouver General Hospital.

A complete autopsy was performed by Dr. Matthew Orde, Forensic Pathologist, at Vancouver General Hospital. The autopsy revealed the body of an adult male. There was widespread tissue loss with complete absence of the central internal organs. The tissue loss was undoubtedly largely due to postmortem predation with associated gnawing marks on the bone margins. There were also multiple puncture wounds and grazes to the skin over the neck region, scalp, face, left arm, and to a lesser extent the left leg, and the subcutaneous soft tissues of the neck was diffusely hemorrhagic (bleeding).

The injuries to the neck, along with the pattern of injuries suggest that at least some of the injuries occurred ante or peri-mortem.

The brain was examined by a specialist neuropathologist who identified changes in the brain (hypoxia/ischemic damage) suggestive of impaired blood and/or oxygen flow to the brain prior to death. These findings were deemed to be essentially, non-specific.

The remains of Mr. Glada-Dick were further examined by UBC Veterinary Pathologist on October 27, 2015. In the opinion of the Veterinary Pathologist, semi-domesticated feral dogs would have been responsible for the death and subsequent scavenging of Mr. Glada-Dick. The dimensions of many of the bite marks indicated involvement of animals with jaws of differing widths, suggestive of an attack by a pack of semi-domesticated or feral animals.

Toxicology testing was performed at the Provincial Toxicology Centre in Vancouver, British Columbia. Due to the condition of the body and postmortem predation, the only sample available for testing was taken from the left calf muscle. Toxicology testing detected the presence of diphenhydramine (sedative antihistamine which is used over the counter for allergies, to induce sleep, and to control motion sickness, etc.), metoprolol (beta-blocker used in the treatment of high blood pressure and migraines), and acetaminophen (analgesic). The substances detected are readily available and fairly routinely administered medications.

Following the conclusion and consideration of all the postmortem examinations, the forensic pathologist determined that cause of death was likely a consequence of an attack by canids (dogs).

#### Potential Contributing or Related Factors

There may have been contributing factors in this death which could not be confirmed through the investigation and post mortem examinations. Although we may not be able to definitively identify contributing factors, it would be improper to not at least consider that additional factors may have played a role in this death.

The autopsy was limited due to the condition of the body. Evidence and information generally obtainable at autopsy was not available due to predation of the remains. Identification of hypothermia during an autopsy can be difficult even with all the organs present to examine macro and microscopically.

Mr. Glada-Dick could have suffered an acute incapacitation or hypothermia, rendering him unconscious and susceptible to attack. The presence of vomitus on the external clothing may indicate that Mr. Glada-Dick was unwell prior to the attack or that he was ill or in shock after the attack. We also do not know when he vomited in relation to the attack or if it was completely unrelated to his death.

Toxicology testing was limited due to the condition of the body. It is possible that Mr. Glada-Dick could have had toxicological factors which could not be detected. It is also possible that there may have been biochemical investigations which may have been relevant, but the samples were simply not available for testing.

We know from multiple witness statements, that Mr. Glada-Dick was frail and suffered from a declining mental and physical health status in the weeks before his death. It is unknown what he was doing just prior to the attack. His frail state of health may have compromised his ability to fend off the attack and may have also made him vulnerable to attack.

#### Dog Related Incidents - 2015

Prior to the death of Mr. Glada-Dick and shortly thereafter, there were several reports of dog-related incidents in Ross River.

In February 2015, it was reported that five dogs attacked a small dog in the community. There were no significant injuries and the owner of the instigating dog was spoken to by RCMP and told to keep the dogs from running at large.

On October 15, 2015 a report was made that a female had been bitten by a dog on October 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Photos were taken of the injuries.

On October 27, 2015 a young boy was reportedly charged by a dog. No injuries were sustained and the owner of the dog was spoken to by RCMP.

On October 28, 2015 there was an unconfirmed report of a dog attacking a female community member.

### Historical and Community Considerations

The issue of dogs running at large in the community of Ross River has been a concern long before this incident. The issue reportedly stems in part, from dogs with no identified ownership, a community or individual belief system, and/or irresponsible dog ownership.

The history of keeping dogs in Ross River has changed over time. In the past, dogs were kept as working dogs that had purpose related to hunting, travel, and bear defense. Contemporarily, the need to keep dogs for these traditional purposes has dwindled. Most dogs in Ross River no longer have these traditional roles but the culture around keeping dogs persists.

There also appears to be underestimation by some dog owners, of the financial and time commitment of owning a dog. Puppies are born and gifted out and after the novelty wears off the dog is no longer cute and cared for in the same manner.

There is also the issue of rural location of Ross River to the main city of Whitehorse. Ross River is located approximately 5-6 hour drive from Whitehorse, and has no veterinarian in the community. It can be prohibitive for residents to travel to Whitehorse to spay or neuter their dogs and there is no overarching veterinarian plan for Yukon. Veterinarian services provided in the community of Ross River have occurred in the past on an ad hoc basis, depending on the capacity and willingness of Whitehorse-based veterinarians to travel to Ross River and offer mobile services.

### Past work on the issue of dogs in Ross River

The investigation into the death of Mr. Glada-Dick considered the current status of dog control measures, past attempts to address the issue, and potential future opportunities to prevent future similar deaths from occurring.

In 2010, Yukon Government entered into a contract with an independent contractor, to develop a pilot program for dog control in Ross River. Two reports were delivered by the contractor (August 17, 2010 and November 15, 2010) recommending education and consultation on dog management. Yukon Government did not fully endorse the project proposal, but did commit to fund (together with Ross River Dena Council) dog sterilization and public education on responsible pet ownership.

In 2010, a pilot project between Government of Yukon and Ross River Dena Council was undertaken. Under the pilot program, joint efforts were undertaken to fund a spay/neuter clinic (the "spay/neuter voucher project") in Ross River. This clinic sterilized seven dogs and vaccinated twenty-nine dogs. Additional clinics in Ross River occurred through the spay and neuter voucher project between 2013 and 2015, which resulted in forty additional dogs being sterilized.

In January 2011, March 2011, April 2011, Chief Jack Caeser, Ross River Dena Council (RRDC) wrote to Yukon Government regarding the Ross River Dena Council – Yukon Government Dog Management Pilot (RYDMP) program. Media in January 2011 indicated that continuance of the pilot program was deemed to be cost-prohibitive.

On February 15, 2011 Government of Yukon advised RRDC that government was reviewing the RYDMP and determining what pieces of the program government could effectively deliver given current capacity and budget.

Yukon Government hired a contract dog catcher who conducted community patrols between April 2010 and May 2011. Patrols were unannounced and intermittent but were discontinued because it was consistently apparent that dogs were being tied up when the dog catcher came to town. Within the Memorandum of Agreement made in 2010, Ross River Dena Council

identified a dog registry as a priority. The registry (linking dogs to owners) was not established by RRDC.

Government officials stated in 2016 following Mr. Glada-Dick's death, that the independent contractor's reports delivered in 2010 contained factual inaccuracies and made recommendations beyond the scope of what the government was able to provide. This point is disputed by the contractor who authored the reports.

### Yukon Dog Act

RCMP in Ross River is empowered under the *Dog Act*. RCMP is also empowered with respect to public safety in general. Under the *Dog Act*, regulations can be passed prohibiting dogs from running at large. In 1969, a regulation was passed under the *Dog Act* prohibiting dogs from running at large in Ross River.

Ross River is in a unique situation in Yukon, as it is partially under territorial control and partially under federal control. Because of this state of affairs, all territorial legislation applies to one side of the community, while only territorial laws of general application apply to the other. Comparatively, the *Indian Act* and *Area Development Act* only apply to parts of the community.

Based on a review of the current statute, case law, academic commentary and other sources, the territorial *Dog Act* would apply on both sides of the community, unless the federal government exercised its law-making authority. This makes the territorial *Dog Act* a good candidate for community-encompassing regulations related to dogs.

The territorial *Dog Act* allows for officers under the act, to seize dogs when they are in heat or when they are of *vicious temperament*. The interpretation of *vicious temperament* relies on a witness reporting an attack or a witnessed act of aggression. The *Dog Act* would benefit from a review and strengthening with regards to when and how dogs may be seized under the *Act*.

### Significant Factors and Conclusions

1. The death of Shane Glada-Dick in October 2015 was the result of multiple injuries related to an attack by feral or semi-domesticated dogs.
2. It is not known what, if any, other circumstances (such as an acute health crisis or other event) may have contributed to the circumstances of death.
3. Shane Glada-Dick was frail and suffered from long standing health conditions which rendered him more at risk to be the victim of an attack by feral or semi-domesticated dogs, and/or may have compromised his ability to defend himself when the attack happened.
4. The practice of keeping dogs in Ross River for the purposes of working, hunting, and bear defense are no longer as relevant as they once were. Dogs are still being kept, but their function has changed over time. There is incongruence between the traditional necessities to keep dogs for working/hunting/bear defense versus present-day reality.
5. Dog ownership of some residents in Ross River include keeping multiple dogs, allowing dogs to be at large, dogs that are not being taken care of properly, and owners who are not ensuring that their dogs are not a public nuisance or risk to public health and safety.
6. Not all dog owners in Ross River allow their dogs to be at large. It appears to be the actions of a few people in the community who continue to knowingly permit their dogs to be at large, or do very little to prevent dogs from being at large.
7. Dogs running at large in Ross River is a public safety issue which has caused the death of a community member. It is imperative that the issue of dogs running at large be addressed in order to prevent future deaths related to dog-involved attacks or incidents.
8. Two reports were delivered to Government of Yukon (August 17, 2010 and November 15, 2010) recommending education and consultation on dog management. Yukon Government did not fully endorse the project proposal, but did commit to fund (with Ross River Dena Council) dog sterilization and public education on responsible pet ownership.

9. There have been efforts in the past to control the dogs in Ross River. Spay and neuter programs have been offered, and animals have received veterinarian check-ups. Community members have been given the opportunity to voluntarily surrender animals.
10. Problem dogs are not easily identified, and reports of incidents related to dogs are not always made to the appropriate authorities.
11. When reports of dog-related incidents are made the available enforcement actions are limited under the current *Dog Act*. There is limited or no ability to capture free roaming dogs, to hold them or fine the owners, to licence or register the dogs, require the owner to take responsibility, etc. The current iteration of the territorial *Dog Act* is limited in the way dogs are deemed to be “vicious” and the majority of possible enforcement or public safety actions are limited to the determination that a dog is “vicious.”
12. The community of Ross River does not have the capacity or authority required to fully address the issue of dogs in the community. Yukon Government, Ross River Dena Council, community members, RCMP, and others need to come together with an action plan that will set out goals, activities and measurable outcomes with regard to ensuring that dogs in Ross River will not pose a public health and safety risk in the future.
13. Responsible dog ownership, education, and enforcement are critical components of any action plan to address this serious issue.

I therefore find that **Shane Glada-Dick** came to his death on **October 15, 2015** from Unnatural causes, to wit: **Multiple Injuries** due to a **Probable Dog Attack**.

I classify his death as accidental and make the following recommendations:

**TO: YUKON GOVERNMENT: DEPARTMENTS OF ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES**

1. Establish a working group that is comprised of Yukon Government officials, Ross River Dena Council members, community members of Ross River, RCMP, and other affected stakeholders to develop an action plan on a time sensitive basis that will:
  - a. Address the real and documented history of dog-related problems in the community of Ross River, acknowledging that there is no “one fit solution” but that community safety and prevention of future similar deaths is paramount;
  - b. Identify short, medium, and long term goals to mitigate and eliminate dogs running at large in the community of Ross River in a culturally appropriate manner that reflects the realities of community capacity and resources;
  - c. Hold dog owners in Ross River accountable for their roles and responsibilities of responsible dog ownership, including ensuring that their dog(s) are properly fed, watered, vaccinated, spay/neutered, and are not permitted to roam at large and are not contributing to the public safety issue of dogs at large in the community;
  - d. Provide public education regarding responsible dog ownership;
  - e. Address the issue of licensing and registration of dogs in Ross River;
  - f. Fine dog owners who allow, or do not put proper safeguards in place, to ensure their dogs are not at large; and
  - g. Establish routine ongoing provision of spay and neuter programs, voluntary surrendering support, enforcement and capture of dogs at large, and support for people who need to report incidents involving dogs in the community.
2. Review the Yukon *Dog Act* towards strengthening the ability of the legislation to address dogs that are a risk to public safety, how these dogs are identified, expand and clarify different circumstances of when a dog may be seized and under what conditions, a more inclusive and responsive complaints process, and all other areas that would address the safety of communities with regards to dog-related incidents.