

OCT 22 2010

Mr. Eli Nasogaluak
Environmental Assessment Coordinator
Environmental Impact Review Board
PO BOX 2120
INUVIK NT X0E 0T0

Dear Mr. Nasogaluak:

Hamlet of Tuktoyaktuk, Town of Inuvik and GNWT – Construction of the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway, Northwest Territories [02/10-05]

The Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway Project Steering Committee (the Developers) is pleased to provide the following comments on the draft Environmental Impact Statement Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Environmental Impact Review of the proposed construction of the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway.

As a first comment, we feel that Table 1 of Appendix A of the draft ToR, which outlines the main Biological, Physical and Human Elements and Goal Statements that the Project should strive to achieve during the implementation of the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk highway, are basically appropriate and reasonable.

However, it must be emphasized that, over the life of the project, these goals can only be achieved with the direct and continuing involvement and cooperation of the Developers with all other appropriate parties, including the local Hunters and Trappers Committees, co-management bodies, resource management agencies and potentially others.

Citing from Section 9 of the ToR, "*The EIRB encourages the Developer to use a goal-oriented approach to achieve human and biophysical environmental protection in the design, construction, operation, maintenance, decommissioning and restoration of the proposed development, and associated temporary developments and activities, in order to achieve a more sustainable development.*"

Based on the statement above, we have a major concern that the general expectation of the Developers, as enunciated in the current draft EIS Terms of Reference, is that the Developers are being expected to take full responsibility for ensuring that all of the goals outlined in the ToR are achieved.



With respect, we feel that this is an unreasonable burden to place on the Developers of this public infrastructure Project. We would therefore recommend that the final Terms of Reference more clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the Developer, as well as the roles and responsibilities of other parties to assist in achieving the overall goals related to the Project.

We also have significant concerns about the currently enunciated levels of detail requested for the subject matters identified for Biophysical and Socioeconomic Baseline parameters (Section 9), the subsequent Impact Assessment of the EIS (Section 10) and the Follow-up and Monitoring section (Section 13).

Given the considerable size of the current draft ToR (62 pages) and the extensive level of detail outlined therein, the problematic items are too numerous to itemize. In general, it is our view that much of the requested information does not appear to be relevant or needed for the EIRB to determine whether the goals set for the Project can be achieved. We also feel that for a number of the parameters (particularly of a social nature) the information requested goes well beyond the Developers' responsibility or mandate to address.

To provide perspective regarding what could be considered to be a more appropriate level of detail that the EIRB could include in the final Terms of Reference, we are pleased to provide two sample Terms of Reference for other similar projects currently under review by other jurisdictions. These projects include the proposed Talston Hydroelectric Expansion Project in the NWT (MVEIRB) and the proposed Highway 903 all weather road from Stony Rapids to Lake Athabasca in Saskatchewan (CEAA).

On behalf of the Steering Committee we would like to thank the EIRB for considering the comments provided. The Developers look forward to working closely with all parties to achieve the goals and principals outlined in Section 2 of the current draft Terms of Reference.

Yours truly,



Jim Stevens
Director, Mackenzie Valley
Highway

Attachments.

Attachment A – MVEIRB Terms of Reference for the Talston Hydroelectric Expansion Project Developers Assessment Report.

Attachment B – CEAA/Saskatchewan Environment guidelines for the preparation of an EIS and Comprehensive Study Scoping Document – Highway 903 – Proposed All Weather road – Stony Rapids to Lake Athabasca near Fond Du Lac.