



November 15, 2023

BY EMAIL

Mark Cliffe-Phillips
Executive Director
Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board
P.O. BOX 938
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Dear Mark Cliffe-Phillips:

Preparation of the Developer's Assessment Report by the Government of Northwest Territories for EA1213-02 Mackenzie Valley Highway

In the interest of providing transparency around the Government of the Northwest Territories' (GNWT) approach to the Mackenzie Valley Highway Project (the Project) I am writing to provide an update on how the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) participated in the preparation of the Developer's Assessment Report (DAR) for the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board's (Review Board) environmental assessment (EA) of the Project (EA1213-02). This letter updates the April 13, 2013 ([PR 18](#)) and August 19, 2021 ([PR 79](#)) letters from the GNWT to the Review Board.

Whole-of-Government Approach

The GNWT used a Whole-of-Government Approach for the preparation of the DAR as the Project will have long-term implications for a broad range of programs and services across the GNWT. This approach involved collaboration between GNWT subject matter experts across different departmental portfolios with a view toward ensuring that all departmental perspectives and expertise were considered in informing the DAR.

GNWT Departments' Roles and Responsibilities

On behalf of the GNWT, the Department of Infrastructure (INF) is accountable for leading the project, including the development of the DAR. INF worked with the following departments to prepare the DAR for submission:

- Environment and Climate Change (ECC),
- Industry Tourism and Investment (ITI),
- Executive and Indigenous Affairs (EIA),

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- Health and Social Services (HSS),
- Education, Culture and Employment (ECE),
- Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA),
- Housing NWT,
- Finance (FIN), and
- Justice (DOJ).

The Project Assessment Branch (PAB) of ECC coordinated the GNWT's review of the DAR and supported interdepartmental discussion and oversight. GNWT departments contributed to and reviewed relevant chapters of the DAR, as it related to the specific mandate of the department. Review included but was not limited to: project plans and impact predictions, providing feedback and perspectives on the development of monitoring, mitigation, and management plans, and providing input to ensure that the project as proposed is consistent with legislation and GNWT policies, as well as any requirements related to Aboriginal consultation.

Developer's Assessment Report (DAR) Comment Table

To support a commitment to transparency, the GNWT is providing a table of technical review comments (Appendix A) that includes technical feedback and comments provided by departmental reviewers immediately prior to finalization of the DAR. Similar exchanges occurred over the course of multiple reviews of earlier drafts of the DAR. The table includes comments from subject matter experts across the GNWT and subsequent responses from INF. As necessary, subject matter experts will be made available at upcoming technical sessions and hearings along with INF.

Update on Tier 2 Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan

As determined by the Minister of ECC, an approved Tier 2 Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan (WMMP) will be required for the Project under Section 95 of the *Wildlife Act*. Consequentially, as committed to by INF¹, a draft WMMP is included in the DAR. ECC has reviewed the draft WMMP and will be involved in the WMMP development during and after the EA.


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¹ The September 1, 2021 letter from the Minister of GNWT-INF to the Minister of ENR (now ECC) ([PR 74](#)), confirmed INF's commitment to prepare a Tier 2 WMMP for the Mackenzie Valley Highway Project.

Next steps

The GNWT will provide additional information regarding the Whole-of-Government Approach in the coming weeks, including the roles and responsibilities of the various departments, and how departments will participate in the Review Board's process moving forward.

Sincerely,



Erin Kelly
Deputy Minister
Environment and Climate Change

- c. Nathen Richea, Assistant Deputy Minister, Regulatory, Assessment and Authorizations, Environment and Climate Change

Robert Jenkins, Assistant Deputy Minister, Energy and Strategic Initiatives, Infrastructure

Catherine Fairbairn, Senior Environmental Assessment Advisor, Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board

Parties to EA1213-02 (via Review Board public registry)