Herb G. McCauley
[redacted] personal information redacted

May 6, 2024

VIA EMAIL

Mackenzie Valley Review Board
Mackenzie Valley Highway Environmental Impact Review Board

My name is Herb McCauley, born in Fort Smith, raised in Aklavik and Inuvik, completed my education at Northern Alberta Institute of Technology and Southern Alberta Institute of Alberta. I am a property owner in Norman Wells, purchased for my mother, renovated at great transportation expense, and is currently rented to long term care aides working at the care home.

My mother was the late Honorary Chief for Life; Cece McCauley worked tirelessly for over thirty (30) years for a road from Wrigley to Inuvik. Travelling to Ottawa and writing news articles in the News North, she pushed for the road to relieve the pressures of the cost of living for residents along the Mackenzie River. My brother, Todd McCauley, Sahtu Secretariat Inc., has taken up the cause for the highway.

My extended family and I have many relatives and friends we haven't seen because of travel costs. We would be grateful for a road to Norman Wells and Inuvik. Sadly, my childhood friend, Kenny MacDonald passed away recently in Inuvik. I'd have liked more time with him. The Dempster highway verses a Mackenzie Valley highway is approximately 1000 kms longer.

An all-season, all-weather road would go a long way in reducing the feeling of isolation. The feeling of being isolated can be a problem for some people. Isolation is not a big thing to deal with for others but it can work away at many. Alcohol and drugs seem to be a way to deal with isolation. A functioning alcoholic is a term I have heard to describe a number of people that live and work in Norman Wells. It is hard to believe this type of life style can be maintained year after year.

The absolute tragic result of this lifestyle is the children. Children do not have the resources or support to cope with this type of family environment. Drugs and alcohol are the only way out for some. In extreme cases, it has lead to suicide. I know I have lost some friends to suicide.

In addition, Canada must retain Arctic Sovereignty and protection for the people in the North. The naval base in Inuvik was closed in 1986. The North is vulnerable to the plans Russia and China have for the Arctic.

In conclusion, transportation to the five communities is reduced every year with low water levels and flight schedules. The cost for fuel, goods and food continues to be high. My family and I support the building of the MacKenzie Valley Highway.

Regards,

Herb G. McCauley