Mackenzie Valley
Review Board

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Project Planning

A booklet series about Environmental Impact Assessment in the Mackenzie Valley

THE REVIEW BOARD

OUR VISION

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

Environmental assessment is a set of steps for decision making.
It involves predicting whether a proposed project is likely to cause
environmental impacts that matter (significant impacts), and identifying
ways to avoid or reduce them.

Tuktoyaktuk

Ulukhaktok

ISR

Paulatuk

Inuvik

Aklavik

Fort McPherson

Tsiigehtchic

Gwich'in

Nunavut

Colville Lake

Fort Good Hope

Sahtu

Norman Wells

Délı̨nę

Tulita

Wek'èezhìı

Gamètì

Wekweètì

Yukon

Wrigley

Whatì

Behchokǫ̀

Yellowknife ⭐ Dettah

Łutselk'e

Fort Simpson

Jean Marie River

Fort Resolution

Nahanni Butte

Fort Providence

Kakisa

Hay River

Enterprise

Fort Liard

Sambaa K'e

Fort Smith

British Columbia

Alberta

Saskatchewan

N

0 — 200 Miles
0 — 200 KM

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This booklet provides an overview of things a developer should consider when designing a project and beginning engagement with communities. This should happen before the developer applies for the project and triggers preliminary screening of an environmental assessment. Engaging communities early about the potential impacts the project could cause on their land and cultural practices often leads to better, smarter project design.
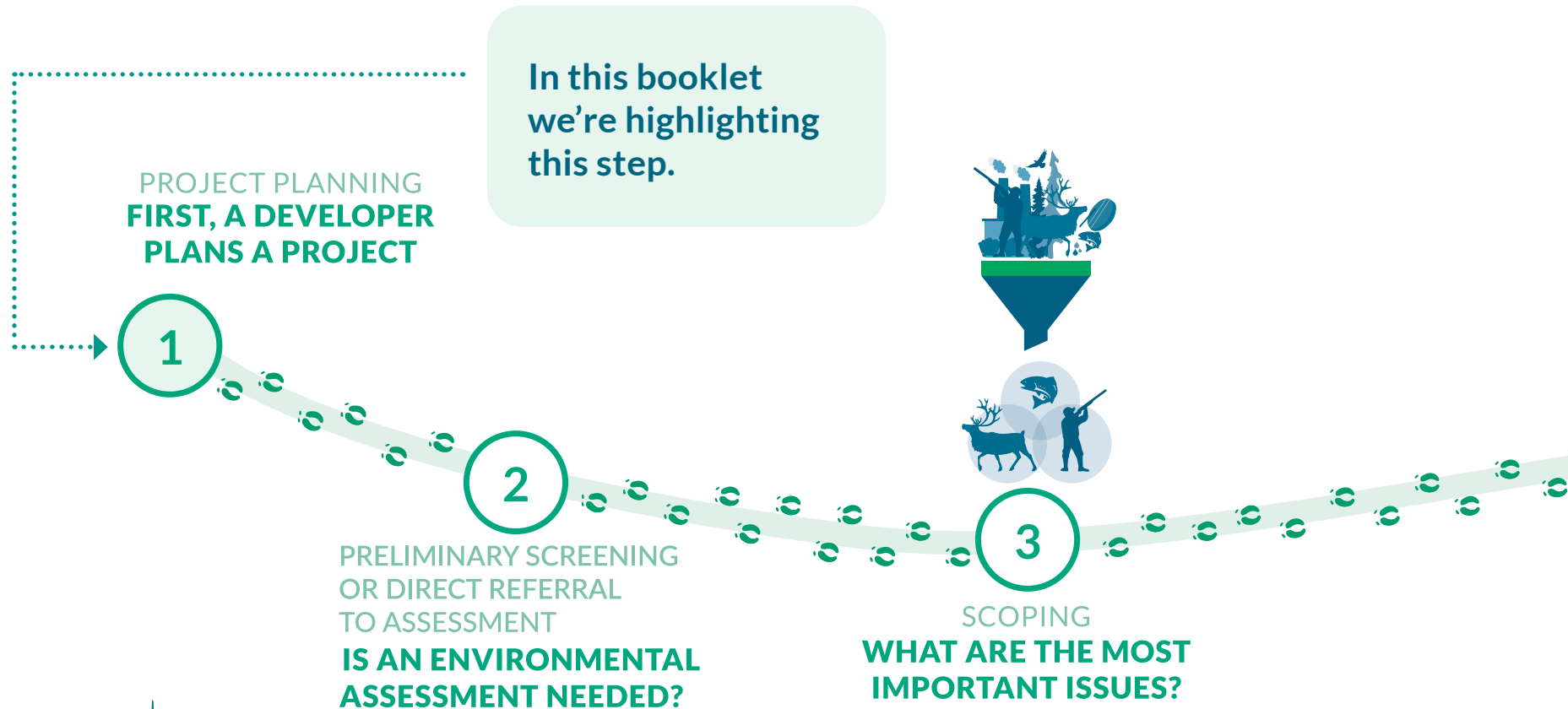
> **Early thoughtful project design helps avoid impacts.**

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- **Early, informed engagement with communities leads to better projects**

- **Project design should consider ALL impacts**

- **Land use and cultural considerations are critical**

- **Address issues proactively before they become problems – early community consultation builds better relationships and, often, smoother project environmental assessment**

This booklet is intended for information purposes only. It has been prepared in an effort to highlight key elements of the environmental assessment process. If any information conflicts with the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act or any of the Board's Guidelines, Reference Bulletins, or Policies, the latter would take precedence.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AT A GLANCE

In this booklet we're highlighting this step.

PROJECT PLANNING
FIRST, A DEVELOPER PLANS A PROJECT

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PRELIMINARY SCREENING OR DIRECT REFERRAL TO ASSESSMENT
IS AN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT NEEDED?

3

SCOPING
WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES?

4

ANALYSIS
PREDICTING IMPACTS

5

PUBLIC HEARINGS
HAVE YOUR SAY

DECISION PHASE
THE REVIEW BOARD DECIDES

6

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FOLLOW-UP
MONITOR AND ADAPT

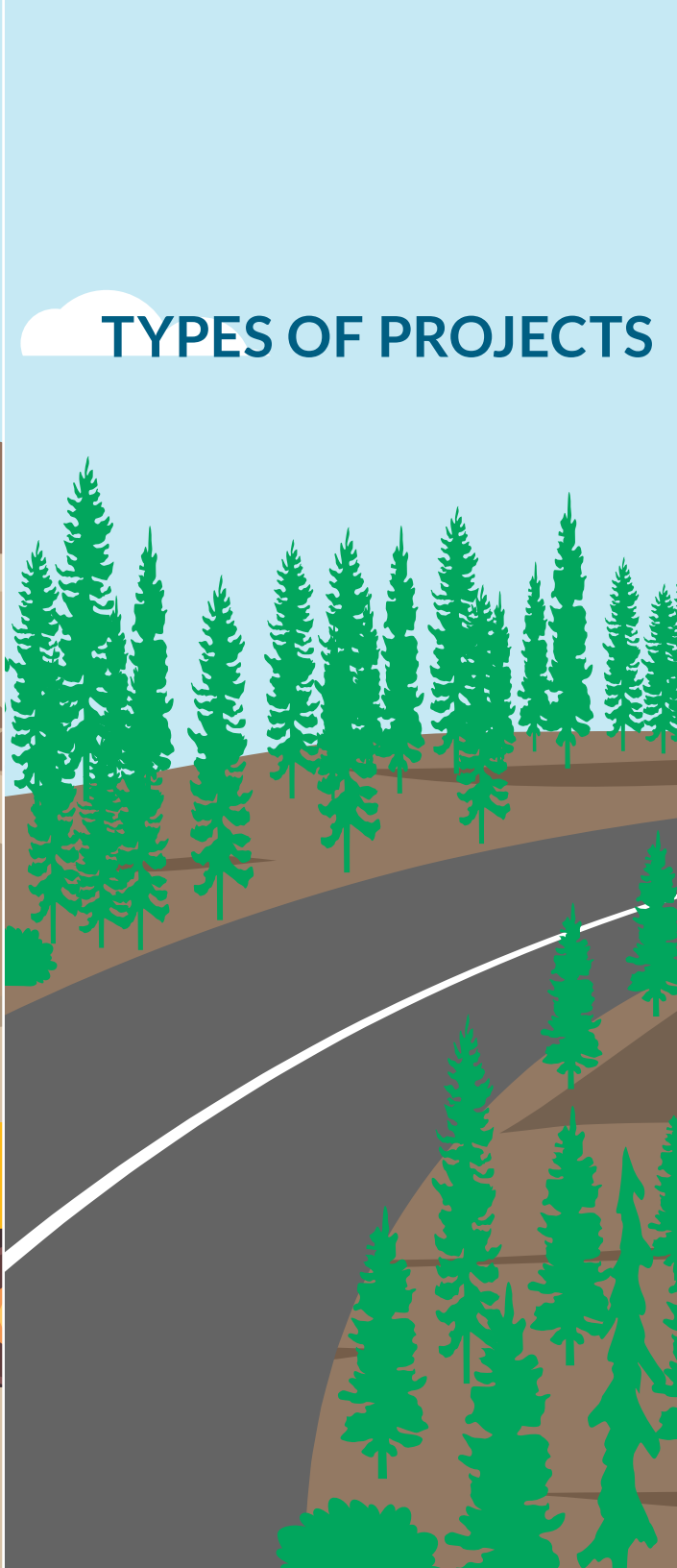# PROJECTS SHOULD BE DESIGNED TO AVOID OR REDUCE IMPACTS

Project design begins when an individual or a company has an idea for a development and starts to plan what that development might look like. A project could be as big as a mine, or as small as a rock quarry. Project design involves thinking about engineering, economics, people and the environment when planning a project.

Designing projects to avoid or prevent impacts early on works better and is less expensive than trying to fix the problems later.

TYPES OF PROJECTS

DEVELOPERS NEED TO CONSIDER LAND USE AND CULTURE WHEN DESIGNING PROJECTS

Consulting local land use plans and engaging with communities and land users on cultural concerns is an important part of project design. Cultural concerns are complex and can be physical, traditional, or spiritual in nature. Developers need to understand how people use and value the land and its cultural importance in and around the area of the project, to identify and avoid impacts. Developers should talk with people in communities as early as possible in the design process so that projects can be designed with cultural uses and local land use values in mind.

Doing this during early project design can help avoid conflicts and encourage smart projects that are supported by (and will benefit) the people of the Mackenzie Valley.

EARLY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT LETS THE DEVELOPER HEAR AND ADDRESS ISSUES BEFORE THEY BECOME PROBLEMS

Good engagement should start early, even before a developer applies for any permits or licenses, or contemplates work in an area. Developers should work with Indigenous governments and organizations, land and water boards, community governments and the Mackenzie Valley Review Board to identify who might be affected by a proposed project and to get advice on how each group wants to be engaged.
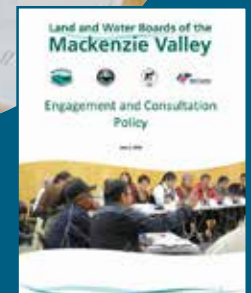
Early engagement has many benefits, including:

- **sharing accurate information** about the project with interested communities, Indigenous groups, and the public

- **fostering good relationships** between developers and communities

- **allowing enough time** for communities to share concerns, information about the project area and Traditional Knowledge early in the design process

- **avoiding costly, unexpected project changes** by addressing community concerns early in the design process

Early community engagement done right makes it possible for the developer and the community to work together to plan the project. This can help build respectful relationships based on trust to improve communications for the whole life of the project.

For more information, please see the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board's *Engagement and Consultation Policy (2018)*.

USE THESE BOOKLETS TO HELP YOU THROUGH THE EA PROCESS

Overview: *How environmental assessment fits into the co-management system.*

Project Planning: *What should happen before an environmental impact assessment?*

Preliminary Screening: *The co-management system decides if an environmental assessment is needed.*

Environmental Assessment: *What steps happen during an environmental assessment by the Review Board?*

Follow-up: *What happens after an environmental assessment is completed?*

Participation: *How to make your voice heard in environmental assessment.*

NOTES

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