

Ray Griffith
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Lutsel K'e, NT
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February 18, 2010

Martin Haefele
Mackenzie Valley Impact Review Board
200 Scotia Centre
Box 938, 5102-50th Ave.
Yellowknife, NT
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Fax: 867-766-7074



Dear Martin:

Re: Alternate Route Taltson Hydroelectric Expansion – EA0708 – 007

I have lived with Lutsel K'e people since 1972 when the First Nation people of Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation were semi-nomadic spending more than half their time traveling, hunting and fishing throughout the East Arm and beyond. They brought me to Fort Reliance for the first time in 1973. From the beginning it was impressed upon me the reverence Lutsel K'e members have for the area they call Kache, Fort Reliance. This area included Maufelly and Fairchild Points. The area around the gap between the two points was the centre of Fort Reliance with the old RCMP station turned fishing lodge, the weather station, Gus D'Aoust's trading post, house and tourist cabins, Noel and Madelaine Drybone's family's home, Red Noiye's cabin and a couple of "American cabins". I lived with Gus in 1975, his final year in Reliance. He was a great storyteller and is remembered as one of the last of the old time trappers/traders, a bust of him still rests at the Prince of Wales museum in Yellowknife in his memory. I remember well the love he had for his Fort Reliance home. "Fort Reliance is the gem of Great Slave Lake" Gus said. And looking out across the lake it is easy to see the unique beauty of the spot.

His trading post and house were built in Fort Reliance in 1933 using local logs and boards from a barge built in Fort Smith to transport trade goods to the eastern end of the lake. I fell in love with Fort Reliance and the buildings that Gus had built and called "Chateau Wolverine". After spending the winter with Gus I purchased the trading post, house and two cabins he had built to rent to tourists. I believe his trading post is the last standing trading post on Great Slave Lake.

The history of Kache is as rich as the natural beauty. It is indeed a "gem on the lake". This was recognized by the Government of Canada when in 1969 Parks Canada proposed it become a national park.

It would be a great shame (read outrageous) to mar the wilderness beauty of a uniquely beautiful spot with a rich history which is on its way to becoming a central attraction in a new national park.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ray Griffith', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Ray Griffith