

Trophy Lodge  
Box 670  
Yellowknife, NT  
X1A 2N5

Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board  
200 Scotia Centre  
Box 938  
Yellowknife, NT  
X1A 2N7

Re: Taltson Hydro Expansion Project Transmission Line Route Adjustment – Reliance

Dear Sirs:

Please accept this letter as my submission and comments on Daze Energy's proposed route adjustment for the Taltson Hydro's transmission line, which would pass right in front of my fishing lodge.

The points I would like to address are:

- History of Trophy Lodge
- History of the Reliance area
- Social and cultural impacts
- Economic impact
- Environmental Concerns
- Consultation
- Alternatives / conclusion

Thank you in advance for your attention to and consideration of this submission that documents my concerns. I am

Yours Truly,

(original signed by)  
Wallace Finlayson

### History of Trophy Lodge

Trophy Lodge was founded at Fort Reliance in 1964 when Doug and Wilma Finlayson purchased the buildings from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, after the RCMP closed this detachment in 1960. The first year of operation for Trophy Lodge was 1965, which was my first full season that spent in the Reliance area. The Finlayson family will celebrate our 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of continuous operation of Trophy Lodge, this year.

Trophy Lodge is owned by Sutherland's Drugs Limited, a Canadian corporation that has been in business in Yellowknife since 1938. Sutherland's Drugs Limited is owned 65% by me, and 35% by my sister Susan Finlayson. My sister was 3 years old when my family moved to Yellowknife from Fort McMurray in 1951. I was born in Yellowknife later that year.

The lodge occupies the property under a lease from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, which expires in 2026. We are licensed to operate as a 16-bed fishing lodge by the Government of the Northwest Territories.

### History of the Reliance Area

The Dene have occupied the Reliance area as long as can be remembered, and theirs is a rich history. I would not presume to try to present any of the Dene history, as I am sure the Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation has fully provided you this information.

I would like to present a short summary of the European and non-Dene Canadian history of this area in order to ensure you have a more complete awareness of how all the various individuals and groups are tied together.

Captain George Back was the first European on record in the Reliance area. However, it's likely that factors from the Hudson's Bay Company had been to the area earlier, as the HBC was hired by the British Royal Navy to expedite and assist Back on his mission to locate Sir John Ross, who was missing in the High Arctic. Back spent two winters at Reliance, in 1833 and 1834, and the clay and stone chimneys of his buildings are still standing today. The factors assigned by the HBC to assist Back had a great deal to do with his mission's survival and success, and Back named McLeod Bay and Charlton Bay in their honor. The HBC continued to visit Reliance intermittently, up until around 1939, trading from a barge they would bring up to the area from Fort Resolution.

In 1897, Warburton Pike occupied Back's site, and set up a short-lived outfitting business, guiding mainly American hunters into what is now the Thelon Game Sanctuary by canoe and dog team, looking for musk-oxen.

From then on, there was a fairly steady stream of adventurers, trappers, and government officials making the journey to Reliance. Ernest Thompson-Seton, founder of the Boy Scouts of America and Canada, camped on Maufelly Point for several days in 1902, while making a canoe trip on Great Slave Lake.

In 1919, Dominion Explorers established a base at Reliance in Police Bay. They operated from this base, prospecting, trading, and expediting, until about 1939. The 1920's and 1930's saw a large number of trappers establish base camps in Reliance, and there is hardly a bay in the area where there is not the faint remains of an old trapping cabin from this era.

In 1927, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police established their detachment at Reliance. Their mission was to protect the newly established Thelon Game Sanctuary, and keep order among the increasing population of Reliance. One of their early missions was to discover the fate of the infamous John Hornby and his nephews. The detachment site at Reliance was chosen for its commanding view of the entrance through Maufelly and Fairchild Points.

Gus D'Aoust had been trapping and trading through the East Arm of Great Slave Lake and the barren grounds since the 1920's. Sometime during the 1940's he established a permanent camp in Police Bay, directly across from the RCMP detachment. He continued to occupy this site until the 1980's, trapping, trading, and hosting a few avid fishermen who had learned about the tremendous sport fishing available in the Reliance area. One of the cabins Gus had built to host these fishermen is occupied by Ray Dacorby of Yellowknife. Other guests of Gus's were so taken with the area that they obtained title to property on the end of Fairchild Point, the location now occupied by Roger Catling.

In 1944, the Royal Canadian Corps of Signals established a station next to the RCMP detachment. This was taken over by Environment Canada and operated as a weather station until 1990. Their buildings have been abandoned and are awaiting decommission by the government of Canada.

As noted earlier, the RCMP withdrew from their detachment in 1960. Trophy Lodge opened on this site in 1965, and has been part of the Reliance community ever since.

### Social and Cultural

Running power lines between Maufelly and Fairchild points, and down both peninsulas, would have a serious negative effect on Trophy Lodge.

During the summer months, other than the week in August when Lutsel K'e hosts its gathering by the Lockhart River, Trophy Lodge is the social center of the Reliance area. All visitors, Dene and non-Dene, end up at the lodge. The existence of power lines and towers would unavoidably draw the eye and cause negative commentary. As there is no television or other type of distraction, the main leisure

activity is looking westward from the deck, and watching the ever changing view and far-away horizon out between Maufelly and Fairchild points.

I cannot honestly recall if there has ever been a guest or a visitor at Trophy Lodge who has not commented on the wonderful view from our camp. This is the precise view that would be marred by the proposed transmission line.

It is not possible to operate a fishing lodge without help from guests, staff, and friends. There is a sense of community built around those who have spent time at Reliance, and I very much rely on this continued sense of community to operate. I do not believe that a major disruption such as the proposed power line would help me maintain that sense of community going forward.

I would also like to say that Trophy Lodge is much more than another business to me. I have scattered the ashes of both my mother and father over the lodge and the area, including between Maufelly and Fairchild points. Reliance has a very special place in my heart.

#### Economic Impact

Should the proposed transmission line be routed down and over Maufelly and Fairchild points, my business would suffer economically. There is no doubt about that.

My clients are willing to pay substantial sums of money for two reasons: excellent fishing, and a pristine wilderness experience. Trophy Lodge has always maintained the world-class level of fishing by adhering to the sport fishing rules and stressing the importance of returning larger fish to the water. We try to add to the wilderness experience by keeping the lodge and surrounding areas as clean as possible, maintaining the history of the RCMP and others who passed through the area, and providing amenities as unobtrusively as possible.

The best fishing spot, year in and year out, in the entire Reliance area, is in the gap between Maufelly and Fairchild points, which is only 4 minutes from Trophy Lodge by boat. More forty pound plus fish are caught and released off these points than all other locations in the Reliance area, combined. This is due to the currents of the Lockhart River meeting the deeper and colder waters of McLeod Bay right between these points, and producing the feed that attracts all fish. I am not a fish biologist, but am sure that a high-capacity transmission line running directly overhead would not be helpful to the productivity of the fishing.

The wilderness experience for my clients would be destroyed. Who would want to travel all the way to the East Arm of Great Slave Lake to spend leisurely days fishing, directly under noisy, crackling high-capacity transmission lines?

For these reasons, as well as the destruction of our lodge's primary view, my guests would simply not return. I would be unable to promote the lodge as unspoiled wilderness fishing. If I did have to try to sell Trophy Lodge after my customers disappeared, the value for resale would be very small.

Economically, if the proposed transmission line is routed between Maufelly and Fairchild points, Trophy Lodge would probably not be able to continue to exist.

### Environmental Concerns

I will leave it to others to comment on impact to the caribou, bear, moose, musk-oxen, wolf, and bird life that I have personally observed on Maufelly point. I do not have the background to fully understand the effects of the proposed transmission line on wildlife, and I suspect there are very few who do have this background. Probably the Lutsel K'e Dene would be the most qualified to speak to this.

I also do not have the background to understand the effects of an overhead power line on fish in the waters below the power line. My suspicion would be that it would not be favorable for the fish, but I would very much like to see further research on the subject.

My main environmental concern is the visual. The proposed transmission line would destroy a world class vista. I do not use the term "world class" lightly. Former Prime Ministers Pierre Trudeau and John Turner, Prince Andrew of the British Royal Family, and the Irving family of New Brunswick are among the many visitors and guests to Reliance and Trophy Lodge, who have marveled over the area. Recently the Irving family named their main family holding corporation after Reliance. All guests and visitors to Trophy Lodge and Reliance, many very well travelled, are literally stopped in their tracks by the breathtaking view down McLeod Bay, through Maufelly and Fairchild points.

Parks Canada has selected this area as a proposed national park for numerous reasons, but one of them must be the views. I believe it would be extremely short-sighted to allow a transmission line to destroy this view.

### Consultation

I was informed of Daze Energy's application for their adjustment to the routing of the transmission line on February 1, 2010, by Mr. Alan Ehrlich of MVEIRB, who reached me by telephone and followed up by email.

On February 8, 2010, I received an email from Mr. Dan Grabke of Daze Energy.

On February 9, 2010, I responded to Mr. Grabke's email.

This is the only consultation I have had with Daze Energy.

I am enclosing copies of these two emails for your information.

From start to finish, I – and other Reliance area residents – have a grand total of 18 days to understand the proposed routing changes, get our facts and arguments together, and try to put together a coherent submission forward to MVEIRB, in opposition to the plan being reviewed. This puts us at a totally unreasonable and unfair disadvantage to the mustered forces and resources of Daze Energy and others who think using the proposed route might be appropriate.

### Alternatives

I do not pretend to understand the financing and construction of transmission lines, and what costs might be involved with rerouting a portion of a line. However, given that Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation are opposed to any crossing east of Reliance, and the proposed route adjustment would have a major negative impact on the small area around Reliance, where the National Park is proposed, it makes sense to look at other alternatives.

### Conclusion

There is no doubt that the proposed transmission line through Reliance, spanning Maufelly and Fairchild points, would bring an end to the business of Trophy Lodge.

I am also convinced that it would be a national disgrace to allow the natural beauty of Reliance to be ruined by a very obtrusive transmission line.

I am hopeful that the MVEIRB may recall their board meetings held at Trophy Lodge in August, 2006, and reflect on how different they may have been if the view had been wrecked by a transmission line spanning only a few hundred meters off our dock.

-----end of submission-----

From: **Dan Grabke** <[DGrabke@nwtec.ca](mailto:DGrabke@nwtec.ca)>  
Date: Mon, Feb 8, 2010 at 1:10 PM  
Subject: Taltson Transmission Line routing  
To: "[wallacef@shaw.ca](mailto:wallacef@shaw.ca)" <[wallacef@shaw.ca](mailto:wallacef@shaw.ca)>

Dear Mr. Finlayson,

During the Public Hearings held by the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (MVEIRB) on January 14-15, 2010, Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation (LKDFN) stated that the Desnedhe Che area is of significant cultural and spiritual importance and the East Arm transmission line route as proposed at that time should not cross the Lockhart River. Dezé Energy Corporation (Dezé) stated at the hearing that it is willing to investigate adjustments to transmission line routing to address these concerns and a conducted a preliminary analysis into potential re-routing of the line to find a route that would respect LKDFN concerns and avoid a crossing of the Lockhart River and disturbance to the Desnedhe Che area. This analysis determined that a possible route at Reliance was possible and this route would veer west just below Charlton Bay and would cross the peninsula of land at Reliance.

I understand that MVEIRB staff has contacted you so that you can review and provide comments on the proposed Reliance route. At this point, we are evaluating the technical aspects of the Reliance route to see how the transmission line tower height, shape and configuration may look and how this can be designed to minimize environmental and visual/aesthetic impacts in the area. This evaluation includes how the transmission line may cross the span between Maufelly and Fairchild points and the detailed routing through this area is still a work in progress. Dezé understands that you own and operate the Trophy Lodge at Fairchild Point and that you may be concerned about the proposed transmission line route at Reliance and how this may impact your business and operation. We would welcome the chance to discuss the project, share information and answer any questions you may have. Please send us your contact information so we can contact you, or you contact me via email or at the phone number listed below.

Dan Grabke, Managing Director

Dezé Energy Corporation

#206-5102-50th Ave

Yellowknife, NT X1A 3S8

**(P) 867-766-5078**

(F) 867-669-3395

(C) 867-444-8246

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Wallace Finlayson** <[wallacefinlayson@gmail.com](mailto:wallacefinlayson@gmail.com)>

Date: Tue, Feb 9, 2010 at 6:25 PM

Subject: Re: Taltson Transmission Line routing

To: Dan Grabke <[DGrabke@nwtec.ca](mailto:DGrabke@nwtec.ca)>

Dear Mr. Grabke:

Thank you for your email of February 8, 2010 concerning your proposed overhead power line between Maufelly and Fairchild points. I have just returned to Yellowknife and am starting to prepare my submission to the MVEIRB for February 18, 2010. If there is anything to discuss my mailing address is: c/o Trophy Lodge, Box 670, Yellowknife, NT, X1A 2N5 and my telephone number is (867) 873-5420 - afternoons are the best time to reach me.

Just so that you are clear about my position, I am appalled that it could be contemplated that an overhead power line could destroy a view that prime ministers, royalty and thousands of others have marveled over.

Thank you. I am, yours truly Wallace Finlayson Trophy Lodge



