



**WWF** *for a living planet*®

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May 29, 2008

Dear Board Members;

Re: Upper Thelon land use applications, EA0708-002 through to EA0708-005

World Wildlife Fund-Canada supported Lutsel K'e, Akaitcho and other aboriginal groups during the UR-Energy hearing in January 2007. The reason WWF gave support was because it is our position that northern aboriginal peoples have the right to determine their future and the future of their traditional lands. When an area that has significant cultural and spiritual importance to those who have the strongest ties and claim to rights to the area currently, historically and prehistorically it must be respected over the interests of those out for a buck. We also believe in the principle of "conservation first" which is the very simple and indisputable concept that natural areas can only be protected before they are destroyed. Further, the Upper Thelon is an internationally recognized wilderness/wildlife area that has increasing value as fewer such areas exist in our ever developing world.

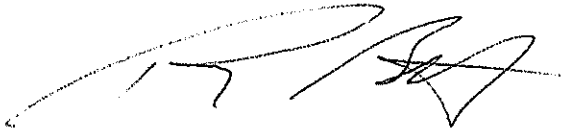
The issues for the current land use applications are the same as they were for UR-Energy's rejected application. However, in response to the mining exploration industry and their inability to proceed with work in the area, INAC promised and initiated a land use planning process with Lutsel K'e to define areas for development and areas for conservation in the Upper Thelon. To approve these applications now without allowing the LUP process to play out is not consistent with the intent of the federal government in initiating the process, nor is it respecting the rightful land owners and their right to plan how their territory will be utilized.

There is no urgent need to explore this area now. Saskatchewan has enough uranium in a much more accessible area to supply the world market for the foreseeable future. The NWT has one of Canada's fastest growing economies and the labour market is tight. The pressure to explore in the Upper Thelon comes simply from high uranium prices resulting in investors willing to expend money on uranium exploration and exploration companies anxious to make a dollar by utilizing that available money. Is

that a sound reason to disrespect the wishes of those who have used the area for centuries, and not even allow them the time to develop their land use plan?

There is economic risk in proceeding with granting rights to third party interests prior to the completion of planning. Should those areas be deemed, through the planning process, to require protection, then there are only two choices. One, force the company that has invested in exploration to strand intellectual capital assets, potentially opening the door to expensive compensations and causing a chill on future investments. Or, two, proceed with the development, despite recommendations for protection, putting at risk the long standing cultural and ecological values which planning was initiated to address. Postponing land use approvals until completion of planning clearly seems the better choice for all applications in that area.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ray Griffith', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

Ray Griffith, Manager Mackenzie River Basin, WWF-Canada