



March 26, 2004

Her Worship Mayor Diane Ehman  
Town of Hay River  
73 WOODLAND DRIVE  
Hay River, NT X0E 1G1

Dear Mayor Ehman;

**Re: Town of Hay River Request for a Public Hearing**

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter to the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (Review Board) dated March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2004.

I can advise that the Review Board has considered the request from the Town of Hay River to hold a public hearing in Hay River during its Phase 1 environmental assessment of the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project. This request was considered at its meeting on March 25th.

The Board appreciates the interest shown by the Town of Hay River to host a public hearing in its community for this environmental assessment. However the Board wishes to stress that this Phase 1 portion of the environmental assessment is to scope issues that should be considered in a comprehensive environmental impact assessment and to determine if there is significant public concern regarding this proposed development. If there is significant public concern the Board will refer this proposed development to a higher-level panel review. It is the Board's conclusion, however, that three community public hearings, one in each of the Gwich'in, Sahtu and Deh Cho areas, will be sufficient for the Review Board to scope the issues of concern and to make a decision on whether or not to refer this proposed development to a panel review.

In any case, the next more intensive phase of review is expected to involve public hearings in most communities throughout the Mackenzie Valley, including Hay River. It will be during these next hearings that concerns regarding biophysical, social, economic and cultural impacts of the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project will be heard in detail. More

information regarding the developer's assessment of project impacts will become known between now and these next hearings as well.

If the Town of Hay River does have concerns, which it wishes to bring to the Review Board's attention at this time, it may wish to submit a written submission to the Board prior to the close of the public record for the Phase 1 environmental assessment at 5 PM April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2004.

The Town may also wish to make a presentation to the Review Board at its public hearing scheduled for Fort Simpson from April 14-16<sup>th</sup>, 2004. If so please provide the Board with advance notice of the Town's intention to make a presentation. The Review Board also requests that a copy of the Town's presentation be filed with the Board office by the end of day, Friday April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2004.

Hopefully Town Council will find this response helpful. The Review Board encourages the Town to provide any concerns or issues it may have regarding the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project. Any advice the Town can provide will assist the Board in its assessment of the extent of public concern regarding this proposed development and the impacts that need to be carefully examined in the next review phase.

Sincerely,



Vern Christensen  
Executive Director

CC: Honorable Ethel Blondin-Andrew, MP Western Arctic  
Honourable Joe Handley, Premier  
Honourable Brendan Bell, Minister of RWED

