

APR 19 2013

Simon Toogood
Environmental Assessment Officer
Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board
BOX 938
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 2N7

VIA EMAIL: stoogood@reviewboard.ca

Dear Mr. Toogood:

Mackenzie Valley Highway Project – EA1213-002 Government of the Northwest Territories Participation in the Environmental Assessment

This letter is in response to your letter dated March 26th, 2013 requesting that interested organizations and individuals apply to be granted party status by the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (the Board). The purpose of this letter is to clarify how the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) plans to participate in the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Mackenzie Valley Highway Project (the Project).

Generally, during an EA the GNWT registers as a party to the review, participates in all stages of the process including submitting information requests and technical reports, and provides expert advice to the Board. This participation of the GNWT is managed by the Environmental Assessment and Monitoring (EAM) section of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR). For the Mackenzie Valley Highway Project the participation of the GNWT will be different since the developer is the Department of Transportation (DOT), a department within the GNWT.

For this Project, the GNWT will not be registering as a party in addition to the DOT who is automatically granted party status as the developer. Government departments such as ENR, Industry, Tourism and Investment, Municipal and Community Affairs, Education, Culture and Employment, and Health and Social Services will work directly with the DOT to ensure that the proposed highway meets all government criteria for management and mitigation. GNWT departments will not put forward information requests or provide a final technical report to the Board, other than the work put forward by the developer.

.../2



Although the GNWT will not participate in the review as a party, GNWT departments are still available to respond to questions and provide expert advice or information to parties when requested. Should the Board or another party require information from a GNWT department, we will ensure a response is provided in a timely manner. The EAM section will coordinate responses on behalf of the GNWT and any requests for information from a GNWT department other than the developer should be directed to them.

Finally, it should also be noted that the GNWT is a decision-maker for this project, along with the other responsible ministers. The responsible minister representing the GNWT is the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources. The Minister, along with the other responsible ministers, will fulfill his statutory decision-making role based on the relevant evidence provided during the EA.

I trust that this information is helpful to the Board and provides clarity to all parties on the GNWT's participation in the assessment for the Mackenzie Valley Highway. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact Ms. Kate Witherly, Environmental Assessment Analyst at (867) 920-6340 or kate_witherly@gov.nt.ca.

Sincerely,



Joel Holder
Manager, Environmental Assessment
and Monitoring