



Annual Report 2007-08



Mackenzie Valley
Environmental Impact Review Board

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Our vision

Excellence in environmental impact assessment within a co-management system that balances diverse values to protect the Mackenzie Valley for present and future generations.

Our mission

To conduct quality environmental impact assessments that protect the environment and the social, economic and cultural well being of residents of the Mackenzie Valley and all Canadians.

Our values

We value

- Relationships based on mutual respect, trust and honesty
- Acting with integrity, objectivity and fairness
- Accountability, quality and efficiency in our work
- Consensus decision making and team work
- Transparency, accessibility and openness in our processes
- The diversity of the Mackenzie Valley
- Learning as an organization
- Continual improvement through innovation and adaptation

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Message from the Chairperson

With fourteen environmental assessments, two environmental impact reviews, a variety of strategic initiatives and some board membership changes, 2007-08 was a very busy year for the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board.

During this time, two environmental impact assessments for projects were completed. The federal and territorial ministers' acceptance of these two Review Board recommendations was received in 2007-08. In one of the environmental assessments, the Review Board decided that a proposed lead-zinc mine could proceed directly to the regulatory phase because the Review Board found no likely significant adverse impacts or public concerns. In the other assessment, the Review Board recommended that the federal and responsible ministers reject a mineral exploration program proposed in the Upper Thelon. The project was in a spiritually significant cultural landscape and the Review Board found there were likely significant adverse impacts on the cultural well being of the residents of the Mackenzie Valley if the project were to proceed.

The Review Board will be carrying forward all of the environmental impact reviews and eight of the environmental assessments into the 2008-09 fiscal year. Ministerial acceptance is still pending for the Review Board's recommendations to approve four other proposed developments that have undergone an environmental assessment.

The Review Board completed a number of strategic initiatives in addition to managing environmental impact assessments. These initiatives included:



Chairperson, Richard Edjericon

- production of a separate Glossary of Terms for five major aboriginal languages spoken in the Mackenzie Valley;
- translation of the Review Board's EIA Overview document into five aboriginal languages as well as French;
- production of draft guidelines for the consideration of wildlife species at risk in the conduct of environmental impact assessment;
- active participation in the NWT Board Forum; and
- active participation in the review of the northern regulatory system by Mr. Neil McCrank, special representative of the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

This year marked a change at the position of Chairperson as well. The Honourable Chuck Strahl, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada announced my appointment to the position of Chairperson of the Review

Board in March of 2008. I am honoured to be the Chairperson of the Review Board for the next three-year period and look forward to the challenges that lay ahead. We have a very strong Board with goals and a solid vision for where we need to go to ensure quality and timely environmental impact assessments in the Mackenzie Valley.

I want to acknowledge and commend my predecessor, Gabrielle Mackenzie-Scott, for her leadership as Chairperson over the previous three-year period. She has guided the Review Board through a period of unique and sometimes contentious environmental assessments. We will miss her passion for the environment and for the well being of Mackenzie Valley residents. Review Board members and staff wish Gabrielle the very best in all of her future endeavours.

I also want to acknowledge the long and valuable service of Gwich'in Tribal Council nominee Charlie Snowshoe. Charlie was our Elder on the Review Board and had been a member since its inception in December 1998. His term as board member expired in February 2008. Charlie's dedication and contribution to the Review Board's work will be sorely missed. Review Board members wish Charlie the very best in all of his future endeavours as well.

The Review Board has renewed its strategic plan for the next three-year period. The priorities set out in the strategic plan will guide me in my activities as Chairperson. In particular, I will be paying special attention to continually improving the quality and timeliness of the Review Board's environmental impact assessment process. We will do this by learning from previous environmental


impact assessments, by process innovation and by adapting the best practices of others.

Secondly, I will be focusing on building relationships with our stakeholders, in particular, the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act partners, namely land claimant organizations, the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Government of Canada. My plan is also to travel to communities, First Nation assemblies and industry tradeshow in an effort to educate and raise awareness about the Review Board, its responsibilities and the environmental impact assessment process in the Mackenzie Valley.

My third main priority will be to secure the financial resources needed by the Review Board to ensure it can deliver on its mandate in a timely manner. This has been an on-going issue for a number of years. Now that the Minister's special representative has concluded his review of the northern regulatory system, hopefully the issues related to financial capacity of the Review Board can be addressed.

I would like to acknowledge and thank Vern Christensen, Executive Director and the excellent staff of the Review Board. Their knowledge, dedication and hard work have been key to the Review Board's success. Exceptional staff and an ambitious group of board members bode well for the continued success of the Review Board.

Mahsi Cho



Richard Edjericon, Chairperson



About the Review Board

The Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board's mission is to conduct quality environmental impact assessments that protect the environment and the social, economic and cultural well being of the residents of the Mackenzie Valley and all Canadians. The Review Board is an independent administrative tribunal established when the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* came into effect in 1998. This legislation resulted directly from land claim negotiations and established a co-management system where aboriginal land claimant groups and government work together in resource management of the Mackenzie Valley, Northwest Territories. The Review Board's jurisdiction includes the portion of the Northwest Territories south of the Inuvialuit Settlement Region down to the 60th parallel, excluding the Wood Buffalo National Park.

Board membership

The Review Board consists of nine members appointed by the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. The chairperson is typically appointed on the nomination of the Review Board directly, whereas the eight regular board members are appointed in equal numbers from nominees submitted by government (federal and territorial) and land claimant organizations. As a result, the Review Board is called a "co-management" board, composed of an equal number of land claimant nominees and government nominees.

There were a few departures and a few new faces at the Review Board near the fiscal year end. Most significantly, at the end of March 2008, Ms. Gabrielle Mackenzie-Scott's term as Chairperson expired and fellow board member Mr. Richard Edjericon was appointed in her place.

During Ms. Mackenzie-Scott's term, the Review Board was at its busiest time in history, managing up to thirteen environmental assessments at a time. Ms. Mackenzie-Scott's quiet confidence and strong leadership helped the Review Board navigate the complex issues in the Mackenzie Valley in a fair and balanced approach. The Review Board would like to thank Gabrielle for her commitment and dedication over the past three years. She will be missed.

Mr. Richard Edjericon plans to continue building on the Review Board's momentum. "I have tremendous respect for the Review Board and what it has accomplished over the past three years under Ms. Gabrielle Mackenzie-Scott's

leadership,” said Richard Edjericon. “I am honoured by the appointment and I look forward to furthering the Review Board’s vision over the next few years.”

Other changes to board membership included the departure of Mr. Charlie Snowshoe, the Review Board’s longest serving board member. Mr. Snowshoe’s term expired at the end of February. Mr. Snowshoe was the respected Gwich’in Elder on the Review Board and made a significant contribution to environmental impact assessment in the Mackenzie Valley during the nine years he served on the Review Board. He carried knowledge and a passion for protecting the environment of the Mackenzie Valley which will be hard to replace. Charlie was the last remaining original appointee to the Review Board, having served since December 22, 1998 when the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board was first established. One reflection on his commitment and dedication to the Review Board’s mission was his *2007 Lifetime Achievement Award in Environmental Impact Assessment* from the Western and Northern Canada Affiliate of the

International Association for Impact Assessment. To serve as the new Gwich’in Tribal Council nominee, the Review Board welcomes a new member to the Review Board, Mr. Fred Koe. Mr. Koe has been appointed to a three year term.

The Review Board welcomes back Mr. Percy Hardisty, who was re-appointed to the Review Board for a three-year term with the support of the Dehcho First Nations. Mr. Hardisty previously served on the Review Board from November 2003 until August 2004, at which time he took a leave of absence to serve as a Joint Review Panel Member for the Mackenzie Gas Project. Mr. Hardisty continues to sit as a Joint Review Panel member while also serving on the Review Board.

At present, the Review Board has one vacancy, that being a nominee from the federal government. The Review Board continues to work with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada to ensure the Review Board vacancies do not give rise to quorum issues, which could delay board business.

Review Board members (left to right): Back row – Jerry Loomis, John Ondrack, John Stevenson, Richard Edjericon
Front row – Danny Bahya, Nora Doig, Percy Hardisty, Fred Koe



Review Board staff

In summer of 2007, the Review Board developed an internship program, which gave two summer students, Terri Bugg and Harry O'Keefe, a more focused and directed learning experience. The two students successfully completed the program and Harry O'Keefe returned back to school and the Review Board hired Terri for a few additional months in the fall to assist in supporting the Gahcho Kue Panel. After Terri left, Shannon Ripley was hired on as a casual to assist in this environmental impact review of the Gahcho Kue diamond mine.

In the fall of 2007, Mary Tapsell's interchange term as Manager of Environmental Impact Assessment with the Review Board ended and she returned to Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. Martin Haefeale, an Environmental Assessment Officer at the Review Board for five years, was appointed Manager of Environmental Impact Assessment to replace Mary.

Renita Jenkins (nee Schuh) was promoted to Manager of Communications to replace Alison Blackduck, who left the Review Board in spring 2007. Renita was the Community Liaison Officer at the Review Board for three years prior to her appointment.

A new staff member was welcomed to the Review Board in the 2007-08 year. Ms. Jessica Simpson, a born and raised northerner, was hired to fill the Community Liaison Officer position in the fall 2007. Ms. Simpson has her Bachelor's degree in Anthropology and prior to joining the Review Board was the President of the Arctic Indigenous Youth Alliance.

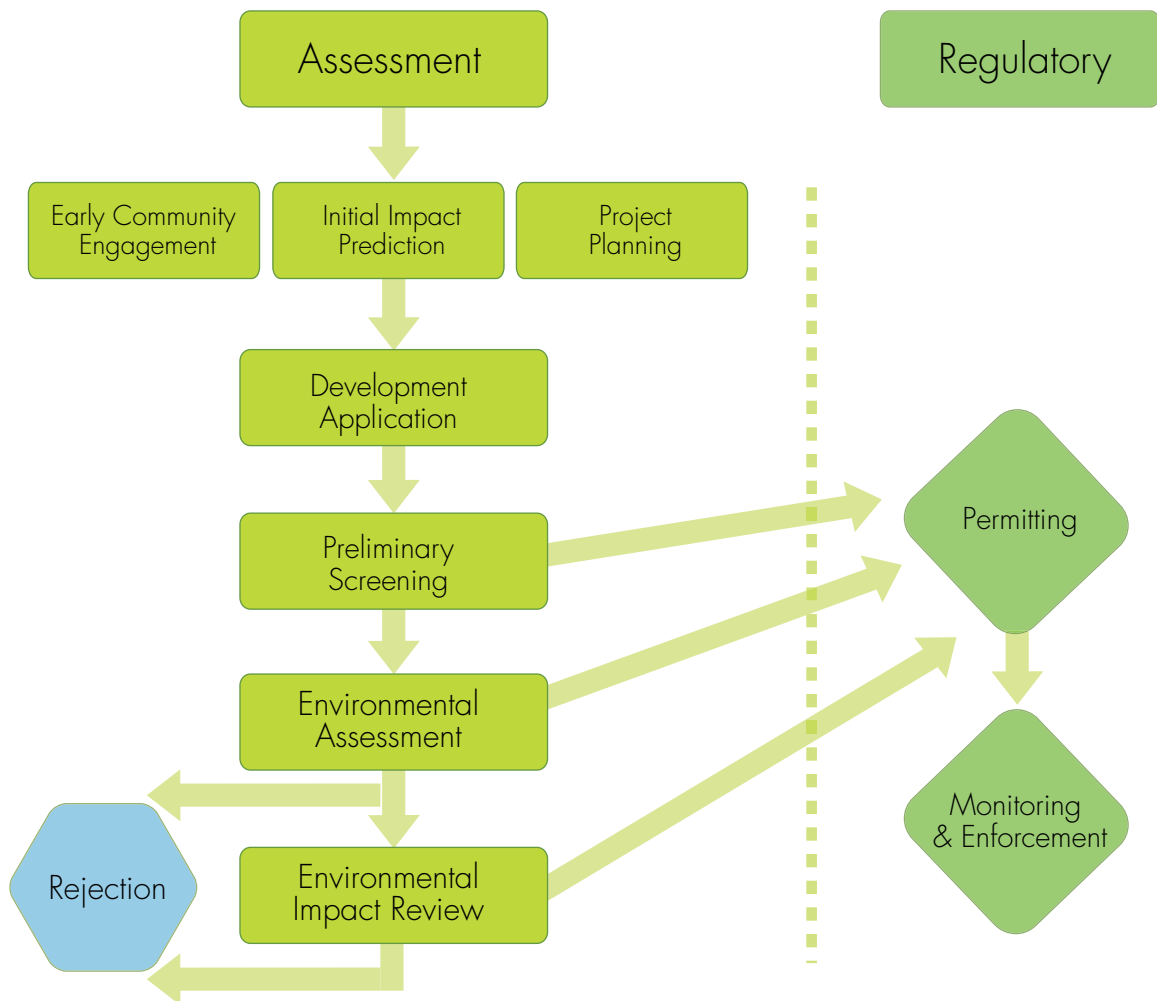
Tawanis Testart was promoted to Environmental Assessment Officer. Prior to this, Tawanis was the Environmental Assessment Assistant for the Gahcho Kue Panel for a year and a half.

The Review Board also welcomed another new staff member, Alison MacKinnon as the Review Board Secretary. She replaced Linda Piwowar, who left in the summer.



Review Board staff and chairperson keep warm on a chilly day (left to right): Back row – Alan Ehrlich, Wendy Ondrack, Patrick Duxbury, Therese Charlo, Vern Christensen
Front row – Richard Edjericon (Chair), Renita Jenkins, Martin Haefeale, Alison MacKinnon

Environmental impact assessment and regulatory process overview



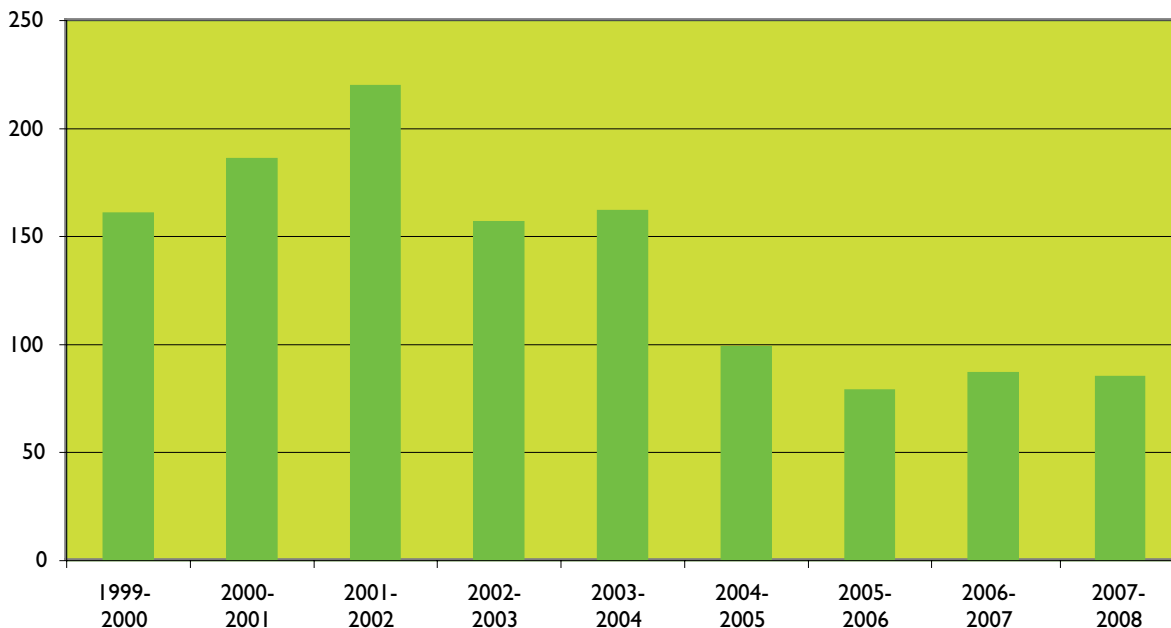
Preliminary screening

This year the Review Board reviewed 85 preliminary screening applications. In last year's annual report, the Review Board presented data showing that the number of development applications has been stabilizing over the last five years. This trend continues this year, with the number of applications remaining close to last year's numbers. These figures do not include various developments that did not require a preliminary screening, such as "grandfathered" developments, which are developments related to those approved prior to June 22, 1984 and have been exempted from preliminary screening.

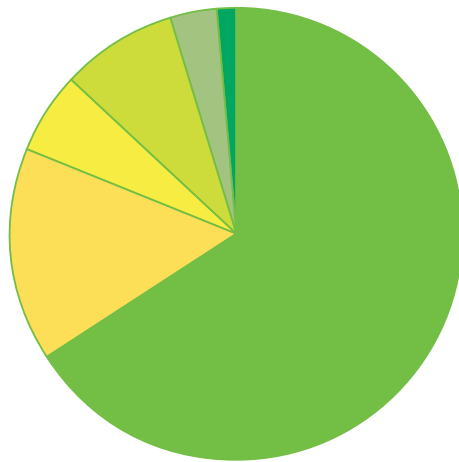
The distribution between the various types of developments remains similar to previous years, with most being applications from the mineral and oil & gas sectors. One notable increase is in the number of applications for quarries, which has tripled from last year.

The Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board conducted most of the preliminary screenings. This year the Wek'eezhii Land and Water Board took over the duties of regulating the use of land, water and the deposit of waste throughout the Wek'eezhii area from the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board.

Trend (total number of screenings)



By Screener

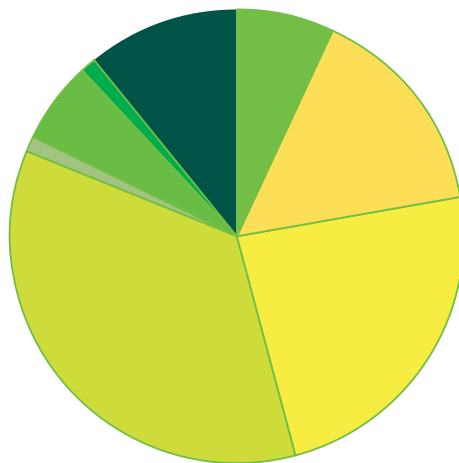


of
Screenings

Screener

- Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board
- Sahtu Land and Water Board
- Wek'èezhii Land and Water Board
- Gwich'in Land and Water Board
- Government of the NWT department
- Parks Canada

By Development Type



of
Screenings

Development Type

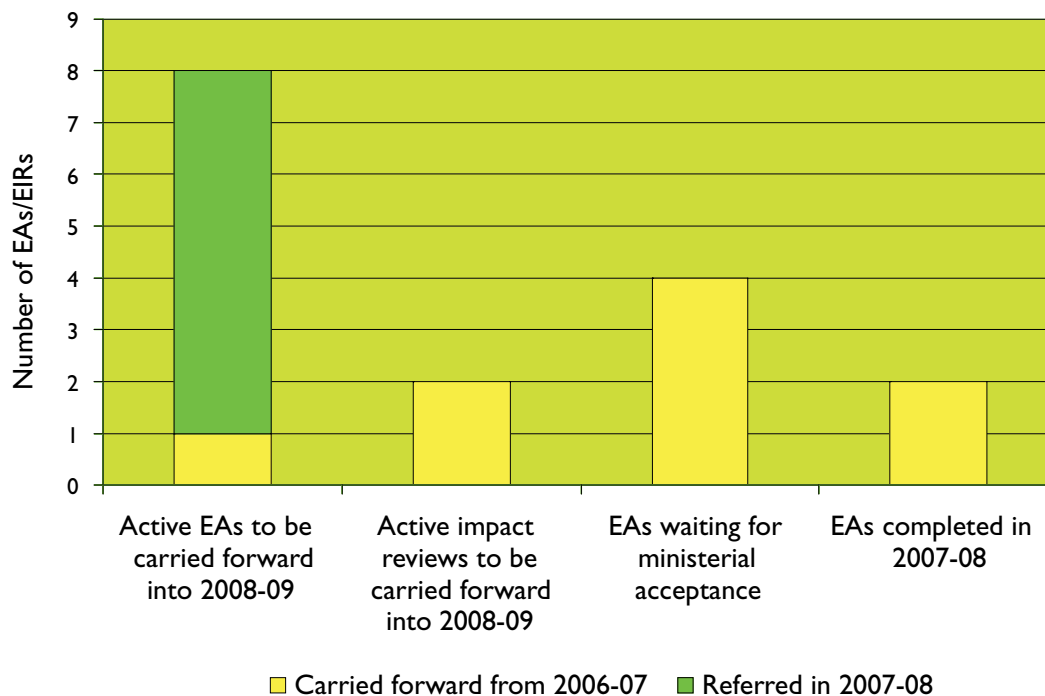
- transportation
- quarrying
- mineral exploration & mining
- oil & gas
- logging/harvesting
- remediation
- research projects
- other

Environment assessments and impact reviews

During 2007-08, the Review Board managed 14 environmental assessments and two impact reviews. The Review Board is carrying forward eight active environmental assessments into the 2008-09 fiscal year and has four environmental assessments waiting for ministerial acceptance. The two remaining environmental assessments were completed in 2007-08. The Review Board recommended approval without any measures for one development, which then

proceeds to regulatory review, and the Review Board's recommendation to reject a proposed development was accepted by the federal and responsible ministers. The environmental impact reviews are carrying forward into the 2008-09 fiscal year.

EA/EIR Progress Chart for 2007-08



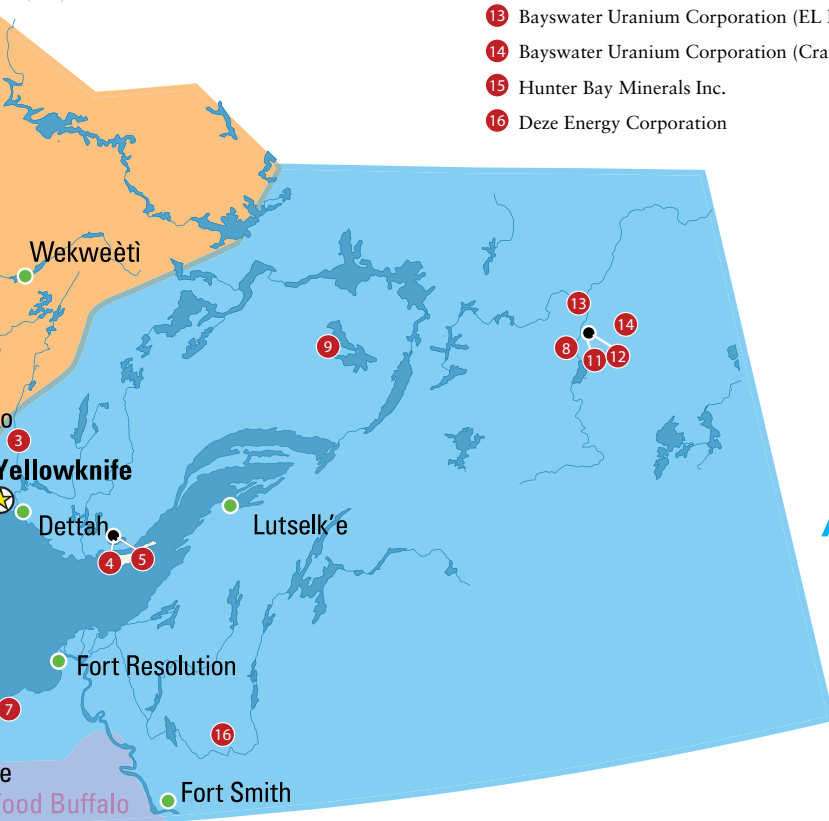


2007 – 08 Year in Review

Fig. 2 Map of Environmental Impact Assessments 2007 - 08
Mackenzie Valley, Northwest Territories

Developer	EA #	Description
1 Imperial Oil Resources Ventures Ltd.	EA03-009	Oil and Gas Geotechnical Program
2 Imperial Oil Resources Ventures Ltd	EIR0405-001	Gas Pipeline
3 Tyhee NWT Corporation	EA0506-004	Gold Mine
4 Consolidated Goldwin Ventures Inc.	EA0506-005	Mineral Exploration
5 Sidon International Resource Corp.	EA0506-006	Mineral Exploration
6 Paramount Resources Ltd.	EA0506-007	Oil and Gas Seismic
7 Tamerlane Ventures Inc.	EA0607-002	Lead-Zinc Mine
8 UR Energy Inc.	EA0607-003	Mineral Exploration
9 De Beers Canada Mining Ltd.	EIR0607-001	Diamond Mine
10 Selwyn Resources Ltd.	EA0708-001	Mineral Exploration
11 Uravan Minerals Inc. (S. Boomerang)	EA0708-002	Mineral Exploration
12 Uravan Minerals Inc. (N. Boomerang)	EA0708-003	Mineral Exploration
13 Bayswater Uranium Corporation (EL Lake)	EA0708-004	Mineral Exploration
14 Bayswater Uranium Corporation (Crab Lake)	EA0708-005	Mineral Exploration
15 Hunter Bay Minerals Inc.	EA0708-006	Mineral Exploration
16 Deze Energy Corporation	EA0708-007	Hydroelectric Expansion

Wek'èezhîi



Akaitcho

Other board decisions

OBD0708-001: Hunter Bay Minerals Inc. – Great Bear Lake Exploration Project

On June 28th, 2007, the Review Board received a screening report from the Sahtu Land and Water Board, for a uranium exploration program proposed by Hunter Bay Minerals Inc. The company proposed to conduct about 30,000m of drilling in the Edaiila (Caribou Point) area near the McTavish Arm of Great Bear Lake. The drilling was to take place from May to October over a five year period.

Based on a review of the preliminary screening, the Review Board identified possible outstanding issues with the proposed development.

In July 2007, the Review Board issued information requests to several parties seeking additional information on mitigation measures relating to caribou, and outstanding community concerns regarding a potential protected area and conservation zone in which a drill target was proposed. Considering all of the information that was available to the Review Board, the Review Board felt there was evidence of public concern regarding the proposed development, in particular the proposed drill target in Edaiila. On September 4th, 2007, the Review Board decided to exercise its discretion under subsection 126(3) of the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* and the Review Board ordered an environmental assessment of the proposed Hunter Bay Minerals Inc. mineral exploration project.

Ongoing environmental assessments

The following environmental assessment status updates are provided as of April 1st, 2008. Please visit the public registry at mveirb.nt.ca for the current status of these environmental assessments.



Fort Resolution scoping session participant

EA0708-007: Dezé Energy Corporation – Taltson Hydroelectric Expansion Project

This proposed development adds 36 megawatts of power generating capacity to the Taltson Twin Gorges Plant and includes a 690 kilometre transmission line to the diamond mines. The Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board referred this proposed development for an environmental assessment in October 2007 because the development might cause significant adverse impacts on the environment and might be a cause of public concern. The Review Board held scoping sessions in Fort Smith, Fort Resolution and Yellowknife in late November and early December

2007 and another one in Lutsel K'e in March 2008 to hear what issues should be focused on during the environmental assessment. In late March 2008, the Review Board issued its terms of reference for the environmental assessment. The Review Board is waiting for Dezé Energy Corporation to submit its Developer's Assessment Report.

EA0708-006: Hunter Bay Minerals Inc. - Hunter Bay Mineral Exploration

This is a proposed mineral exploration program in the McTavish arm of Great Bear Lake. In the summer of 2007, the Review Board created a public registry, when the Review Board first contemplated making an *Other Board Decision* to conduct an environmental assessment of the proposed project. The Review Board issued several information requests and received responses from various groups in July 2007. After examining the information before it, the Review Board referred this development in August 2007 for an environmental assessment on its own motion on the basis that it might be a cause of public concern.

In November 2007, the Review Board issued a draft workplan but delayed issuing a final workplan until Hunter Bay Minerals Inc. responded to the Review Board's questions about Hunter Bay Minerals Inc.'s activities that have already taken place in the area. The Review Board posed the questions in January 2008 and is still waiting for Hunter Bay Minerals Inc. to respond.

EA0708-004 & EA0708-005: Bayswater Uranium Corporation - EL Lake & Crab Lake Mineral Exploration

The following two mineral exploration programs are being proposed in the Thelon River Drainage Basin; EL Lake being in the upper Thelon River basin while Crab Lake is in the Dubawnt River watershed. The Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board referred both of these proposed developments for environmental assessments in August 2007. Public concern about development in the upper Thelon prompted the referrals. In October and November 2007, the Review Board solicited comments on how the environmental assessments should be structured so the assessments could be managed most efficiently. The Review Board issued draft work plans in January 2008 for public comment and in March 2008 issued scoping questionnaires and solicited comments on evidence transfer possibilities from the UR Energy Ltd. environmental assessment's public registry.

EA0708-002 & EA0708-003: Uravan Minerals Inc. - South Boomerang Lake & North Boomerang Lake Mineral Exploration

The following two mineral exploration programs are being proposed in the upper Thelon River watershed. The Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board referred these proposed developments for environmental assessments in August 2007. Public concern about development in the upper Thelon prompted the referrals. In October and November 2007, the Review Board solicited comments on how the environmental assessments

should be structured so the assessments could be managed most efficiently. The Review Board issued draft work plans in January 2008 for public comment and in March 2008 issued scoping questionnaires and solicited comments on evidence transfer possibilities from the UR Energy Ltd. environmental assessment's public registry.

EA0708-001: Selwyn Resources Ltd. - Mineral Exploration at Howard's Pass

This mineral exploration program is proposed in the Sahtu region, near the Northwest Territories/ Yukon border. In June 2007, the Sahtu Secretariat Inc. referred the project for environmental assessment on behalf the Tulita District Land Corporation. The referral was made on the basis that the proposed development might be a cause of public concern. In October 2007, Review Board staff conducted scoping sessions in Tulita and Norman Wells. The final workplan was released in November 2007. After soliciting comments on the draft, the Review Board issued the final terms of reference to Selwyn Resources Ltd. in January 2008. The Review Board is now waiting for the Developer's Assessment Report.

EA0506-004: Tyhee NWT Corp. - Yellowknife Gold Project

This is a proposed gold mine located approximately 88 km from Yellowknife. In May 2005, the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board referred this proposed development to environmental assessment because it might have significant adverse impacts on the environment.

The original proposed project was an underground mining operation.

In the spring and summer of 2005, the Review Board held issues scoping sessions and in August 2005 it released the terms of reference to Tyhee NWT Corp. However, in February 2006, Tyhee NWT Corp. notified the Review Board that it was examining an open pit scenario for the mine. As a result, over the past two years, this environmental assessment has remained in its initial stages, while the Review Board waited for updated information about this potentially significant change to the development. To date, Tyhee NWT Corp. has not produced a Developer's Assessment Report.



Completed environmental assessments waiting for ministerial acceptance

The following environmental assessment status updates are provided as of April 1st, 2008. Please visit the public registry at mveirb.nt.ca for the current status of these environmental assessments.

EA0506-007: Paramount Resources Ltd. – SDL 8 2-D Geophysical Program

This is a proposed oil and gas geophysical program in the Cameron Hills area. In November 2007, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada referred this proposed development on behalf of the Ka'a'Gee Tu First Nation. The Ka'a'Gee Tu First Nation was of the opinion that the proposed project could have an adverse impact on the environment of the Ka'a'Gee Tu First Nation's traditional territory. In February 2006, the Review Board held a scoping hearing in Hay River, followed by information requests and responses between April and October 2006.

On November 14th 2006, the Review Board recommended the federal Minister allow this proposed development to proceed to the regulatory phase, subject to the measures the Review Board listed in its *Report of Environmental Assessment and Reasons for Decision*. The Review Board's measures outlined actions necessary to prevent significant adverse impacts on the boreal caribou and the Review Board also made a number of suggestions in its report. As of March 2008, the Review Board was still waiting for a decision from the federal and responsible ministers on the project.

EA0506-006: Sidon International Resources Corp. – Mineral Exploration Program

This diamond exploration program was proposed near Defeat Lake, inland of the north shore of Great Slave Lake. In September 2005, the Review Board referred this proposed diamond exploration development to environmental assessment on the basis that the proposed development might be a cause of public concern. The environmental assessment was conducted concurrently with EA0506-005, Consolidated Goldwin Ventures Inc. – Mineral Exploration Program. The Review Board requested a detailed development description and issued information requests to Sidon International Resources Corp. rather than require the completion of a Developer's Assessment Report. Following an extended delay, Sidon International Resources Corp. provided responses in November 2006. A public hearing was subsequently held in Yellowknife on April 3rd and 4th, 2007.

Key issues in this environmental assessment included potential cultural impacts from disturbance to unrecorded heritage sites, disturbance of traditional harvesters, and impacts arising from increased access. In early February 2008, the Review Board recommended the federal Minister allow the proposed development to proceed to the regulatory phase, subject to the measures the Review Board outlined in its *Report of Environmental Assessment and Reasons for Decision*. These measures were designed to avoid or reduce the predicted impacts and they require Sidon International Resources Corp. to investigate

potential sites with an aboriginal Elder and an archaeologist, to conduct no activities within 100 meters of suspected sites, and to use helicopter access only to prevent the creation of new overland access routes.



Participants and audience during the joint public hearing for the Consolidated Goldwin and Sidon environmental assessments

EA0506-005: Consolidated Goldwin Ventures Inc. – Mineral Exploration Program

In September 2005, the Review Board referred this proposed diamond exploration development to environmental assessment on the basis that the proposed development might be a cause of public concern. The Review Board requested a detailed development description and issued information requests to Consolidated Goldwin Ventures rather than require the completion of a Developer's Assessment Report. Following an extended delay, Consolidated Goldwin Ventures provided responses in November 2006. A public hearing was subsequently held in Yellowknife on April 3rd and 4th, 2007.

This was a complex assessment with many difficult issues. These included cultural impacts on the Yellowknives Dene First Nation, access issues and cumulative impacts arising in part from the proximity of the City of Yellowknife. After careful deliberation, the Review Board released its *Report of Environmental Assessment and Reasons for Decision* in late November 2007. The Review Board recommended the federal Minister allow the proposed development to proceed to the regulatory phase, subject to the Review Board's measures to avoid or reduce the predicted impacts. These measures included access by helicopter only, no construction of a new winter road proposed by the developer, and planning for the area with the input of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation to reflect its values for the area.

EA03-009: Imperial Oil Resources Ventures Ltd. – Dehcho Geotechnical Survey

This is a proposed oil and gas geotechnical program designed to evaluate the feasibility of pipeline construction and engineering in the Dehcho region. The proposed development involves using drill rigs, creating access, building ice roads and creating work camps at many different sites. In November and December of 2004, the Review Board held hearings in Trout Lake, Wrigley and Fort Simpson. The environmental assessment dealt with issues such as industrial traffic road safety near Trout Lake, potential impacts on caribou and moose, harvester compensation, and proximity to sensitive areas (such as the Blackwater River near Wrigley).

In late February 2005, the Review Board recommended that the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada allow this proposed development to proceed to the regulatory phase, subject to the measures the Review Board outlined in its *Report of Environmental Assessment and Reasons for Decision*. The Review Board designed the measures to avoid or reduce the predicted impacts. The measures included: the developer implementing traffic advisory and control measures to ensure safety on roads the project will need in the Dehcho; the developer hiring community environmental monitors; the consideration of compensation for claims from harvesters displaced from their traditional harvesting areas; identifying heritages resources at specific sites before work is done; and restrictions on land use activities in the vicinity of the Blackwater River. In June 2005, the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada initiated the consult-to-modify process. The consult to modify process has been dormant since June 2006 and the Review Board continues to wait for feedback from the federal and responsible ministers.

Completed environmental assessments

EA0607-003: Ur Energy Inc. – Screech Lake Uranium Exploration

This proposed development involved conducting uranium exploration activities in the Upper Thelon Watershed. In September 2006, the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board referred this project to environmental assessment due to public concern. The Review Board issued information requests in October 2006. In January 2007, the Review Board held a public hearing in the community of Lutselk'e.

Key issues in this assessment included cultural impacts of a spiritual nature, because the area is sacred to the people of Lutselk'e as "the place where God began". Potential significant impacts on the Beverly caribou herd were also identified. The Review Board found that the potential for industrial development of the area was incompatible with aboriginal values for this spiritually significant cultural landscape. The Review Board submitted its *Report of Environmental Assessment and Reasons for Decision* to the federal Minister in May 2007 recommending that the development proposal be rejected without an environmental impact review. The federal and responsible ministers accepted the Review Board's recommendation in October 2007.

EA0607-002: Tamerlane Ventures Inc. – Pine Point Pilot Project

This proposed development involved using a new technology to extract one million tonnes of lead and zinc ore from a previously disturbed area and transport the concentrate to market. In June 2006, Environment Canada determined that this proposed development might have significant adverse environmental impacts and therefore referred the development for environmental assessment. The Review Board held issues scoping sessions in August 2006 and issued the terms of reference to Tamerlane Ventures Inc. in October 2006. Tamerlane submitted its Developer's Assessment Report in May 2007. Following a round of information requests, the Review Board hosted technical sessions in July 2007. A public hearing was held in Fort Resolution in October 2007.

Technical issues identified during this environmental assessment meant the developer had to significantly improve the water management, waste management, ore processing and energy sources for this project. Considering these design improvements made during the assessment for the proposed development, the Review Board submitted its *Report of Environmental Assessment and Reasons for Decision* to the federal Minister in February 2008 recommending approval without further measures or an environmental impact review.



Board members attending the Tamerlane site visit



Ongoing environmental impact reviews

The following environmental impact review status updates are provided as of April 1st, 2008. Please visit the public registry at mveirb.nt.ca for the current status of these environmental impact reviews.

EIR0607-001: De Beers Canada Mining Ltd. – Gahcho Kué Diamond Mine

This is a proposed diamond mine near Kennady Lake. In June 2006, the Review Board completed its *Report of Environmental Assessment and Reasons for Decision*, in which it ordered the proposed development to an environmental impact review. In July 2006, De Beers applied to the Supreme Court of the Northwest Territories for a judicial review of the Review Board's order to conduct an environmental impact review. In April 2007, the Northwest Territories Supreme Court upheld the Review Board's decision and by May 2007 the Review Board had announced the formation of the environmental impact review panel. In October 2007, the Panel issued its terms of reference for the Environmental Impact Statement and it is now waiting for De Beers' submission of this document.

EIR0406-001 Imperial Oil Resources Ventures Mackenzie Gas Project

The Joint Review Panel established by the Review Board, the Inuvialuit Game Council and the federal Minister of Environment, concluded its hearings during the fiscal year. The Joint Review Panel entered its decision making and report writing phase. The Review Board continues to support the Joint Review Panel and the associated Northern Gas Project Secretariat with administrative assistance and advice regarding the report production phase to follow.



Panel members and staff attending the Gahcho Kue site visit

Strategic plan summary for 2005-06 to 2007-08

Mission:

To conduct quality Environmental Impact Assessments that protect the environment and the social, economic and cultural well being of residents of the Mackenzie Valley and all Canadians

Vision:

Excellence in Environmental Impact Assessment that reflects the values of our residents for a sustainable Mackenzie Valley

Goal 1:

Leadership in Environmental Impact Assessment

Strategy 1.1

Confirm the Review Board's Mandate

Strategy 1.2

Continually Improve EIA Processes, Procedures and Reporting

Strategy 1.3

Continually Improve the Implementation of the MVRMA

Strategy 1.4

Strengthen Relationships

Goal 2:

Increasing Participation in the Environmental Assessment Process

Strategy 2.1

Build Awareness and Understanding

Strategy 2.2

Promote Community Participation

Goal 3:

Building our Capacity

Strategy 3.1

Keep Pace With Workload Demands

Strategy 3.2

Secure Long-term Funding

Strategy 3.3

Maintain a Quality Work Environment



Goal 1 – Leadership in environmental impact assessment

This goal has been carried over from the Review Board's previous strategic plan, as environmental impact assessment is the Review Board's core business. The information gathered during the strategic planning process identified a number of areas where the Review Board might provide leadership in the environmental impact assessment process and confirmed that many stakeholders expect the Review Board to be a moving force towards improvements in environmental impact assessment in the Northwest Territories.

The Review Board identified four strategies to support the goal of leadership in environmental impact assessment:

Strategy 1.1 – Confirm the Review Board's mandate

The strategic planning process clearly indicated that there is still a lack of consensus between various levels of government, industry, other stakeholders, and the Review Board itself with respect to its mandate. It is critical that this issue be resolved and that all groups involved have a common understanding of the Review Board's mandate. Confirming the Review Board's mandate will also address some of the concerns raised by stakeholders about the extent of the Review Board's decision-making independence from the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

- **Annual meeting with senior Indian and Northern Affairs Canada on mandate, policy and operational issues**

Every January, the Review Board meets with senior Indian and Northern Affairs Canada officials in Ottawa. The purpose of these meetings is to build strong working relationships with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada staff and, in addition to reviewing the Review Board's annual business plan submission, to advance important issues involving Indian and Northern Affairs Canada headquarters staff. Issues at the top of the Review Board's agenda continue to be the Review Board's authority to assess social and economic impacts of proposed development and to recommend measures to mitigate significant adverse impacts. In turn, those measures once accepted by the federal and responsible ministers must be implemented. With implementation comes a management obligation to monitor, report, and evaluate the success of those measures.

- **Working with Indian and Northern Affairs on monitoring and follow-up**

Discussions were advanced between Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and the Review Board staff in June 2007 on both of these matters. One outcome of that meeting was to conduct a relationship building workshop in October 2007 with all Northwest Territories resource management boards. The workshop was sponsored by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. Good progress has been made on developing a plan for monitoring

and follow-up of mitigation measures. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada recognition of the Review Board's authority to recommend socio-economic measures appears to be solidifying and so is the need for a transparent, monitoring and follow-up process for environmental impact assessment measures and terms and conditions of licences and permits. However, in the meantime the enforcement of measures has become an area of focus to ensure implementation of measures so that monitoring can occur in every instance. This will be an on-going activity for the next few years as this part of the resource management process is more fully developed.

- **Clarifying the Review Board's referral authority**

In October 2007, Review Board staff journeyed up to Fort Good Hope to meet with the Sahtu Land and Water Board staff to begin discussions on how to improve the environmental impact assessment process, in particular the procedures being followed during the Review Board's consideration of making its own motion to refer a development to environmental assessment pursuant to section 126 of the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act*. The two day meeting also allowed staff to gain a better understanding of roles, functions and challenges each board faces.

Strategy 1.2 – Continually improve EIA processes, procedures, and reporting

A number of potential improvements to processes, procedures, and reporting were identified during the development of the strategic plan. The Review Board is committed to identifying and promoting best practices in environmental impact assessment, to ensuring the quality of the Review Board's reports and recommendations, and to establishing appropriate and responsive processes and procedures.



2008 EIA Practitioners' Workshop participants

- **Close the loop**

The Review Board continued a tradition and at the same time started implementing its new vision with this year's "Close the Loop" EIA Practitioners' Workshop. Approximately 85 representatives from communities, co-management boards, industry, and government agencies gathered for two days in Yellowknife to discuss the place of the environmental assessment process in the greater resource management regime. Presentations and group discussions ranged from the crown's duty to consult to practical

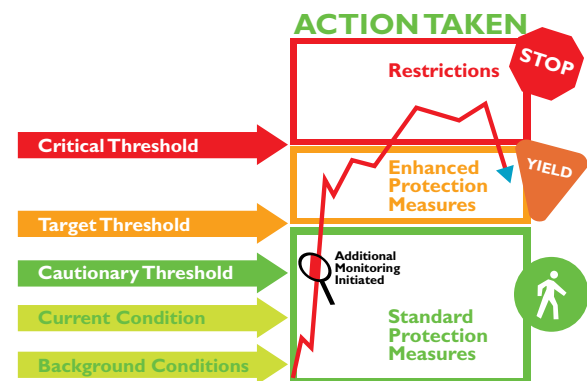
tips for hearing presentations, to follow up on environmental assessment measures, to the ways a development may be referred to an environmental assessment. The workshop also served as venue for the Western and Northern Canada Affiliate of the International Association for Impact Assessment's presentation of its lifetime achievement award to board member Charlie Snowshoe. The practitioners' workshop was made possible through the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada's generous financial contribution.

- **How to get into environmental assessment**

In December 2007, the Review Board issued a draft Reference Bulletin for public comment in order to clarify the roles and authorities of the Review Board and land and water boards for the preliminary screening process and the process of referral of proposed developments to environmental assessment. Comments have been received from land and water boards, industry, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and others. The scope of this initiative has now been broadened to include all referring organizations under the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* in order to ensure the all referring processes are legally correct and harmonized. A workshop involving all involved organizations is scheduled for the new fiscal year.

- **Implementation of valued component thresholds**

Review Board staff are leading a research initiative for determining thresholds or management targets for valued components in the Mackenzie Valley. The research is funded through the Oil and Gas industry's Environmental Sciences Research Fund. It is being carried out through a contracted consultant firm under the guidance of a steering committee composed of representatives from industry, the National Energy Board, the Review Board and government. The study is ongoing with results expected in the 2008-09 fiscal year.



Credit: Salmo Consulting Inc.

- **New and improved Reference CDs**

For the 2006-07 year, the Review Board improved the functionality of its reference CDs to incorporate all the environmental assessment and impact review decisions since the creation of the Review Board. The CD also provides links to all the Review Board guidelines, publications and links to the website.

Strategy 1.3 – Continually improve the implementation of the MVRMA

- **Response to 2005 Environmental Audit**

The Review Board has accumulated considerable experience in working with Part 5 of the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* and is committed to sharing this experience with others as the opportunity arises. One specific opportunity identified during the strategic planning process is the 2005 NWT Environmental Audit (Part 6 of the Act). The Review Board is monitoring progress on recommendations arising from the audit and facilitating the implementation of those recommendations that the Review Board submitted to the auditors during their review. The Review Board's recommendations included certain legislative amendments to provide process clarity, consistency and certainty; the need for a comprehensive monitoring, reporting and evaluation process for measures arising from reports of environmental assessment and the need for funding to assist certain participants in the Review Board's environmental impact assessment processes.

- **Guidelines for considering wildlife at risk**

The Review Board worked with Environment Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories to draft guidelines for considering wildlife at risk in environmental impact assessment. These guidelines also address the requirements of the federal *Species at Risk Act* for environmental assessment. The Review Board has issued the draft guidelines

for public comment and will finalize the guidelines in the upcoming year.

- **NWT Board Forum**

The Review Board continued to be active participants in the work of the NWT Board Forum during 2007-08. Review Board staff have been actively involved in the development of strategic and business planning guidelines and templates for use by Board Forum members; the development of an NWT Board Forum "one stop shop" website portal and the development of a consolidated statement of Board Forum research priorities for distribution to researchers and funding agencies interested in the Northwest Territories. The Review Board was pleased to host the NWT Board Forum meeting in Yellowknife on November 10-11, 2007.



Gabrielle Mackenzie-Scott (right) leading Gaëton Caron (National Energy Board), Liz Snider (Inuvialuit Environmental Impact Review Board) and Jan Atkinson (National Energy Board) through a drum dance at the Board Forum

- **Northern Regulatory Improvement Initiative**

In November 2007, the Honourable Chuck Strahl, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada announced the appointment of Neil McCrank as his special representative to review the predictability, effectiveness and efficiency of the northern regulatory system. The Review Board made a number of written and verbal presentations to Mr. McCrank. In particular, the Review Board emphasized the need for the “right capacity in the right places” to make the northern environmental impact assessment and regulatory system work as intended by the legislation and associated land claim agreements. This included financial, human and institutional capacity.

The Review Board also emphasized that the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* partners (i.e. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Government of the Northwest Territories, and land claimant organizations) need to jointly manage the implementation of the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act*; that without all partners involved, improvements may not be timely or possible. To facilitate transparency and an open dialogue with all stakeholders, the Review Board placed all information it received or sent regarding the Northern Regulatory Improvement Initiative on the Review Board website for ready access by the public.

Hon. Chuck Strahl, Minister of INAC (left) speaking to NWT Board Forum members including former Review Board Chairperson Gabrielle Mackenzie-Scott (right)



Strategy 1.4 – Strengthen relationships

The Review Board’s relationships with other *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* boards and all stakeholders are important to the success of the environmental impact assessment process. These relationships also provide valuable feedback to the Review Board on its processes and procedures, as demonstrated through the strategic planning process.

- **Exchanging thoughts, messages, and information**

Review Board representatives attended six annual assemblies of aboriginal organization and four tradeshow to better understand the Review Board’s stakeholders and promote the Review Board’s roles, responsibilities and achievements.

First Nation Assemblies attended:

Dehcho First Nation Assembly, Fort Simpson (June 26th – 29th, 2007)

Akaiitcho First Nation Assembly, Lutselk’e (July 10th – 12th, 2007)

3rd Annual Tlicho Gathering, Behchoko (July 17-19th, 2007)

Dene National Assembly, Behchoko (July 17-19th, 2007)

Gwich’in Annual General Assembly, Tsiigehtchic (August 14th – 16th, 2007)

Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated Assembly, Tulita (August 28th - 30th, 2007)



(left to right): John Stevenson, John Ondrack and Richard Edjericon working the Review Board's booth during PDAC Trade Show 2008

Tradeshows booth appearances:

Inuvik Petroleum Show, Inuvik (June 13th – 14th, 2007)

Yellowknife Geosciences Forum, Yellowknife (November 20th – 22nd, 2007)

Mineral Exploration Round-up, Vancouver (January 28th – 31st, 2008)

PDAC 2008 International Convention, Trade Show and Investors Exchange, Toronto (March 2nd – 5th, 2008)

• **Managing from start to finish**

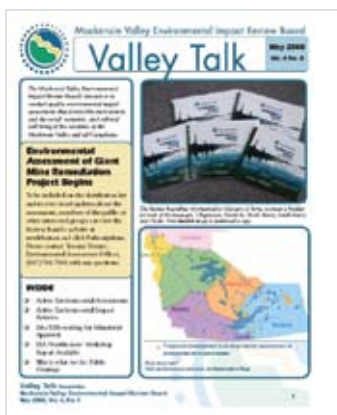
In the fall of 2007, representatives from various co-management boards and government came together in a “*Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act Relationship Building Workshop*” for a critical look at the coordination, implementation and monitoring of mitigation measures and terms of conditions. For two days participants listened to various presentations and had open and frank discussions on topics such as how mitigation measures are drafted, how they can be implemented, or what the limitations on enforcement are. Review Board representatives came away with a new understanding of the challenges faced by the other organizations responsible for implementing the Review Board's recommendations. Next steps were formulated and follow up discussions are to occur in 2008-09.

Goal 2 – Increasing participation in the environmental assessment process

The strategic planning process brought participation in the environmental assessment process, particularly by communities, to the forefront as a challenge for the Review Board. Participation by all stakeholders is essential if the Review Board is to have a well-rounded and accurate base of information for decision-making. The Review Board identified two strategies to support increased participation in the environmental assessment process:

Strategy 2.1 – Build awareness and understanding

The strategic planning process identified that some stakeholders may not be aware of their opportunities to participate in the environmental assessment process or may not understand how to exercise those opportunities. The Review Board intends to continue its efforts to clearly communicate its processes and the roles of all groups within those processes.



• “Valley Talk” newsletter

The Review Board continued to release its monthly newsletter called “Valley Talk”. This past fall a new monthly column called “This is what we do” by Jessica Simpson provides subscribers with a simple to understand explanation of each stage of the environmental assessment process.

• Professional interactions

The Review Board made a number of presentations at various conferences and other venues over the past year to share its experiences in environmental impact assessment and lessons that are being learned. Presentations by board members and staff included:

“The Role of the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board”
Gabrielle Mackenzie-Scott, Chairperson, Presenter; Obtaining Project Approvals North of 60’, Edmonton, AB; April 11-13, 2007

“Involving Canada’s Indigenous Peoples in EIA: Co-management through the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board”
Gabrielle Mackenzie-Scott, Chairperson, Presenter; IAIA International Conferences, Seoul, Korea; June 1 – 10, 2007.

“The awakening of SEIA in the NWT, Canada – The Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board’s experience” Mary Tapsell, Manager of Environmental Impact Assessment, Presenter; IAIA International Conferences, Seoul, Korea; June 1 – 10, 2007.

“The Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board” Gabrielle Mackenzie-Scott, Chairperson, Presenter; Dene National Assembly, Behchoko, NT; July 18, 2007

“The Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act and the role of the Review Board” Gabrielle Mackenzie-Scott, Chairperson, Presenter; Northern Mine Reclamation Management, Yellowknife, NT; September 11-12, 2007.

“Everything you wanted to know about EIA, but were afraid to ask!” Gabrielle Mackenzie-Scott, Chairperson, Presenter; Environmental Laws & Regulations North of 60’, Edmonton, AB; November 15-16, 2007.

“The importance of early engagement” Gabrielle Mackenzie-Scott, Chairperson, Presenter; Geosciences Forum, Yellowknife, NT; November 20-22, 2007.

“Aboriginal Consultation for Industry” Gabrielle Mackenzie-Scott, Chairperson, Presenter; 5th Annual Aboriginal Consultation for Industry Conference, Vancouver, BC; December 4-6, 2007.

“The Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board – What you would like to know” Gabrielle Mackenzie-Scott, Chairperson, Presenter; Truths from the North: Law, Politics and Society, Edmonton, AB; January 17-18, 2008.

“Navigating the environmental assessment process in the Mackenzie Valley” Martin Haefele, Manager of Environmental Impact Assessment, half day seminar; Arctic Gas Symposium, Calgary AB; March 5-7, 2008.



Alistair Macdonald (centre) discussing social indicators with workshop participants Sarah Olivier (left) and Sharon Haydon (right)

• SEIA workshops

The Review Board held four sessions of the Socio-Economic Impact Assessment workshops in June 2007. These interactive workshops helped participants learn how to do socio-economic impact assessment and to use the Review Board’s *Socio-Economic Impact Assessment Guidelines*.

Strategy 2.2 – Promote community participation

Communities have raised a number of concerns with respect to their capacity to participate in the environmental assessment process. The strategic planning process also clearly identified intervener funding as an issue for many stakeholders and a limit to a successful environmental assessment process. The Review Board is committed to addressing these issues to the extent possible given its mandate and the roles and responsibilities of other organizations.

- **Translation of EIA Overview**

The Review Board translated its Environmental Impact Assessment Guidelines Overview booklet from English into Chipewyan, French, Gwich'in, North Slavey, South Slavey and Tlicho. The booklet is a condensed version of the *Environmental Impact Assessment Guidelines* and is written for readers who are unfamiliar with the process and are trying to get a better understanding of the *Environmental Impact Assessment Guidelines*.

- **Reproduction of glossary**

Since 2002, the Review Board has held five terminology workshops for the Mackenzie Valley aboriginal languages of Chipewyan, Gwich'in, North Slavey, South Slavey and Tlicho. As an outcome of these workshops, the Review Board has produced a Glossary of Terms for each language. The glossaries provide translations of terminology for the biophysical environment, the oil and gas industry, the mining industry, the human environment and the resource management system.

In this new edition of the Glossary of Terms, the layout has been changed to have one language per publication. In addition, many of the English definitions were simplified to make them easier to understand.

- **Website improvements**

The Review Board continued to improve the functionality of its website over the past year. Some of the improvements included:

- enhancing the subscription service features
- developing an interactive map, which displays the locations and information about ongoing environmental assessments and impact reviews
- adding RSS feed options to public registry updates and news announcements

These improvements to the website allow the public access to the most current information in a timely manner.

- **Community Tours**

Due to funding delays both the translator workshops and community tours for the year were not completed. However, generic public information sessions about the environmental assessment process were held in Tulita, Norman Wells, and Fort Smith as a precursor to issues scoping sessions held in those communities for proposed developments.



Goal 3 – Building our capacity

The information gathered during the strategic planning process clearly indicated that Review Board members and staff are already stretched in completing their duties and that the Review Board can expect a continued increase in its workload over the next three years. These challenges result in a continued emphasis on capacity building, administrative efficiency, and staff satisfaction. The Review Board identified three strategies to support the goal of building its capacity:



Harry O'Keefe (left) and Terri Bugg (right) celebrate the success of their internships

Strategy 3.1 – Keep pace with workload demand

In order for the Review Board to fulfill its responsibilities for a timely and high quality environmental impact assessment process, Review Board members must be readily available and appropriate staff resources must be in place. The assessment and allocation of existing resources is a key issue in efficiently meeting demand, as is the on-going improvement of the Review Board's internal administrative procedures.

- **Investing in the future**

The office was bustling in the summer of 2007, with the addition of two summer interns. This year was the first year the Review Board implemented a summer intern program, which provided environmental assessment relevant training to the interns and challenged them with conducting a small project on their own.

- **Building from within**

Although there were a number of staffing changes, the Review Board was able to manage the change in such a way that the corporate knowledge held by the Review Board staff was retained with a number of internal promotions made.

- **Maintain IT capacity**

This has been accomplished through replacement and expansion of hardware as required. Software is upgraded as required to make best use of electronic technology available to support efficient operations of the Review Board. A planned conversion to the MS Vista operating software was delayed for one year to ensure early operational problems had been successfully resolved by Microsoft before being adopted by the Review Board.

Strategy 3.2 - Secure long-term funding

Having a reliable, long-term funding base is a key success factor for the Review Board, particularly given that the oil and gas funding, which has supplemented the Review Board's budget in the past, came to an end in the 2004-05 fiscal year. The Review Board recognizes it is accountable for the funding received, and as a result is committed to establishing performance measures for its activities and benchmarks. The Review Board seeks to maintain open communications with its funding groups and agencies to resolve outstanding funding issues.

- **Annual Meeting with senior Indian and Northern Affairs Canada officials in Ottawa**

Every January, the Review Board meets with senior Indian and Northern Affairs Canada officials in Ottawa. A primary objective of this meeting is to review the Review Board's annual business plan submission for the coming fiscal year. For many years now, the Review Board has made a case for sufficient funding to fulfill all of its responsibilities under the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act*. This case was repeated again in January 2008. The Review Board was advised that Neil McCrank, the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada's special representative reviewing the northern regulatory system, was considering the theme of capacity and stable funding for resource management boards. The Review Board looks forward to the implementation of supportive recommendations from Mr. McCrank's report to Minister Strahl in 2008-09.

- **Meetings with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Claims implementation Branch throughout the year**

Fulfilling all the Review Board's obligations under the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* requires approximately \$5.5 million annually. The Review Board funding flows from through the Gwich'in land claims agreement implementation plan in the amount of \$2.4 million annually. This amount is tied to a ten year "flat line" contract ending in 2012. Review Board staff met regularly with Claims Implementation staff to seek supplementary funding in the amount of \$500-\$700,000 annually to meet the minimum operating requirement of the Review Board. The availability of supplementary funding continues to be very uncertain from year to year. Not only is there a chronic annual funding shortfall – but funding uncertainty also continues to complicate good planning and project management by the Review Board. Again the Review Board looks forward to the results of the Northern Regulatory Improvement Initiative and hopes it will address this issue.

- **Building relations with land claimant groups**

The Review Board recognises that the support of the land claimant groups which set the ground for the creation of the Review Board is vital if funding issues are going to be addressed. In September 2007, the Review Board sought the support of land claimant organizations to emphasize the urgent need for Indian and Northern Affairs Canada to

provide the Review Board with adequate funding for 2007-08 operations. This support was appreciated and the necessary funding agreement was finalized shortly after.

Strategy 3.3 – Maintain a quality work environment

A work environment where all staff and board members are empowered to contribute their skills and experience is necessary for meeting the Review Board's challenging workload and capacity issues. The strategic planning process identified some areas where the Review Board could do more to support staff and board members. The Review Board will continue to work towards programs and policies that maintain the Review Board's competitiveness as an employer.

- **Professional Development**

Review Board and staff attended a number of training conferences over the year. Training most often focused on board governance and training, project management and environmental impact assessment.

- **Plain language writing training**

In December 2007, the Review Board and staff participated in an "Improving Legal Writing Workshop". The workshop provided staff with tools to develop their skills in writing and designing clear, concise, and reader-friendly documents. The knowledge gained at the workshop has helped the Review Board members and staff write better

decisions, communicate more clearly with parties and offer better information materials to the public.

- **A safer workplace**

In an effort to ensure the workplace remains a safe place to be, the Review Board staff took their Standard First Aid and CPR C Training in January 2008. The training provides staff protection, security and assurance that there can be prompt treatment in case of injury while on the job with their colleagues.



Renita Jenkins (right) poses with Larry the CPR dummy during Standard First Aid and CPR C training

Strategic initiatives postponed or cancelled

Some strategic initiatives were cancelled or significantly reduced this past fiscal year because funding was either not provided or it was transferred too late in the year. These included:

- **Determining effectiveness of mitigation measures**

The Review Board feels it is essential to know if the predictions made, the measures written and the implementation of those measures for environmental assessments have been both accurate and effective. However, the Review Board's lack of adequate funding has limited the Review Board's work to simply tracking whether or not measures are implemented and very preliminary discussions with regulators about database development. The Review Board has not been able to explore why measures are or are not implemented and also who is responsible for pursuing the measures and at what frequency. The Review Board feels this information is essential to improving the overall regulatory framework but had to postpone the work due to funding constraints.

- **Community tours**

The Review Board has run community tours annually since 2001. These tours are an important venue for the Review Board to learn more about the communities it serves and to assist in building the capacity of communities that may participate in an environmental assessment. During the tours, sometimes the meetings are large formal public meetings, other times they are one-on-one discussions over tea. However, no matter

the format of the meeting, each discussion brings new insights to the Review Board about the communities' perspectives on environmental impact assessment. These tours were scheduled for February and March 2007 but were cancelled because the necessary funding did not come through until mid-March and it did not provide enough time to coordinate the initiative before fiscal year end.

- **Translator workshops**

The Interpreters'-Translators' Workshop Initiative began in 2002 after translators at a hearing in the Dehcho told the Review Board they were having difficulty translating the proceedings. Since then, the Review Board has held terminology workshops almost every year for the Mackenzie Valley aboriginal languages of Chipewyan, Gwich'in, North Slavey, South Slavey and Tlicho. As an outcome of these workshops, the Review Board produces a Glossary of Terms for each language. These workshops are viewed as a cornerstone to communicating properly with Elders and community members in the official languages of the Northwest Territories. The goal for the 2007-08 fiscal year was to focus on training presenters on how to communicate effectively in public hearings when simultaneous translation is occurring. The training was to be designed in collaboration with the translators. However, funding was not available to pursue this initiative.

- **Establishing a participant funding program**

Participant funding, which is provided in other jurisdictions in Canada, would assist aboriginal and other organizations and individuals to participate more effectively in the Review Board's environmental assessment process. Participant funding is essential to assist potentially affected parties that lack the resources to provide quality and timely advice to the Review Board regarding impacts of proposed developments. Without the capacity for all potentially affected parties to effectively participate, the fairness of the environmental assessment process can be called into question. However, no funding has been provided for participant funding to be established in the Mackenzie Valley.

- **Complying with the Official Languages Act**

In April 2006, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada advised the Review Board that the *Official Languages Act* applies to the boards formed under the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* even though it was enacted pursuant to aboriginal land claim agreements. Legal counsel clarified that the Review Board is a "federal institution" as defined by the *Official Languages Act* and as such must provide public communications and services in both French and English. The Review Board requires additional resources to meet its obligations under the *Official Languages Act* of Canada. The Review Board proposed to address its similar obligations to provide language services in aboriginal languages spoken in the Mackenzie Valley

following a commensurate and concurrent approach. These obligations are drawn from sections 114 and 115 of the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act*, which states that the "concerns of aboriginal people must be taken into account" in the environmental impact assessment process and that those processes shall have regard to social and cultural well being of Mackenzie Valley residents. The communication of aboriginal languages is critical to understanding and protecting the social and cultural environment of many Mackenzie Valley communities. However, funding has not been provided to do so.

- **Negotiate a Cooperation Agreement with Alberta**

The Review Board feels it is necessary to enter into a cooperation agreement with Alberta environmental impact assessment authorities to collaborate on proposed developments that may have transboundary impacts and to make appropriate arrangements for early notification of proposed developments and information sharing regarding EIA best practices and "lessons learned". Efforts to meet with Alberta have been made but limited because of resources and capacity in both jurisdictions.

- **Review/update Board Guidelines**

The Review Board lacked the capacity and staff resources this year to undergo a necessary revision process for its guidelines and reference bulletins. These revisions are needed so that the guidelines reflect the changes to the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* arising from the Tlicho self-government agreement.

- **Environmental Impact Assessment Course Materials**

Due to transition in staff and a lack of funding for publications, the initiative to develop course materials related to environmental impact assessment for schools in the Northwest Territories was not realized.

- **Pursue a solution to the continuing delays in filling board member vacancies**

This issue is raised at every opportunity with senior Indian and Northern Affairs Canada officials and to Indian and Northern Affairs Canada officials attending regular meetings of the NWT Board Forum. It was raised with Neil McCrank during *Northern Regulatory Improvements Initiative* meetings as well. The Review Board continues to give Indian and Northern Affairs Canada a minimum of three months notice when a member's term will be expiring.

- **Conduct a Management Risk Audit of the Review Board's operations**

This project was not undertaken due to uncertainty of 2007 – 08 supplementary funding from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

- **Improve the Review Board's GIS database**

During the fiscal year the Review Board continued to utilize and make incremental improvements to its geographic information system. However, major improvements and upgrades to the database had to be postponed to the next fiscal year due to fiscal and human resources constraints.

Renewing our strategic plan

The Review Board renews its strategic plan every three years. The current strategic plan had been developed for the period of fiscal years 2005-06 to 2007-08. An extensive environmental scan was conducted in which Review Board members, staff and external stakeholders provided comments and advice on what is working well, not so well and what can be done to improve Review Board's success in fulfilling its roles and responsibilities. With this feedback in hand the Review Board reaffirmed or revised its mission, vision, values, goals and strategies for the next three year period (2008-09 to 2010-11) as follows.

Mission

To conduct quality environmental impact assessments that protect the environment and the social, economic and cultural well being of residents of the Mackenzie Valley and all Canadians.

The mission defines the core purpose or reason for being of the organization and the contribution it makes to society and to basic human needs. It answers the question "what must the Review Board do?" - often by law.

Vision

Excellence in environmental impact assessment within a co-management system that balances diverse values to protect the Mackenzie Valley for present and future generations

The vision is a succinct powerful statement. It is something you would be willing to work hard for. It answers the question "what does the Review Board want to achieve over the next 10 to 25 years?"



Vern Christensen (standing) leads board and staff through the strategic planning workshop

Rationale

The essential task of the Review Board is to produce quality and timely environmental; impact assessments of proposed development; hence the focus on “excellence in environmental impact assessment”.

However, the operating environment of the Review Board is changing significantly. The work load will be sharply increasing in the relatively short term and the reality is that further improvement of environmental impact assessment in the Mackenzie Valley is increasingly dependent on external factors. The Review Board’s vision resets the focus of the organization on not just building the internal organization and doing quality environmental impact assessment but also on taking a leadership role in making the overall Mackenzie Valley resource management system work more effectively and efficiently. In effect, it announces that the Review Board has moved to a more mature development phase and, given that the success of the Review Board is dependent on the success of the whole *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* system, it is now prioritizing its efforts to address those barriers to success outside the organization as well.

The vision complements the Review Board’s mission and vision. It highlights the importance of “co-management”, “balancing diverse values”, the Review Board’s purpose to have regard for the protection of the Mackenzie Valley environment, and the notion of sustainability through the words “for present and future generations” as key success factors for the organization.

Values

We value:

- Relationships based on mutual respect, trust and honesty
- Acting with integrity, objectivity and fairness
- Accountability, quality and efficiency in our work
- Consensus decision making and team work
- Transparency, accessibility and openness in our processes
- The diversity of the Mackenzie Valley
- Learning as an organization
- Continual improvement through innovation and adaptation

Our values are lasting and enduring behaviour and a belief that is truly lived.

Goals and Strategies

The goals and strategies for the 2008-09 to 2010-11 period are identified in the following Strategic Plan Summary.

Goals are the top 3 or 4 things (major issues or groups of issues) we must address to make the vision a reality over the next 5-10 year period?

Strategies are specific measurable time bound plans to achieve a goal over the next three year period. There are usually no more than four strategies per goal.

Strategic plan summary 2008-09 to 2010-11

Mission:

To conduct quality environmental impact assessments that protect the environment and the social, economic and cultural well being of residents of the Mackenzie Valley and all Canadians

Vision:

Excellence in environmental impact assessment within a co-management system that balances diverse values to protect the Mackenzie Valley for present and future generations

Goal 1:

Excellence in environmental impact assessment

Strategy 1.1

Improve the resources available to EIA stakeholders

Strategy 1.2

Expand the EIA toolbox

Strategy 1.3

Enhance EIA communications

Goal 2:

An effective integrated resource management system

Strategy 2.1

Enhance integrated resource management communication and cooperation

Strategy 2.2

Improve MVRMA clarity, certainty and consistency

Strategy 2.3

Strengthen the preliminary screening process

Strategy 2.4

Promote a comprehensive post Report of EA follow up process

Goal 3:

Capacity to achieve our vision

Strategy 3.1

Secure timely and sufficient funding

Strategy 3.2

Secure adequate human resources and infrastructure

Strategy 3.3

Enhance capacity through professional development and training

Strategy 3.4

Maintain best practices and a quality work environment

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Auditors' Report

To the Board of Directors of Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board

We have audited the statement of financial position of Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board as at March 31, 2008 and the statements of operations – operating fund, and changes in equipment fund for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Board's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Board as at March 31, 2008 and the results of its operations for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

Yellowknife, Northwest Territories
May 1, 2008

Mackay LLP

Chartered Accountants

Statement of Operations – Operating Fund

For the year ended March 31,	Budget 2008	Actual 2008	Actual 2007
Revenue			
Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development – Claims Implementation	\$ 2,944,011	\$ 2,944,011	\$ 2,881,604
Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development – Joint Review Panel	–	–	3,046,416
Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development – Environmental Impact Review	–	700,000	–
Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development – EA Practitioner’s Workshop	–	50,000	50,000
Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development – Glossary of Terms	–	5,550	–
Government of the Northwest Territories – Translators Workshop	–	–	35,000
Other	–	183	37,782
Deferred contribution from prior year	341,396	1,474,836	377,015
	3,285,407	5,174,580	6,427,817
Repayable surplus contribution	–	21,076	–
	3,285,407	5,153,504	6,427,817
Expenses			
Administration	179,194	115,099	132,716
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency – 1/3 share of Joint Review Panel costs	–	1,133,440	1,912,976
Communications	82,460	43,309	67,619
Honoraria	556,801	510,540	477,594
Office rent	174,720	170,483	158,751
Professional fees	462,598	446,616	449,296
Salaries, wages and benefits	1,184,402	1,335,675	1,360,168
Travel – board	406,561	253,650	272,396
Travel – staff	205,671	135,282	100,524
	3,252,407	4,144,094	\$ 4,932,040
Excess of revenue over expenses before transfer	33,000	1,009,410	1,495,777
Transfer to equipment fund (Note 4)	(33,000)	(6,670)	(20,941)
Excess of revenue over expenses	–	1,002,740	1,474,836
Transfer to deferred contributions (Note 8)	–	(1,002,740)	(1,474,836)
Excess revenue	\$ –	\$ –	\$ –

Statement of Changes in Equipment Fund

For the year ended March 31,	2008	2007
Opening balance	\$ 63,275	\$ 96,175
Transfer from operating fund (Note 4)	6,670	20,941
Amortization	(16,439)	(53,841)
Closing balance	\$ 53,506	\$ 63,275

Statement of Financial Position

As at March 31,

2008

2007

Assets

Current

Cash	\$ 1,010,981	\$ 1,303,554
Accounts receivable (Note 5)	127,366	507,746
Prepaid expenses	4,475	13,377

1,142,822 1,824,677

Equipment (Note 6)

53,506 63,275

\$ 1,196,328 \$ 1,887,952

Liabilities

Current

Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 119,006	\$ 349,841
Contributions repayable (Note 7)	21,076	–
Deferred contributions (Note 8)	1,002,740	1,474,836

\$ 1,142,822 \$ 1,824,677

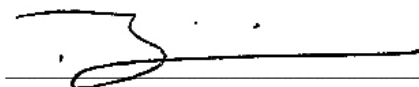
Net Assets

Equipment fund

53,506 63,275

\$ 1,196,328 \$ 1,887,952

Approved on behalf of the Board



Director – Richard Edjericon



Director – John Stevenson

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2008

1. Organization and Jurisdiction

The Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (the “Board”) was established under the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* with a mandate to conduct environmental impact assessments in the Mackenzie Valley of the Northwest Territories.

The Board is exempt from income tax under section 149(1) of the *Income Tax Act*.

2. Accounting Changes

Effective April 1, 2007, the Board implemented the new CICA Handbook Section 1506 “accounting changes”. Under these new recommendations, voluntary changes in accounting policy are permitted only when they result in the financial statements providing reliable and more relevant information. This section requires changes in accounting policy to be applied retroactively unless doing so is impracticable, requires prior period errors to be corrected retroactively and requires enhanced disclosures about the effects of change in accounting policies, estimates and error on the financial statements.

These recommendations also require the disclosure of new primary sources of generally accepted accounting principles that have been issued that the Board has not adopted because they are not yet in effect.

The impact the adoption of this Section will have on the Board’s financial statements will depend on the nature of future accounting changes

General Standards for Financial Statement Presentation

The CICA has amended Handbook Section 1400 “General standards for financial statement presentation” effective for periods beginning on or after January 1, 2008 to include requirements to assess and disclose the Board’s ability to continue as a going concern. The adoption of this new section is not expected to have an impact on the Board’s financial statements.

Capital Disclosures

In December 2006, the CICA issued Handbook section 1535 “capital disclosures” which is effective for years beginning on or after October 1, 2007. The section specifies the disclosure of (i) an entity’s objectives, policies, and processes for managing capital; (ii) quantitative data about what the entity regards as capital; (iii) whether the entity has complied with any capital requirements; and (iv) if it has not complied, the consequences of such non-compliance. This new Section relates to disclosures and did not have an impact on the Board’s financial results.

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2008

2. Accounting Changes (continued)

International Financial Reporting Standards

In January 2006, the CICA Accounting Standards Board (AcSB) adopted a strategic plan for the direction of accounting standards in Canada. As part of that plan, accounting standards in Canada for not-for-profit entities are expected to converge with International Financial Reporting Standards (“IFRS”) by the end of 2011. The impact of the transition to IFRS on the Board’s financial statements has not yet been determined.

Comprehensive Income

Effective April 1, 2007, the Board adopted the new accounting standards issued by the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants (CICA): Handbook Section 1530, Comprehensive Income, Handbook Section 3855, Financial Instruments – Recognition and Measurement, Section 3251, Equity, and Section 3861, Financial Instruments – Disclosure and Presentation. The Board has evaluated the impact of these new standards and determined that no adjustments are currently required.

3. Significant Accounting Policies

The following is a summary of the significant accounting policies used by management in the preparation of these financial statements.

(a) Financial Instruments – Recognition and Measurement

Section 3855 requires that all financial assets and financial liabilities be measured at fair value on initial recognition except for certain related party transaction. Measurement in subsequent periods depends on whether the financial asset or liability has been classified as held-for-trading, available-for-sale, held-to-maturity, loans and receivables or other liabilities.

Financial instruments classified as held-for-trading are subsequently measured at fair value and unrealized gains and losses are included in net income in the period in which they arise. Cash has been classified as held-for-trading.

Available-for-sale assets are those non-derivative financial assets that are designated as available-for-sale or are not classified as held-for-trading, held-to-maturity, or loans and receivables.

Available-for-sale assets are subsequently measured at fair value with unrealized gains and losses recorded in other comprehensive income until realized, at which time they will be recognized in net income. No assets have been classified as available-for-sale.

Held to maturity assets are those non-derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments and fixed maturity that the Board has an intention and ability to hold until maturity, excluding those assets that have been classified as held-for-trading, available-for-sale, or loans and receivables. They are subsequently measured at amortized cost using the effective interest method. No assets have been classified as held to maturity.

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2008

3. Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

Financial instruments classified as loans and receivables are non-derivative financial assets resulting from the delivery of cash or other assets by a lender to a borrower in return for a promise to repay on a specified date or dates, or on demand, usually with interest. These assets do not include debt securities or assets classified as held-for-trading. They are subsequently measured at amortized cost using the effective interest method. Accounts receivable have been classified as loans and receivables.

All other financial liabilities that are not classified as held for trading are subsequently measured at cost or amortized cost.

(b) Financial Instruments – Disclosure and Presentation

Section 3861 establishes standards for presentation of financial instruments and non-financial derivatives and identifies the information that should be disclosed about them. Under the new standards, policies followed for periods prior to the effective date generally are not reversed and therefore, the comparative figures have not been restated.

(c) Fund Accounting

The Board uses fund accounting to segregate transactions between its Operating fund and Equipment fund.

(d) Equipment

Purchased equipment is recorded in the equipment fund at cost. Amortization is recorded in the equipment fund using the declining balance method and the straightline method at the annual rates set out in Note 6.

(e) Revenue Recognition

The Board follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions. Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and its collection is reasonably assured. Restricted contributions are recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred.

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2008

3. Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

(f) Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the updated amounts of revenues and expenses during the period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

4. Interfund Transfers

Amounts of \$6,670 (2007 – \$20,941) were transferred from the Operating Fund to the Equipment Fund for the acquisition of assets.

5. Accounts Receivable

	2008	2007
Goods and Services Tax	\$ 27,427	\$ 16,464
Other	99,939	491,282
	\$ 127,366	\$ 507,746

6. Equipment

				2008	2007
	Rate	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	Net Book Value	Net Book Value
Furniture and fixtures	20%	\$ 105,164	\$ 87,819	\$ 17,345	\$ 21,683
Leasehold improvements	20%	92,475	71,679	20,796	25,994
Computer software	100%	17,098	17,098	–	–
Computer hardware	3 yr S/L	270,820	255,455	15,365	15,598
		\$ 485,557	\$ 432,051	\$ 53,506	\$ 63,275

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2008

7. Contributions Repayable

	2008	2007
DIAND – EA Practitioner’s workshop	\$ 21,076	\$ –

8. Deferred Contributions

	2008	2007
DIAND – Claims Implementation funding	\$ 614,182	\$ 341,396
DIAND – Environmental Impact Review Panel	388,557	–
DIAND – Joint Review Panel funding	–	1,133,440
	\$ 1,002,739	\$ 1,474,836

Under Canadian generally accepted accounting principles for not-for-profit organizations, funding received for restricted purposes that has not been expended is required to be deferred. The commitments of the Board under the funding agreement have been met; any remaining balance will be applied towards the planning and carrying out of duties and responsibilities assigned to the Board under the Gwich’in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreements, Implementation Plan, and related Act(s) of Parliament.

9. Statement of Cash Flows

A statement of cash flows has not been prepared as, in the opinion of management, it would not provide additional meaningful information.

10. Commitments

The Board’s total obligation, under various operating leases and a property lease agreement, exclusive of occupancy costs, is as follows:

2009	\$ 218,199
2010	181,719
2011	93,891
2012	1,516
	\$ 495,325

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2008

10. Commitments (continued)

If the Board were to opt out of their office lease contract, they are committed, as outlined in the contract to pay the following:

Month terminating	\$ 15,370
1st month following	15,370
2nd month following	15,370
3rd month following	15,370
	<hr/>
	\$ 61,480

11. Related Party Transactions

During the year, honoraria and travel expenditures were paid to a member of the Board of Directors who is an immediate family member of one of the Board's managers. These expenditures were in the normal course of business.

12. Employee Benefit Plan

The Board participates in a Registered Retirement Savings Plan for its employees. Substantially all employees with at least one year of service are eligible to participate. The Board contributions are in accordance with the individual's employment contract. The Board contributed \$59,032.84 in 2008 on behalf of their employees.

13. Budget

The budget figures presented are unaudited, and are those approved by the Board.

14. Economic Dependence

The Board is dependant upon funding in the form of contributions from the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Management is of the opinion that if the funding was reduced or altered, operations would be significantly affected.

15. Comparative Figures

Certain of the comparative figures have been reclassified to conform with the current year's presentation.

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2008

16. Financial Instruments

The following section describes the Board's financial risk management objectives and policies and the Board's financial risk exposures.

The Board does not have formalized financial risk management objectives and policies.

(a) Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk that one party to a financial instrument will fail to discharge an obligation and cause the other party to incur a financial loss. The Board is exposed to credit risk from the concentration of accounts receivable with one organization.



Mackenzie Valley
Environmental Impact Review Board

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