

Mackenzie Valley Environmental
Impact Review Board
Strategic Plan 2015-2017





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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

I am pleased to present the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board Strategic Plan for 2015-2017. This Strategic Plan was developed through collaboration between Board members and staff, including workshops where progress against the 2011/12–2013/14 Strategic Plan was reviewed and the vision, goals, and strategies for the next three years were updated to reflect the Board's current operating environment.

This Strategic Plan outlines the Board's operating environment, including the successes and the challenges that we have faced, and continue to face. The Plan identifies the Vision, Mission, and Goals that guide the organization in its work. Associated with each of the goals, are strategies that the Board is committed to implementing in order to achieve its goals and continue to respond to changes, leverage opportunities, and address challenges. Finally, the Plan identifies the performance measures and targets that will ensure that the Board remains on track to achieving its goals.

The Board is excited and optimistic about its work over the next three years and is proud of its contribution to representing the interests of the people in the Mackenzie Valley in relation to environmental impact assessment.

This Strategic Plan will be reviewed and renewed upon the conclusion of its three year term.

Sincerely,
JoAnne Deneron

BOARD GOVERNANCE

As a result of the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement and the Sahtu Dene and Metis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement, the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act came into force on December 22, 1998 and established the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (MVEIRB) as the main agency of environmental assessment and review in the Mackenzie Valley.

The purpose of the MVEIRB is to conduct environmental assessments, which are public processes, by undertaking a thorough study of a proposed development application in order to determine if it is likely to have significant adverse impacts on the environment or is likely to cause public concern.

The Board is a co-management body whose members are appointed by the federal, territorial, Tłı̄cho, Gwich'in, and Sahtu Governments. The jurisdiction of the Board applies to all lands in the Northwest Territories, excluding the Inuvialuit Settlement Region and Wood Buffalo National Park.

The members of the Board include:

JoAnne Deneron (Chairperson)
James Wah-Shee (Tłı̄cho Nominee)
John Curran (Federal Nominee)
Sunny Munroe (Federal Nominee)
Michael McLeod (Territorial Nominee)
Kirby Marshall (Territorial Nominee)
Yvonne Doolittle (Sahtu Nominee)
Bertha Norwegian (Dehcho Nominee)

The office of the Board is located in Yellowknife.

MISSION STATEMENT

We conduct fair, effective, timely, and evidence-based environmental impact assessment processes that consider:

- a) the protection of the environment from the significant adverse impacts of proposed developments;
- b) the protection of the social, cultural, and economic well-being of residents and communities in the Mackenzie Valley; and
- c) the importance of conservation to the well-being and way of life of the Aboriginal peoples of the Mackenzie Valley.

VISION STATEMENT

Making wise environmental impact assessment decisions that balance the diverse values, interests, and knowledge of all residents of the Mackenzie Valley, while ensuring the protection of the environment for present and future generations.

Value Statements

The following values guide the Board's decisions as we work toward realizing our goals and vision.

Committed	We are committed to our obligation and duty to ensure our decisions are balanced and respect the interests and knowledge of all communities in the Mackenzie Valley.
Balanced	We consider both traditional knowledge and scientific knowledge.
Diverse	We acknowledge and benefit from the diversity, unique backgrounds, knowledge, and perspectives of our Board and staff.
Fair	Our processes are transparent to ensure fair, accessible, and accountable decisions and operations.
Inclusive	We are inclusive and open, considering holistic perspectives and consulting and collaborating with each other and our parties to ensure the highest benefits for all.
Trust and Respect	We strive to create an environment based on mutual respect, trust, and honesty that enables effective and efficient teamwork and consensus decision-making.
Continuous Learning	We value continuous learning and improvement, fostering an environment of innovation and adaptation.

GOALS

Goal 1

Timely, effective, and evidence-based Environmental Impact Assessment processes

Goal 2

Efficient, innovative, and transparent Board

Goal 3

Parties to our process and residents of the Mackenzie Valley are aware of:

- a) the purpose of the Board, and;
- b) their role in the Environmental Impact Assessment process.

Goal 4

Improved collaboration within an integrated resource management system

CURRENT OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

The following provides an overview of the challenges and opportunities associated with the Board's current operating environment. These challenges and opportunities have helped to inform the Strategic Plan.

Challenges

- Lack of participant funding can result in delays to the environmental assessment process and potentially limit parties' participation in the process
- The MVRMA amendments have resulted in changes to Board processes; further changes are anticipated as the remaining legislative changes come into effect
- Using outdated technology and not keeping abreast of new technology, including the lack of capacity of parties to use new technology
- Ensuring a full complement of Board members, which is dependent on timely appointments
- Unsettled land claims and lack of land-use plans
- Achieving quorum for decisions
- Lack of understanding of the regulatory and Environmental Assessment processes
- Clarity of roles amongst the Review Board, Land and Water Boards, and other integrated resource management organizations

Opportunities

- New Board members, senior management staff, and a dynamic team
- Improved transparency and communication using web-based technology
- Legislated timelines provide improved clarity and consistency
- Implementing the new legislation can result in positive changes to the current Environmental Assessment process, such as:
 - greater efficiency through implementing new timelines without compromising effectiveness
 - more accountability and effective tracking of mitigation measures through development certificates
- The Board has developed into a strong and stable organization
- The devolution process has shifted responsibilities and improved procedural clarity
- Revised MVRMA allows for regional studies that could help the Board deal with cumulative issues
- The Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program now focuses more on Board identified priorities, and can contribute more effectively to the Environmental Assessment process

STRATEGIES BY GOAL FOR THE BOARD

<i>Goal</i>	<i>Strategy</i>
<p>Goal 1 Timely, effective and evidence-based Environmental Assessment processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure appropriate documentation and information to make good EA decisions (Goal 1) • Engage and collaborate with parties involved in EA to ensure effective participation (Goals 1, 2, 3 and 4) • Update EA process guidelines (Goals 2 and 3)
<p>Goal 2 Efficient, innovative, and transparent Board</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and communicating timing of EA process (Goal 2) • Maintain appropriate technical skills and review external information (Goal 4)
<p>Goal 3 Parties to our process and residents of the Mackenzie Valley are aware of: (a) the purpose of the Board; and (b) their role in the Environmental Impact Assessment process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop commitment tracking tools (Goals 1 and 4) • Develop templates for submissions to the Board (Goals 2 and 3) • Improve internal policies (Goals 1 and 2) • Use technology in processes, including reviewing of documents (Goals 1 and 4) • Explore new approaches for project-based intervenor funding (Goal 1)
<p>Goal 4 Improved collaboration within an integrated resource management system</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold regular practitioner workshops (Goals 3 and 4) • Organize sessions to develop Board and staff expertise (Goals 1 and 2) • Hold outreach sessions at the outset of projects when conducting community scoping sessions (Goal 3) • Actively participate in Board forums (Goals 2 and 3) • Actively look for opportunities to build awareness of the Board's role and process, including communication of decisions (Goals 2 and 3) • Identify performance measures for the EA process, including monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of measures (Goals 1 and 2) • Improve partnerships and relationships to achieve common goals (Goals 3 and 4)

BOARD PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The Board has identified a number of performance measures to consider when evaluating its performance against the strategic plan. These measures will also inform adjustments to the Board's activities, as well as development of the next strategic plan and priorities. In general, performance measures aim to be:

- relevant to the overall strategic plan and to one or more specific goals;
- trackable; and
- related to activities that the Board has the authority and practical ability to undertake.

Within this context, the performance measures below are based on the goals of this strategic plan.

<i>Goal</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>	<i>Target Value</i>
<p>Goal 1 Timely, effective and evidence-based Environmental Assessment processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting legislated timelines and requirements • Decisions not judicially reviewed • Positive comments in the Environmental audit • Proponent and other party perceptions on EA process • Number of EA project-based measures implemented • Processes adapted and guidelines drafted 	
<p>Goal 2 Efficient, innovative, and transparent Board</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicly reporting finances and policies • Environmental assessments on budget • Producing reasons for decisions • Continued participation in Board Forum • Full Board and staff complement • Percentage of documents available on the online public registry • Fewer <i>Access to Information</i> requests 	
<p>Goal 3 Parties to our process and residents of the Mackenzie Valley are aware of: (a) the purpose of the Board; and (b) their role in the Environmental Impact Assessment process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of requests for clarification • Number of Practitioners Workshops • Number of outreach activities, such as community visits, school visits, etc. 	
<p>Goal 4 Improved collaboration within an integrated resource management system</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of policies and processes that are developed or reviewed collaboratively • Number of projects that have shared staffing agreements • New MOU's or cooperation agreements 	

STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY

Mission:

We conduct fair, effective, timely, and evidence-based environmental impact assessment processes that consider:

- a) the protection of the environment from the significant adverse impacts;
- b) the protection of the social, cultural, and economic well-being of residents and communities; and
- c) the importance of conservation to the well-being and way of life of the aboriginal peoples.

Vision:

Making wise environmental impact assessment decisions that balance the diverse values, interests, and knowledge of all residents of the Mackenzie Valley, while ensuring the protection of the environment for present and future generations.

Values:

Committed

We are committed to our obligation and duty to ensure our decisions are balanced and respect the interests and knowledge of all of our communities.

Balanced

We consider both traditional knowledge and scientific knowledge.

Diverse

We acknowledge and benefit from the diversity, unique backgrounds, knowledge, and perspectives of our Board and staff.

Fair

Our processes are transparent to ensure fair, accessible, and accountable decisions and operations.

Trust and Respect

We strive to create an environment based on mutual respect, trust, and honesty that enables effective and efficient teamwork and consensus decision-making.

Continuous Learning

We value continuous learning and improvement, fostering an environment of innovation and adaptation.

