



7th Floor - 4922 48th Street
PO Box 2130, Yellowknife NT X1A 2P6

Tel: 867-669-0506 Fax: 867-873-6610
www.mvlwb.com

June 24, 2024

File: MV2024C0014

Mark Cliffe-Phillips
Mackenzie Valley Review Board
200 Scotia Centre
Box 938, 5102-50th Avenue
Yellowknife NT X1A 2N7

Sent by email

Dear Mark Cliffe-Phillips,

Re: Trinex Lithium Ltd. – Notice of Preliminary Screening Determination – Application for Land Use Permit – Mineral Exploration – Ross Lake, NT

The Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board (Board) met on June 20, 2024 and considered the Application Package from Trinex Lithium Ltd. (TLL) for Land Use Permit (Permit) MV2024C0014 for the Ross Lake Project (Project) in accordance with the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* (MVRMA).

The Board conducted a preliminary screening based on the public record for the proceedings. Based on the evidence provided, the Board is satisfied the screening has been completed according to section 125 of the MVRMA and has decided **not to refer** the Project to environmental assessment. The Board's Preliminary Screening Determination and Reasons for Decision, as required by section 121 of the MVRMA, is attached.

If the Board does not receive notice of referral to environmental assessment, it can proceed with issuance of Permit MV2024C0014 on **Friday, July 5, 2024**

The Board and staff look forward to continued communications throughout the pause period. Please contact Kathy Racher via [email](#) or at (867) 766-7457 with any questions or concerns regarding this letter.

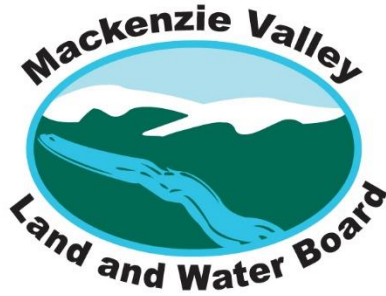
Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tanya MacIntosh". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the beginning.

Tanya MacIntosh
Chair, Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board

BCC'd to: Akaitcho Distribution List
TG – Monfwi Distribution List Distribution List
David Cornish – Trinex Lithium Ltd.
Cath Wetherley – Trinex Minerals Ltd.
Will Dix – Trinex Minerals Ltd.

Attached: Preliminary Screening Determination and Reasons for Decision



7th Floor - 4922 48th Street
 PO Box 2130, Yellowknife NT X1A 2P6

Tel: 867-669-0506 Fax: 867-873-6610
 www.mvlwb.com

Preliminary Screening Determination and Reasons for Decision

Land Use Permit Application	
File Number	MV2024C0014
Company	Trinex Lithium Ltd.
Project	Ross Lake Mineral Exploration
Location	Ross Lake, NT
Activity	Mineral Exploration
Date of Decision	June 20, 2024

1.0 Decision

In accordance with subsection 124(1) of the [Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act](#) (MVRMA), the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board (MVLWB or Board) met on June 20, 2024 to make a preliminary screening determination on the Applications from Trinex Lithium Ltd. (TLL) (Applicant) for Land Use Permit MV2024C0014 (Permit)¹ for the Ross Lake Mineral Exploration (Project).²

The Board has decided not to refer the proposed Project to the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (the Review Board) for Project will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.

The Board’s determination, including reasons for its decisions, are detailed in sections [3.0](#) and [4.0](#).

¹See MVLWB Online Registry www.mvlwb.com for TLL – [Permit Application – May13 24](#)

² The Project is the Ross Lake Mineral Exploration, which is the proposed development, where “development” is defined in Part 5 of the [MVRMA](#) as:

“any undertaking, or any part or extension of an undertaking, that is carried out on land or water and includes an acquisition of lands pursuant to the *Historic Sites and Monuments Act* and measures carried out by a department or agency of government leading to the establishment of a park subject to the *Canada National Parks Act* or the establishment of a park under a territorial law.”

2.0 List of Defined Terms and Acronyms

Applicant	Trinex Lithium Ltd.
Application	The complete application package submitted by the Applicant for Land Use Permit MV2024C0014
Board	Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board
CRP	Closure and Reclamation Plan
EA	Environmental Assessment
GNWT	Government of the Northwest Territories
GNWT-ECC	Government of the Northwest Territories – Environment and Climate Change
MVLWB	Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board
MVRMA	Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act
Minister	Minister of the Government of the Northwest Territories – Environment and Climate Change
ORS	Online Review System (www.new.onlinereviewssystem.ca)
Party	As per the LWB Rules of Procedure , an applicant, a person, or an organization participating in the regulatory proceeding for the Applications.
Project	Ross Lake Mineral Exploration, which is the proposed development (as defined in Part 5 of the MVRMA). ³
Review Board	Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board
SCP	Spill Contingency Plan
Standard Licence Conditions	LWB Standard Water Licence Conditions Template
Standard Permit Conditions	LWB Standard Land Use Permit Conditions Template
TG	Tłı̨chǫ Government
WMP	Waste Management Plan

3.0 Background and Scope of Screening

On May 13, 2024, TLL submitted an application for mineral exploration to investigate the potential for lithium with the Ross Lake area. The following activities are being proposed:

- 1) Reconnaissance mapping;
- 2) Channel Sampling;
- 3) Aerial EM and Magnetic Geophysical Survey; and
- 4) Drill Program.

An Engagement Record and Engagement Plan were included in the Application. TLL noted they engaged with the following Parties:

³ “development” is defined in Part 5 of the [MVRMA](#) as:

“any undertaking, or any part or extension of an undertaking, that is carried out on land or water and includes an acquisition of lands pursuant to the *Historic Sites and Monuments Act* and measures carried out by a department or agency of government leading to the establishment of a park subject to the *Canada National Parks Act* or the establishment of a park under a territorial law.”

- Yellowknives Dene First Nation
- Akaitcho Interim Measure Office
- Łutselk'e Dene First Nation
- Denínu Kúé First Nation
- Tłıchǫ Government
- North Slave Métis Alliance
- NWT Métis Nation

Engagement commenced in October of 2023 and concluded April Of 2024. There were emails, phone calls and in person meetings when available.

In accordance with paragraph 125(1)(a) of the [MVRMA](#), the Board must conduct a preliminary screening of the proposed Project to determine and report to the Review Board whether, in its opinion, the proposed Project might have a significant adverse impact on the environment, or might be a cause of public concern. The details of the Board's analysis are set out in section [4.0](#) below.

3.1 Scope of Screening:

The primary drill program consists of drilling up to 10 holes and pending the results of hose holes, additional holes will be drilled over the life of the permit. The drilling rig will be moved to the project site and to the individual drill sites via helicopter. Crew and geologists will be transported to the site daily from Yellowknife. The bulk of the fuel required will be stored in Yellowknife with small caches stored near the drill pad locations. Waste will be removed from the site and transported back to Yellowknife as per the Waste Management Plan. The site may require some clearing, but it will be kept to a minimum based on the 10x10 drill pad size. There will be no trails cleared. Water for the project will not exceed 99m³/day and will be drawn from Ross Lake.

3.2 Public Record and Regulatory Proceeding

To assist the Board in its preliminary screening determination for the Project, the Board distributed the Application and Permit for public review on May 24, 2024, inviting reviewers to provide comments and recommendations on the Applications and the preliminary screening (e.g., on impacts and mitigation measures) using the Online Review System (ORS). Comments were due June 12, 2024, with responses from the Applicant due June 13, 2024. The Board received comments and recommendations from (attached).⁴

- GNWT-ECE - Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre;
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada;
- GNWT-ECC (Inspector);
- GNWT-ECC; and
- Environment and Climate Change Canada.

⁴ See MVLWB Online Registry for [TLL - Issuance – Review Summary Table – Jun24 24](#).

Since there were no requests to extend the reviewer comment deadline, the Board is satisfied that a reasonable period of notice was given to affected communities and First Nations, as required by subsection 63(2) of the [MVRMA](#).

Pursuant to Schedule 4.1 of [Northwest Territory Métis Nation \(NWTMN\) Interim Measures Agreement](#),⁵ the Board determined that written notice was given to the NWTMN and that a reasonable period of time was allowed for NWTMN to make representations with respect to the Application.

Pursuant to subsection 1.6, paragraphs (a) and (b) of the [Akaitcho Territory Dene First Nations \(ATDFN\) Interim Measures Agreement](#),⁶ the Board determined that written notice was given to the ATDFN and that a reasonable period of time was allowed for ATDFN to make representations with respect to the Application.

4.0 Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations

Table 1 below summarizes:

- the potential impacts of the proposed Project;
- the concerns that were identified during the regulatory proceeding and how the Applicant addressed those concerns;
- the proposed and potential mitigations for the potential impacts; and
- the Board's analysis of the potential impacts and proposed mitigations.

⁵ See MVLWB Land Claims, IMAs, and Land Use Plans webpage to access the [Northwest Territory Métis Nation Interim Measures Agreement](#).

⁶ See MVLWB Land Claims, IMAs, and Land Use Plans webpage to access the [Akaitcho Territory Dene First Nations Interim Measures Agreement](#).

Table 1: Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations for the Proposed Project

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations <i>Description of measures to reduce potential impacts, including consideration of cumulative impacts and climate change.</i>	Board Analysis and Determination
Abiotic Components – Land – Soil contamination	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact: Potential for soil or snow contaminated with either diesel, oil, or other spill materials. Mitigation: Spill Contingency Management Plan will be implemented in the event of any unplanned release. Every effort will be made to avoid contamination of soil. Fuel supplies will be stored in an impermeable berm. • The Board has standard permit that are typically used to mitigate the identified potential impacts. 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.
Abiotic Components – Land – Soil compaction	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact: Compacting of soil by drill rig. Mitigation: Disturbed sites will be scarified as required and monitored for revegetation. All disturbed land be returned as close to the original condition as possible. If topsoil is removed it will be retained to spread over the site post disturbance • The Board has standard permit that are typically used to mitigate the identified potential impacts. 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.
Abiotic Components – Land – Destabilization/ erosion	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact: Destabilization and erosion from creation of drill pads - changes of natural surface. Mitigation: Ground disturbance will be kept to a minimum and if required recontouring of surfaces will take place in order for the land to be returned to its natural state. Any areas of likely erosion will be monitored and remediated as required. Each drill casing will be cut off and sealed to ensure level ground. Sumps will be backfilled and the natural land surface restored to limit potential for localized erosion. • The Board has standard permit that are typically used to mitigate the identified potential impacts. 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.

Abiotic Components – Water – Groundwater	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact: Potential impact from drilling activity or spills. Mitigation: Avoid drill sites, including sumps close to a natural water course. Attend to spills immediately as per the Spill Contingency Plan. The Board has standard permit that are typically used to mitigate the identified potential impacts. 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.
Abiotic Components – Permafrost – Loss or change in extent	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact: Thermokarst Mitigation: Capture water in depressions near drill sites. The Board has standard permit that are typically used to mitigate the identified potential impacts. 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.
Abiotic Components – Surface Water – Water flow or level changes (permanent, temporal, seasonal)	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact: Changes in water flow due to drill sites impeding the natural flow of water. Level changes by overuse of water. Mitigation: Avoid drill sites, including sumps close to a natural water course. Provide drainage channels if required during a drilling program. Remediate to predisturbance conditions. Water use less than 99m3 per day. Record usage. The Board has standard permit that are typically used to mitigate the identified potential impacts. 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.
Abiotic Components – Surface Water – Changes in water quality	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact: Potential impact from drilling activity or spills. Mitigation: Avoid drill sites, including sumps close to a natural water course. Store fuel in appropriate containers. Fuel supplies will be stored in an impermeable berm. Attend to spills immediately as per the Spill Contingency Plan. The Board has standard permit that are typically used to mitigate the identified potential impacts. 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.

Abiotic Components – Surface Water – Wetland Impairment	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact: Possible disturbance from drilling. Mitigation: Ensure proper buffer distances from wetlands to drill site. Store fuel >100 m away in appropriate containment. No machinery over wetland areas in spring/summer months. The Board has standard permit that are typically used to mitigate the identified potential impacts. 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board's opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.
Abiotic Components – Air – Changes in air quality	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact: Emissions from drill rigs and helicopter. Mitigation: Conduct routine maintenance on equipment 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board's opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.
Abiotic Components – Air – Increased greenhouse gases	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact: Emissions from drills and helicopter Mitigation: Routine maintenance on generators and engines 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board's opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.
Biotic Components – Vegetation – Direct Loss of vegetation	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact: Clearing of vegetation for drill sites Mitigation: Limit clearing, especially established trees and moves sites if required. Remediate site on completion of drilling to allow for vegetation regrowth. 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board's opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.
Biotic Components – Introduction of non-native species	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact: Noxious weeds from equipment. Mitigation: Ensure all machinery is cleaned prior to mobilization to site. 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board's opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.

Biotic Components – Effects on plant health (dust, metals, toxins)	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact: Potential Impact from drilling process (water, dust, cuttings) Mitigation: Ensure drill rigs have appropriate measures in place to reduce dust release while drilling. Limit extent of drill water discharge, use of sumps as required. 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.
Biotic Components – Increased risk of fire	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact: Machinery/combustible materials have the potential to start a fire. Mitigation: Keep drill sites clean and tidy by following Waste Management Plan. Ensure machinery is checked daily to identify any faults and that these are rectified prior to commencing operations. Ensure adequate fire suppression supplies at drill sites. Temporarily suspend operation if conditions are too dry. The Board has standard permit that are typically used to mitigate the identified potential impacts. 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.
Biotic Components – Compaction of Vegetation	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact: Ground disturbance from drill rigs and additional equipment. Mitigation: Ensure machinery and equipment remains on cleared or naturally clear areas to avoid additional affects on natural vegetation 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.
Biotic Components – Terrestrial Wildlife Habitat – Direct loss or removal of habitats, dens, or nests.	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact: Inadvertently disturb animals with drilling or as a result of clearing. Mitigation: Crew will avoid interaction with any wildlife. Sites will be visually assessed prior to clearing in order to minimize destruction of habitat, dens or nests. Special attention will be paid to minimize the disturbance of and impact on species at risk in the area including the Barrenground Caribou, Little Born Myotis, Wolverine, Bank Swallow, Barn Swallow, Common Nighthawk, Harris’s Sparrow, Horned Grebe, Lesser Yellowlegs, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Red-necked Phalarope, Rusty Blackbird, Shorteared Owl, Transverse Lady Beetle and Yellow-banded Bumble Bee. The Board has standard permit that are typically used to mitigate the identified potential impacts. 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.

Biotic Components – Terrestrial Wildlife Habitat – Direct injury or mortality	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact: Potential for injury/mortality during drilling process. Mitigation: Limit interaction with wildlife. Suspend program if required. 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.
Biotic Components – Terrestrial Wildlife Habitat – Effects on wildlife health (toxins, mentals, etc.)	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact: Drilling fluids, dust, waste. Mitigation: Maintain a clean and tidy site during and after the program. Ensure all potentially harmful substances are not able to be compromised and that food and all waste is inaccessible – ie Implement Waste Management Plan and ensure attractants are sealed in animal-proof containers. Ensure that dust and water discharge during the drilling process is limited. Ensure sumps have a point of egress. On completion of the program leave the site clean and tidy e.g. remove empty fuel containers, domestic refuse etc The Board has standard permit that are typically used to mitigate the identified potential impacts. 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.
Biotic Components – Terrestrial Wildlife Habitat – Human wildlife conflicts	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact: Potential harm to people and/or wildlife. Mitigation: Implement Waste Management plan to keep work area free of garbage so as not to attract animals to the site. Ensure attractants are sealed in animal-proof containers. Do not feed wildlife and ensure staff have appropriate training. To help limit human-wildlife conflicts drill rigs or any other machinery will be shut down and programs suspended, when there is known wildlife within 500m, including Caribou and all large ungulates including Moose, Bison and/or Muskoxen. 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.
Biotic Components – Aquatic Habitat – Effects on health (toxins, metals,	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact: Drilling fluids, dust, waste. Mitigation: Maintain a clean and tidy site during and after the program. Ensure all potentially harmful substances are not able to be compromised and that food and all waste is inaccessible – i.e. Implement Waste Management Plan and ensure attractants are sealed in animal-proof containers. Ensure that dust and 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.

sediment, etc.)		water discharge during the drilling process is limited. On completion of the program leave the site clean and tidy e.g. remove empty fuel containers, domestic refuse etc.	
Biotic Components – Aquatic Habitat – Other	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact: Water withdrawal sites. Mitigation: Equip pump hoses with mesh screens and avoid water withdrawal from small streams or lakes. 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.
Cultural Components – Wildlife Harvesting	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed mineral exploration work will not add significantly to the previous historical and existing disturbances or impinge on existing harvesting rights. 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.
Cultural Components – Cultural Integrity and Heritage Resources – Change to or loss of traditional lifestyle	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact: Interruption to traditional lifestyle. Mitigation: The proposed activities are additional to what has occurred previously and what is continuing to occur in the area and is a well-known, understood activity. Engagement with stakeholders has been and will continue to take place. Implement Engagement Plan as required 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.
Cultural Components – Cultural Integrity and Heritage Resources – Change to or loss of heritage	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact: Disturbance to an Archaeological site. Mitigation: Train workers to identify archaeological sites and then follow the “Chance Archaeological Find Procedure”. An Archaeological Overview Assessment has been completed and an Archaeological Impact Assessment is currently being coordinated with WSP who will undertake an on-ground survey as soon as practicable in the 2024 summer field season. Workers on-site will be notified of identified archaeological sites and the management procedure. 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.

resource			
Cultural Components – Social and economic well being – economic opportunities or losses (employment, training)	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact: Increased employment opportunities. Trinex is committed to providing a broad range of employment opportunities, including business contract opportunities to the local workforce throughout the duration of the Land Use Permit. 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.
Cultural Components – Social and economic well being – other	Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact: Potential Noise levels from machinery, helicopter and drilling. Mitigation: Baseline noise readings will be taken prior to drilling, during drilling, and after drilling is completed. Mitigation proposed for the noise generated includes using only up to two drills at any one time. Noise will be closely monitored to ensure limited disturbance to wildlife and surroundings. High level helicopter flying policy will be implemented, with no-fly zone below 1,000 feet except in designated landing zones near machinery being operated. Flights will be kept to a minimum. To minimize wildlife disturbance, for this Land Use Permit program drill rigs or any other machinery will be shut down and programs suspended, when there is known wildlife within 500m, including Caribou and all large ungulates including Moose and/or Muskoxen. 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.

4.1 Consideration of Potential Impacts

Based on the potential impacts and proposed mitigations identified above in Table 1, the Board considered whether the Project might have a significant adverse impact on the environment. In general, impacts of the Project on the environment can be mitigated through the use of standard permit conditions and/or project-specific conditions established by the Board as per the LWB [Standard Process for Creating New Conditions](#). These conditions may include requirements for management and monitoring plans that provide detailed information regarding the implementation of mitigation measures and the evaluation of their effectiveness.

A draft Permit was circulated for review during the regulatory proceeding, and all Parties were given the opportunity to provide comments and recommendations on the draft conditions. In finalizing the conditions, the Board will consider all of the evidence provided through the regulatory proceeding.

4.2 Consideration of Public Concern

In addition to considering the potential impacts of the Project, the Board considered whether the Project might be a cause of public concern.

Based on the evidence provided during the regulatory proceeding, the Board did not identify any comments or issues that indicate that the Project is a cause of public concern.

5.0 Conclusion

The Board has reviewed all the evidence received during the regulatory process with respect to the Preliminary Screening of the proposed Project. Based on the evidence, it is the Board's opinion that the proposed Project will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern as set out in paragraph 125(1)(a) of the [MVRMA](#). The Board has therefore decided not to refer the Project to Environmental Assessment.

If the Board does not receive a notice of referral to environmental assessment by July 4, 2024, the Board can issue the Permit on July 5, 2024.

SIGNATURE



Tanya MacIntosh, Chair
Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board

June 24, 2024

Date

