



Indian and Northern
Affairs Canada

Affaires indiennes
et du Nord Canada

Environment & Conservation
Box 1500
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 2R3

April 16, 2010

MVEIRB File Number: EA0708-007

Alan Ehrlich, Senior Environmental Assessment Officer
Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board
P.O. BOX 938
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 2N7

VIA EMAIL

Dear Mr. Ehrlich:

**Re: Taltson Hydroelectric Expansion Environmental Assessment -
Potential Adjustments to Transmission Line Route**

On February 18, 2010, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) wrote to the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board discussing several questions, concerns, and recommendations about the Review Board's process for assessing the impacts of any potential adjustments to the proposed Taltson hydroelectric transmission line route. One of these concerns was a request to the Review Board to notify all potentially affected Aboriginal groups about the potential adjustment, as follows:

IV. Need for evidence of Review Board efforts to notify all potentially affected Aboriginal groups

As part of the Crown's consultation assessment, INAC and the other Responsible Ministers must confirm that all Aboriginal peoples with established or potential Aboriginal and treaty rights that might be adversely affected by the proposed development have been properly notified about the environmental assessment. INAC commends the Review Board's efforts to contact leaseholders and other interested parties in the Reliance area, and notes that the Review Board has advertised the potential route adjustment and public comment period in local newspapers.

Staff from the Athabasca Denesuline contacted INAC staff the week of February 1, 2010 expressing concerns about the proposed Taltson Hydroelectric expansion. INAC staff advised the Athabasca Denesuline via email to contact the Review Board immediately and provided the Athabasca Denesuline with Review Board contact information as well as a copy of Dezé's January 26, 2010 letter concerning the potential route adjustment.

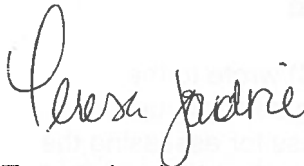
Recommendation: INAC recommends that the Review Board review its October 17, 2007 Taltson distribution list and ensure that it has informed all potentially affected Aboriginal groups about the potential route adjustment. In addition to those Aboriginal groups with party status for the environmental assessment, the Review Board should particularly ensure that the Tlicho Government, the

Northwest Territory Métis Nation, the Fort Smith Métis Local, the Hay River Métis Council, and the Athabasca Denesuline are aware of the potential change to the development and the Review Board's process to solicit comments on the potential route change.

To date, the Review Board has not responded to this request from INAC and INAC is not aware whether the Review Board has notified these groups as requested. Throughout the course of an environmental assessment, and particularly when there are significant changes to a proposed development under assessment, notification provided by the Review Board to potentially affected parties of the Board's process is an important consideration for the Crown when considering the fulfillment of its consultation obligations. INAC respectfully requests a response from the Review Board on this matter as soon as possible.

If you have any questions about this matter, please contact Lorraine Seale at (867) 669-2590.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Teresa Joudrie', with a stylized, flowing script.

Teresa Joudrie
Director, Renewable Resources and Environment

cc. Eddie Erasmus, Lands Protection Environment, Tlicho Government
Betty Villeneuve, President, Northwest Territory Métis Nation
Ken Hudson, President, Fort Smith Métis Local
Paul Harrington, President, Hay River Métis Council
Ron Robillard, Athabasca Denesuline Chief Negotiator, c/o Prince Albert
Grand Council