



Government of | Gouvernement des  
Northwest Territories  
Territoires du Nord-Ouest

# What We Heard Report

## Rapport sur ce que nous avons entendu

### Mackenzie Valley Highway Engagement Summary

### Sommaire des échanges sur la route de la vallée du Mackenzie

Assessment Findings and Project Effects | Résultats de l'évaluation et répercussions du projet

SEPTEMBER 2023 | SEPTEMBRE 2023

Le présent document contient la  
traduction française du sommaire.





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## ABBREVIATIONS

| Abbreviation     | Description  |
|------------------|--|
| DAR              | Developer's Assessment Report                      |
| GNWT             | Government of the Northwest Territories            |
| km               | kilometers   |
| NT               | Northwest Territories                              |
| the Project      | Mackenzie Valley Highway Project                   |
| the Review Board | Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board |
| ToR              | Terms of Reference                                 |

# Executive Summary

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) Department of Infrastructure conducted engagement in November and December 2022 to share engagement feedback and early findings in the environmental assessment for the Mackenzie Valley Highway Project. This was done in support of the Environmental Assessment and Planning of the Mackenzie Valley Highway Project (the Project), which seeks to construct a two-lane all-season gravel highway from Wrigley, through Tulita, to Norman Wells, Northwest Territories.

To gather input, the GNWT visited Norman Wells, Tulita, Colville Lake, Fort Simpson, Fort Good Hope, and Délne, where they invited Indigenous Governments, Indigenous Organizations, and other affected parties, including community members to engage on early findings in the environmental assessment, and share their interests and concerns on the Project. Engagement occurred through five one-on-one meetings with the Project team, four drop-in public open houses, and six community meetings. In total, 197 individuals participated in the in-person engagement sessions.

Engagement findings included the following:

- Participants expressed concerns about water quality during construction activities and provided feedback on potential water sources to be accessed for the Project.
- Participants shared concerns about the proposed Project's route, including erosion, slope, and visibility conditions. Feedback and recommendations about borrow and quarry sources was also shared.
- Participants expressed that it is important to communities that the GNWT continue to engage with residents to identify wildlife and fish habitat, as well as trapping areas and trails.
- Participants requested that the Project team involve more Elders who can share Traditional Knowledge. Concerns were expressed that non-local tourists may not appreciate the lands or understand that the land is sacred.
- Participants stated that there are inadequate resources (medical services, social workers, education, etc.) to combat current drug and alcohol problems within communities. Concerns were expressed that the Project would increase the problem.

Feedback received regarding preliminary environmental assessment results will be considered alongside Traditional Knowledge and technical studies during project planning and design. Feedback will be integrated, where appropriate, in the Project description and assessment of effects to the environment in the Developer's Assessment Report.

# Sommaire

De novembre à décembre 2022, le ministère de l'Infrastructure du gouvernement des Territoires du Nord-Ouest (GTNO) a mené des échanges afin de partager les commentaires reçus précédemment, de même que les résultats préliminaires de l'évaluation environnementale dans le cadre du Projet de route de la vallée du Mackenzie. Cette route toutes saisons de gravier à deux voies relierait Wrigley, Tulita et Norman Wells, aux Territoires du Nord-Ouest (TNO). Ces échanges ont été organisés pour appuyer l'évaluation et la planification environnementales du projet.

Pour recueillir des commentaires, le GTNO a invité les gouvernements et les organisations autochtones de Norman Wells, Tulita, Colville Lake, Fort Simpson, Fort Good Hope et Délne, ainsi que d'autres parties concernées, notamment les résidents de ces collectivités et de l'ensemble des TNO, à s'exprimer sur les premiers résultats de l'évaluation environnementale, et à faire part de leurs attentes et de leurs préoccupations concernant le projet. Voici les moyens utilisés par l'équipe du projet pour recueillir les observations des participants : cinq réunions individuelles, quatre séances d'information publiques et six réunions communautaires. Au total, 197 participants ont assisté aux échanges en personne.



Voici certains commentaires recueillis :

- Des participants s'inquiètent de ce que sera la qualité de l'eau pendant les activités de construction et se sont exprimés sur les sources d'eau auxquelles le projet pourrait accéder.
- Des participants font part de leurs préoccupations quant au tracé proposé, notamment en raison des risques d'érosion, des pentes et de la visibilité. Ils ont également soumis des remarques et des recommandations à propos des sites d'emprunt et des carrières.
- Des participants soulignent que le GTNO devrait, pour le bien des collectivités, poursuivre ses échanges avec les résidents, afin de cerner les habitats de la faune et des poissons, ainsi que les zones et les sentiers utilisés pour la chasse.
- Des participants demandent à ce que l'équipe du projet inclue davantage d'aînés, pour que ceux-ci puissent partager leurs connaissances traditionnelles. Des participants craignent également que des touristes non originaires de la région n'aient pas conscience qu'ils traversent des terres ancestrales sacrées.
- Des participants affirment que certaines ressources (services médicaux, travailleurs sociaux, éducation, etc.) sont insuffisantes pour lutter contre les problèmes de drogue et d'alcool qui sévissent actuellement dans les collectivités, et des participants craignent que le projet aggrave la situation.

Les commentaires reçus concernant les résultats préliminaires de l'évaluation environnementale seront pris en compte au même titre que les connaissances traditionnelles et les études techniques durant la planification et la conception du projet. Les commentaires seront intégrés, le cas échéant, dans la description du projet, et l'évaluation des répercussions du projet sur l'environnement figureront dans le rapport d'évaluation du promoteur.

# Project Overview

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) is advancing the Environmental Assessment and Planning of the Mackenzie Valley Highway Project (the Project). The proposed Mackenzie Valley Highway will be a two-lane all-season gravel highway from Wrigley through Tulita to Norman Wells, Northwest Territories (NT). The Project is intended to replace the existing Mackenzie Valley Winter Road and will mostly follow the current route, with some realignment. The highway will connect with existing bridges on the Mackenzie Valley Winter Road and new culverts will be required at some watercourse crossings.

Currently, the Project is undergoing an Environmental Assessment by the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (Review Board). The GNWT is preparing a Developer's Assessment Report (DAR) that presents the assessment of the Project's effects on the biophysical and socio-economic environment. The DAR is developed according to the Review Board's Terms of Reference (ToR) and will be submitted to the Review Board as part of the Environmental Assessment process.

Between 2018 and 2020 the GNWT visited the Sahtu and Dehcho region communities to share early Project information and provide updates on the environmental planning work. Engagement activities for the DAR were initiated in the summer of 2021. The GNWT team visited the Sahtu Region communities in August 2021, provided an update on the project planning, and heard initial concerns and interests about the Project.

Engagement activities were paused during the fall of 2021 due to an upsurge of COVID-19 cases in the territory. In March of 2022, engagement activities on the DAR were re-initiated in the Sahtu and Dehcho regions. Engagement activities that occurred between March and July 2022 (regarding the Project description and construction activities) are consolidated into a separate, publicly available *What We Heard* summary report<sup>1</sup>. At the request of Pehdzéh Kǰ First Nation, the GNWT did not complete virtual or in-person engagement with their members in Wrigley when GNWT reinitiated engagement on the DAR. GNWT has had continuing dialogue with Pehdzéh Kǰ First Nation leadership and staff since that time and seeks to engage with the community of Wrigley on each of these topics in the near future.

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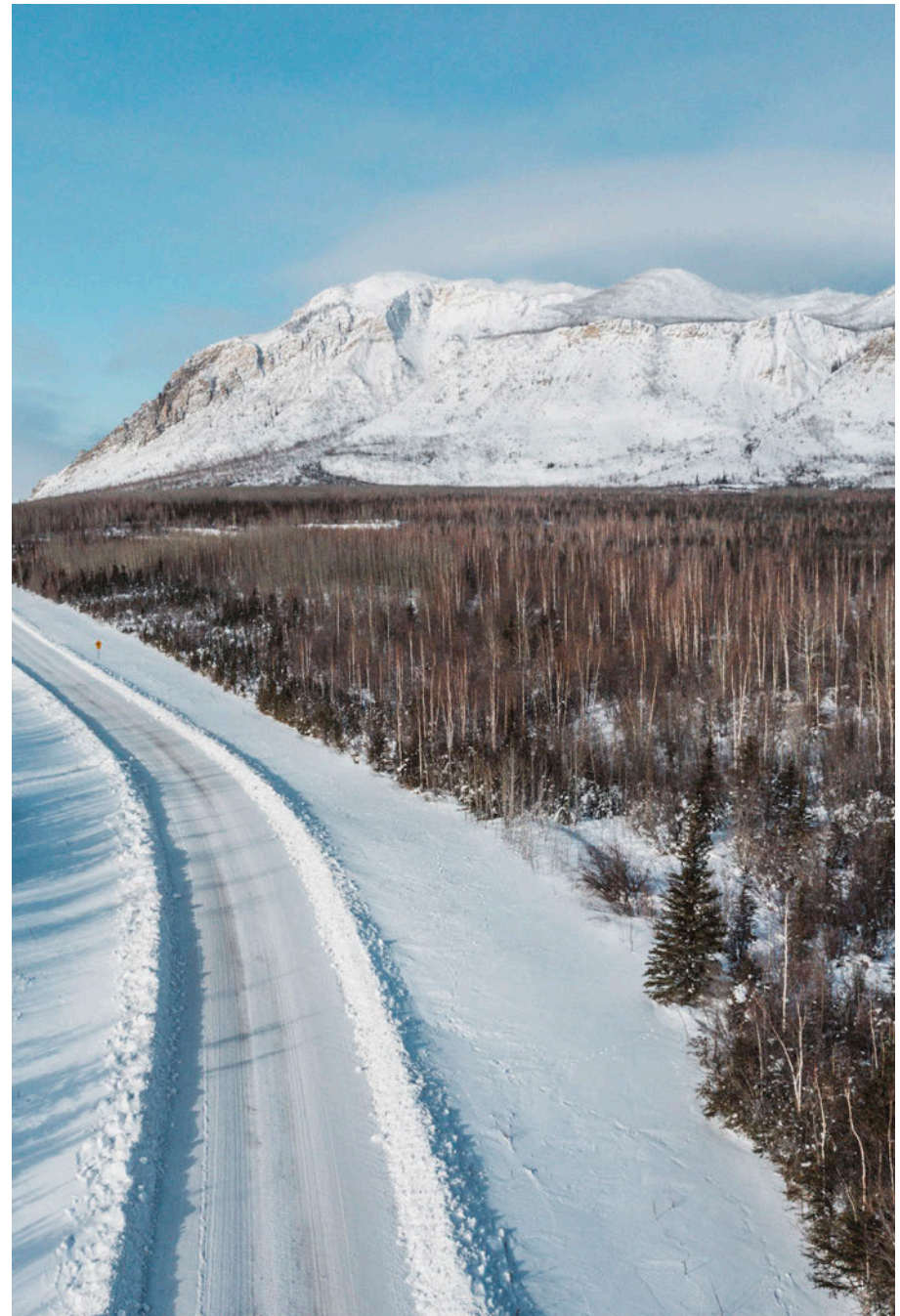
1 GNWT, 2023. What We Heard Report: Mackenzie Valley Highway Engagement Summary – Project Description and Construction Activities.

# Engagement Overview

The Mackenzie Valley Highway Environmental Assessment will assess how people, communities, and the environment may be affected by constructing an all-season highway. To collect input for the assessment, the GNWT engaged communities on the early findings in the Environmental Assessment, including effects on caribou and moose, effects on fish and water resources, and effects on traditional and non-traditional land use and harvesting, as well as any other public concerns or interests.

A total of 197 participants attended the engagement activities. For details on engagement activities, advertising, and communications, please reference the Engagement Approach section on page 17.

Feedback shared through engagement activities will be considered alongside Traditional Knowledge studies, biophysical studies, and socio-economic research to inform the design of the Mackenzie Valley Highway, as well as the DAR. The DAR will summarize the proposed development, examine potential effects to the environment, and propose mitigation measures to avoid or reduce these effects.





# What We Heard

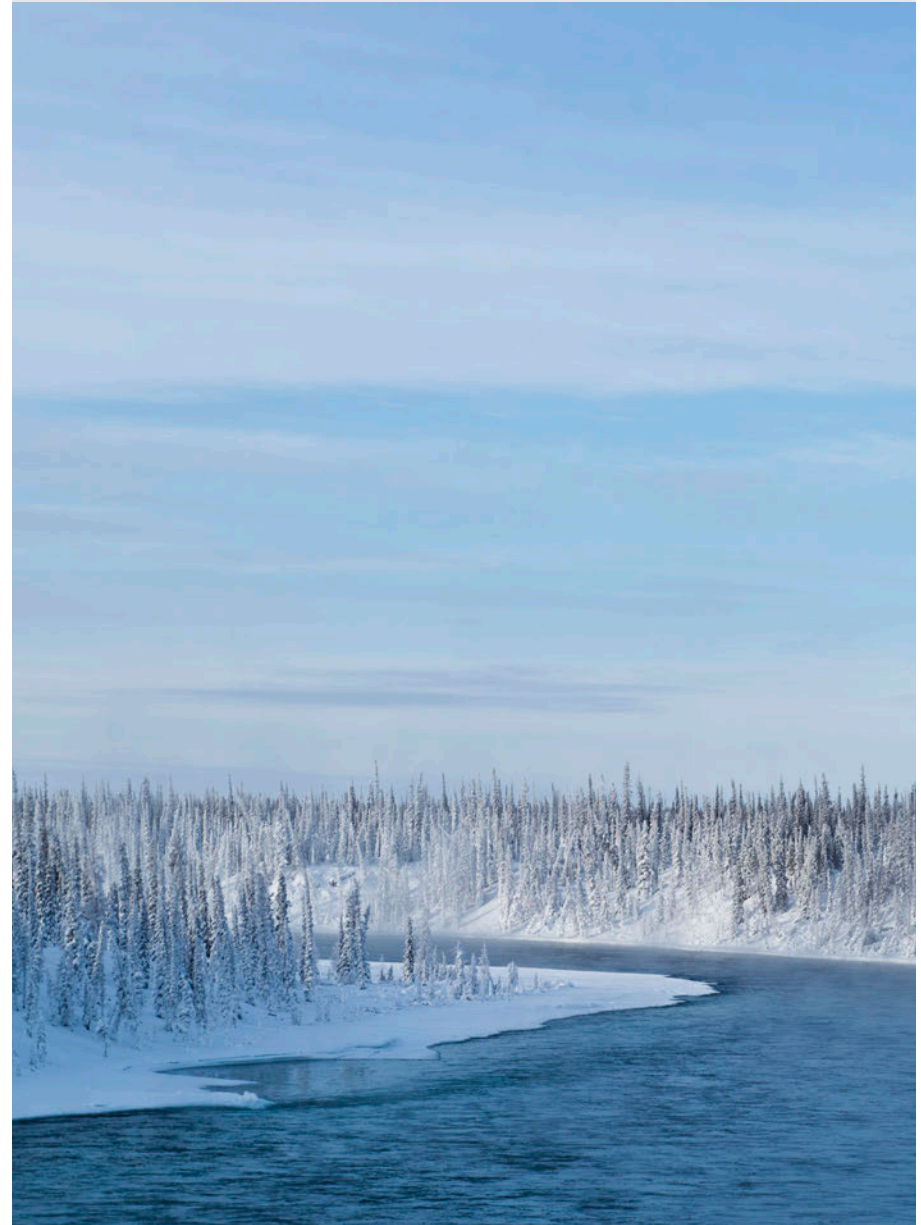
Engagement focused on sharing feedback received during April - July 2022 engagement activities and discussing preliminary assessment findings. Those who participated in engagement activities were asked to share their interests, concerns, and recommendations related to the following aspects:

- Water Sources and Water Use – where and how water will be used
- Locations of Road Cuts and Quarries
- Effects on Caribou and Moose and Other Wildlife
- Effects on Fish and Water Resources
- Effects on Traditional and Non-traditional Land Use and Harvesting
- Public Concerns and Interests

A copy of the presentation is included in Appendix A. Details on the approach to engagement and descriptions of the activities are contained in the Engagement Approach section.

# WATER SOURCES AND WATER USE

Participants expressed concerns about materials from blasting activities entering the water and contaminating food sources and local food chains. Participants inquired where the water for road construction will come from and asked if it would be from the water treatment plant in Tulita and whether this would cause problems for the communities. Participants also requested information about where water will be accessed from the Mackenzie River. Participants recommended hauling water from creeks with bridges in the summer rather than directly from Mackenzie River or areas without existing bridge access.





## LOCATIONS OF ROAD CUTS AND QUARRIES

Participants informed the Project team of areas of concern along the proposed Project's route including Seagram's Creek (due to erosion issues), Black Water Creek (due to slope of the hill), Strawberry Creek (due to limited visibility) and Gotcha Creek. Participants explained that areas of erosion are troublesome along the Mackenzie River, specifically in the area between the Délne Winter Road junction and the area north of Big Smith Creek. Participants informed the Project team that bridges are important to deal with drainage and sediment. They stated that the proposed Project's route intersects steep landscape features and there will be lots of culverts needed.

Participants requested additional information about the sources of gravel. The GNWT provided maps of proposed quarry and borrow sources during in-person engagement activities. Participants informed the Project team that there is good gravel across Mackenzie River at Little Bear River, which could potentially be hauled along the ice road. Participants requested that excess granular resources go back to the communities. Participants questioned if sawdust will be used on the highway.

# EFFECTS ON CARIBOU AND MOOSE AND OTHER WILDLIFE

## MOOSE

Participants informed the Project team that Mio Lake (approximately 51 km from Tulita and 3 km from the proposed Project's route) is a moose habitat. With respect to moose near the proposed Project route, participants requested a no-hunting zone 1 km from the Project route, noting that too many people are shooting moose and leaving them rather than utilizing the moose. Participants recommended a 5- or 10-year moratorium to protect and monitor moose.

## CARIBOU

Participants stated that caribou are found near the Prohibition Creek and Canyon Creek areas year-round because there are salt licks. Participants explained that caribou avoid culverts and migrate around them because the noise from the wind tunnelling through the culverts scares the caribou away. Participants in the Sahtu Region recommended a 5- or 10-year moratorium to protect and monitor caribou.



## OTHER WILDLIFE

Participants expressed the importance of respecting the environment and wildlife species and giving them due consideration during Project planning. Participants identified wildlife species present in the Project area including sheep, wolverine, squirrel, bat, beaver, bear, wild chicken, and muskox. They stated that muskox are found near the Prohibition Creek and Canyon Creek areas all year round because there are salt licks. Participants inquired why muskox were not included as a key line of inquiry (KLOI) in the ToR and stated that since muskox are becoming more abundant in the region, they may be introduced as a new meat source.

Participants informed the Project team that the black bear population is healthy, but bear behaviour is changing (more are present in residential areas, for example) and expressed concerns about disturbance to bear dens on Bear Rock. They informed the GNWT that beaver dams can be moved by using a transmitter with water noise to lure the beaver to the new area, and the beaver will build a new dam.

Participants expressed concerns about how the Project will affect local wildlife. They expressed concern about the noise levels from vehicles and construction affecting local wildlife. Participants said you can hear some vehicles over long distances. They support the idea of improved wildlife surveys and monitoring including aerial surveys, noting that during aerial surveys the wildlife are not disturbed. Participants recommended using trail cameras and snow machines to survey wildlife and expressed interest in creating wildlife corridors, like Banff National Park, Alberta.



# EFFECTS ON FISH AND WATER RESOURCES

## FISH

Participants reported that grayling spawn near Bluefish Creek (approximately 14 km NW of Tulita and 3 km from the proposed Project's route) and expressed concerns with bridge crossings, as the land has natural vibrations and are worried the construction will create more vibrations which might affect fish migration up-stream. Participants suggested monitoring vibrations before and afterward Project construction.

Participants requested monitoring once the road is open for events like fishing derbies in the spring and ice fishing.

## WATER RESOURCES

Participants reported that creeks are migration routes for wildlife and that protection of water is important. Participants recommended analyzing water temperature and depth as a priority, including core sampling, phytoplankton, and biological data.





# EFFECTS ON TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL LAND USE AND HARVESTING

## TRADITIONAL LAND USE

Throughout this engagement period the Project team received many comments, stories, and guidance regarding traditional land use. Participants discussed that increasing access to certain locations may have a detrimental effect on the environment and wildlife. Participants requested involving Elders and residents to learn more about the land and what areas to avoid, including traplines. It is important to communities that the GNWT continue to engage with residents to identify wildlife and fish habitat, as well as trapping areas and trails. Participants requested the Project team involve more Elders who can share Traditional Knowledge; they also support the Project team continuing to engage with residents who have information about local bat populations. Participants support monitoring the land and wildlife and using programs like the Guardians Program.

Participants explained that the road being open all year would be helpful for hunting, berry picking, plant harvesting, and wood gathering. Participants supported the wider road access and with the area being cleared, it will be easier to see and good for harvesting. However, participants expressed concerns that their ability to exercise their hunting rights may be affected once the highway is built. They expressed concern that the highway may lead to an increase in harvesting pressure due to an increase in the number of non-local hunters coming to the area.

Participants shared that, as a result of climate change, more people are likely to travel North where it is cooler, which would add to this effect. They informed the Project team that there has been an increase of hunters accessing lands and outfitters are now going into the mountains for bigger game. In addition to concerns about over-harvesting, they expressed concerns that people may hunt in areas where there are burial grounds. They also shared concerns that tourists may not appreciate the lands or understand that the land is sacred.

Participants recommended using local Indigenous languages to name places along the Project to help promote local language. Participants suggested using local knowledge and traditional names instead of using new ones.

## NON-TRADITIONAL LAND USE

Participants expressed interest in knowing what the GNWT's plans are for parks and recreational areas along the Project route. Participants stated the road to Canyon Creek has been a positive change for the community. They informed the Project team that residents enjoy swimming in Canyon Creek, and it is a gathering area in the summer.

Participants expressed concerns about the number of boats, all-terrain vehicles, and other recreational vehicles that would access local water sources after the highway is constructed. The participants in Fort Simpson informed the Project team that Mackenzie River is full of jet boats and worry what that is doing to the local wildlife.





# PUBLIC CONCERNS AND INTERESTS

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

### Employment and Economy

Participants want to see benefits for their communities. They stated that the road is an opportunity for tourism, which will be good for the whole community. Participants shared that the economy has to grow and that will not happen without the highway. Participants expressed an interest in seed funding to help local companies be able to participate in the Project (e.g., trucking companies).

Participants proposed that a toll system be installed on the highway, which would help to pay for construction and maintenance.

### Human Health and Community Wellness

Participants explained that exposing local communities to new viruses with new workers coming in and out of communities is dangerous. Participants expressed concerns about the Project creating easier access to cheaper alcohol and drugs in communities and stated there is a lack of treatment centres and health professionals.

### Infrastructure, Services and Institutional Capacity

Concerns were expressed regarding inadequate social services and resources, such as emergency services, medical services, social workers, and education. Participants stated that these services will be required if the highway is built.

Participants see the benefit in tourism and helping the local economy but want local communities to benefit first. Participants expressed concerns over lack of emergency response and communication lines once the highway opens. Participants suggested putting roadside emergency communication devices at regular intervals along the route.

### Education, Training and Skills

Participants would like to learn more about local job opportunities and training. Communities recommended employing local people first and creating training and education for residents. Participants supported using northern-owned businesses to utilize local employment instead of bringing an external workforce. They also supported using the Indigenous Guardians Program<sup>2</sup> for Indigenous monitoring. Fort Simpson recommended creating a Junior Guardian Program for all communities as a way of involving youth in the Project.

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2 A Government of Canada program that provides funding towards stewardship initiatives that support ecosystem conservation efforts and Indigenous rights. More information is available at: [Indigenous Guardians - Canada.ca](https://www.indigenousguardians.ca/).



## LAND ACCESS

Sahtu participants were interested in land access and inquired about a land exchange process for the Project as part of the proposed Project route is located within Sahtu private lands. They expressed that they would like to better understand the route in order to make sure that any issues regarding ownership are discussed.

## CLIMATE-RELATED CONCERNS

Participants stated they cannot rely on the Mackenzie Valley Winter Road because of climate change. Participants who rely on barges to receive supplies in non winter months highlighted the challenges associated with changing water levels on the operation of the barges. This was a concern in Fort Good Hope particularly, where participants expressed that if the highway is built, Fort Good Hope would remain the only community reliant on barge transportation.

## SPILL CONTINGENCY PLANNING

Participants inquired about the Project's spill contingency and spill cleanup plans in relation to concerns about water quality and health concerns for humans, wildlife, and plants. Participants referenced the waste management facility project proposed by Imperial Oil in Norman Wells to manage contaminants accumulated over the lifespan of the company's operations in the area.<sup>3</sup> Participants were particularly concerned with the management of the cleanup including the safe disposal of wastewater.

## GENERAL FEEDBACK

During the engagement sessions, participants also had general questions on a variety of themes. Participants were interested in the status of engagement with other communities who will be affected by the Project. Participants inquired about the Project timeline, and the GNWT's strategy to advance the Project to ensure the highway is built. Participants also inquired about, and encouraged the Project team to use, lessons learned from past projects.

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3 Imperial Oil filed an application with the Canada Energy Regulator for the Norman Wells Waste Management Facility in 2021, and a Hearing Order was released in 2022, which coincided with engagement on the Mackenzie Valley Highway Project. The application for the waste management facility has since been withdrawn.

See: <https://www.cer-rec.gc.ca/en/applications-hearings/view-applications-projects/norman-wells-waste-management-facility/> for more information on that project.

# Engagement Approach

The GNWT is committed to engaging with Indigenous Governments, Indigenous Organizations, and other affected parties, providing relevant and meaningful opportunities for feedback, and considering and integrating the information shared into the Project planning and design.

The GNWT sought input from people who currently use the Mackenzie Valley Winter Road, who would have access to using the proposed Mackenzie Valley Highway, and those who might be affected by the Mackenzie Valley Highway Project.

The approach to engagement was shaped by the feedback from communities requesting in-person meetings to help foster meaningful relationships. The Project team primarily met in-person with participants from Indigenous Governments, Indigenous Organizations, and other affected parties in their respective communities. Where participants were not able to meet in person, the GNWT offered online and telephone meetings. Project information was made available in print and electronic versions and was distributed by email, in-person, or mail, and through the GNWT's online engagement portal. Meeting notes were documented at each engagement session.

## WHO WAS ENGAGED?

Outreach and engagement efforts were focused on providing updates on the Project's progress and early findings in the environmental assessment. All engagement activities were open to those who may be users of the new Mackenzie Valley Highway and those who may be affected by the highway construction or future operations. Engagement involved:

- Indigenous Governments, Indigenous Organizations, and other affected parties representing:
  - Settlement beneficiaries
  - Municipal and community governance
  - Health, education, and cultural organizations
- Community members in Tulita, Délne, Fort Good Hope, Colville Lake, Norman Wells, and Fort Simpson
- Residents of the Northwest Territories

# ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

The following table summarizes engagement activities between November and December 2022. Additional details about each activity are included in Appendix B. In total 197 participants shared their thoughts through meetings and workshops, while another 76 provided feedback online or by email. Following the table is an explanation of each activity.

Meeting notes were taken at each meeting.

**Table 1: Summary of Engagement Activities: November – December 2022**

| Activity  | Number of Participants  |
|---|---|
| Email correspondence  | 76 emails exchanged   |
| Project Website and Online <i>Have Your Say</i> Engagement Platform | Approximately 1,500 website visits between November 3, 2022 and February 2, 2023* |
| Online <i>Have Your Say</i> Engagement Platform                     | 536 visits between November 3, 2022 and February 2, 2023*                         |
| Public Drop-in Open Houses  | 38 participants during 4 open houses  |
| In-person Community Meetings  | 113 participants during 6 meetings  |
| One-on-One Meetings (in-person and virtual)                         | 46 participants during 6 meetings   |

**Note:**

\* Spans two engagement periods – *Assessment Findings and Project Effects* engagement and *Project Mitigation and Monitoring* engagement

## PUBLIC DROP-IN OPEN HOUSES

During each community visit from November to December 2022, the GNWT hosted public open houses during the day. The Project team shared Project information with each visitor, answered questions, and documented feedback. Lunch and door prizes were available at each event to encourage participation.

## IN-PERSON COMMUNITY MEETINGS


During each community visit, the GNWT also hosted in-person community meetings. These meetings were open to the public and included a brief presentation and time for questions and answers. Meeting rooms were set up with wall maps and Project information, and attendees were invited to circulate and discuss the information with a subject matter expert or a GNWT staff member.

Language interpreters were present, and attendees were invited to listen in using a headset. Similar to the open houses, dinner and door prizes were available at each event to encourage participation.

## ONE-ON-ONE MEETINGS

The GNWT welcomed one-on-one meetings with Indigenous Governments, Indigenous Organizations, and other affected parties when requested. These occurred through the Microsoft Teams or Zoom applications, or in person. The GNWT reached out to Indigenous Governments, Indigenous Organizations, and other affected parties in advance of travelling to a community to offer a scheduled in-person meeting time regarding the Project. One-on-one meetings allowed for parties to discuss information relevant to their interests. When requested, the GNWT invited subject matter experts to participate and assist in answering questions regarding the Project.





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Home / Mackenzie Valley Highway: Impacts and Mitigation Measures

## Mackenzie Valley Highway: Impacts and Mitigation Measures

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### Overview

The GNWT is seeking input from community residents on the proposed Mackenzie Valley Highway (MVH) between Wrigley and Norman Wells. Your input will be used to revise and update the MVH Developer's Assessment report which is required to advance the environmental assessment.

When completed, the MVH will be a two-lane gravel highway from Wrigley to Norman Wells, approximately 321 kilometres in length.

### Have Your Say

The MVH project team will be visiting communities to continue engagement in January and February 2023.

This series of engagement aims to hold two public meetings in each Sahtu community, and in Fort Simpson. The first round of meetings will focus on providing an overview of the project description and asking for feedback on the potential impacts of the project.

The second round of meetings will report back on what was heard during previous engagement rounds and discuss proposed mitigation measures and residual effects monitoring.

There are a variety of ways to participate including by attending an engagement session and/or drop-in. Lunch and dinner will be provided!

#### Upcoming engagement:

Monday, January 30 – Délıne Arena Hall

- Drop in Open House – 12 to 2 p.m.
- Community Meeting – 6 to 9 p.m.

Tuesday, January 31 – Colville Lake Community Hall

- Drop in Open House – 12 to 2 p.m.
- Community Meeting – 6 to 9 p.m.

Wednesday, February 1 – Fort Good Hope Community Hall


- Drop in Open House – 12 to 2 p.m.
- Community Meeting – 6 to 9 p.m.


Thursday, February 2 – Fort Simpson Rec Centre


- Drop in Open House – 12 to 2 p.m.
- Community Meeting – 6 to 9 p.m.

Please note: This schedule will be updated as more public meeting dates and locations are confirmed.


#### Status



**Open**  
This engagement is open from November 3, 2022 to February 2, 2023.


**Under Review**


**Completed**

#### Related Links


[The Mackenzie Valley Highway Project](#)


[Past engagement, Have Your Say on the Proposed Route for the MVH](#)

## HAVE YOUR SAY ENGAGEMENT WEBPAGE

To assist with sharing project information to the public and provide an online option for engagement, the GNWT used their *Have Your Say* engagement webpage from November 2022 until February 2023. The *Have Your Say* webpage hosted project information, advertised upcoming engagement opportunities, and had two interactive features: a question/comment box and a link to the interactive map. The *Have Your Say* webpage included contact information for the Project team, links to the Project's website on the GNWT's webpage and the Review Board's Mackenzie Valley Highway environmental assessment process. The webpage was accessible in English and French.

[haveyoursay.nwt-tno.ca/mvhimpacts](http://haveyoursay.nwt-tno.ca/mvhimpacts)

## EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE

A dedicated email address for receiving Project feedback has been in use since 2019. This email address is publicly available and was listed on all engagement materials and advertisements. The email address was used as a channel to receive requests for registration in the workshops, and for the public to communicate feedback or questions to the Project team. The Project email ([mvh@gov.nt.ca](mailto:mvh@gov.nt.ca)) will remain open for the life of the Project.

## POSTERS, WALL MAPS, AND MAPBOOKS

Affected parties and stakeholder organizations received posters to help advertise engagement activities. Hard copy wall maps were provided to reduce barriers associated with relying on the technology of the interactive map. The Renewable Resource Councils and Land Corporations located in Tulita and Norman Wells also received printed mapbooks of the road location study area showing detail to facilitate sharing of site-specific feedback.

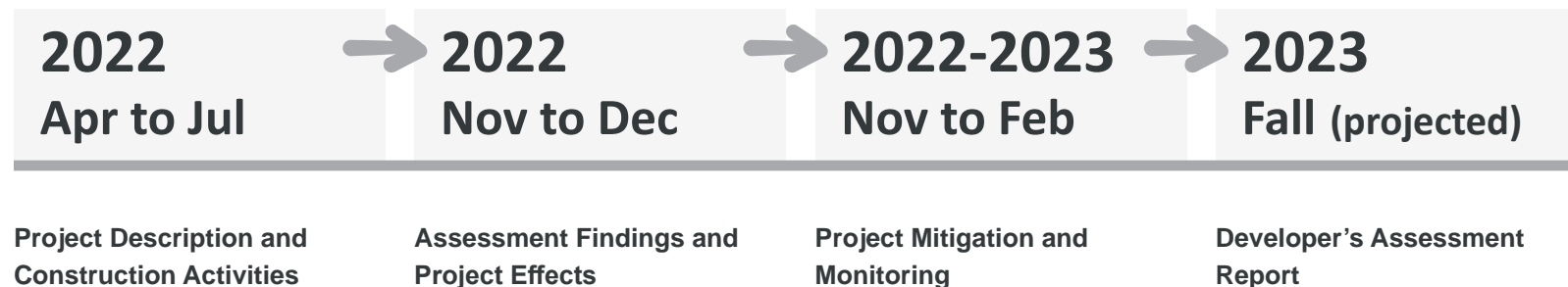
# What Comes Next

Feedback shared by participants during the engagement on the preliminary findings on the environmental assessment has been reviewed and considered in the context of Project planning and design and will be integrated into the Project description and assessment of effects to the environment in the DAR.

The GNWT will continue to advance the environmental and engineering studies for the Project. The GNWT anticipates the DAR will be ready for submission to the Review Board in Fall 2023. Prior to the DAR submission, the GNWT will continue engagement on the Project with affected parties. Once the DAR is submitted, the Review Board begins a public review process of the DAR. During this time, Indigenous Governments and Indigenous Organizations will conduct a final review of the documents and have an opportunity to provide comments.

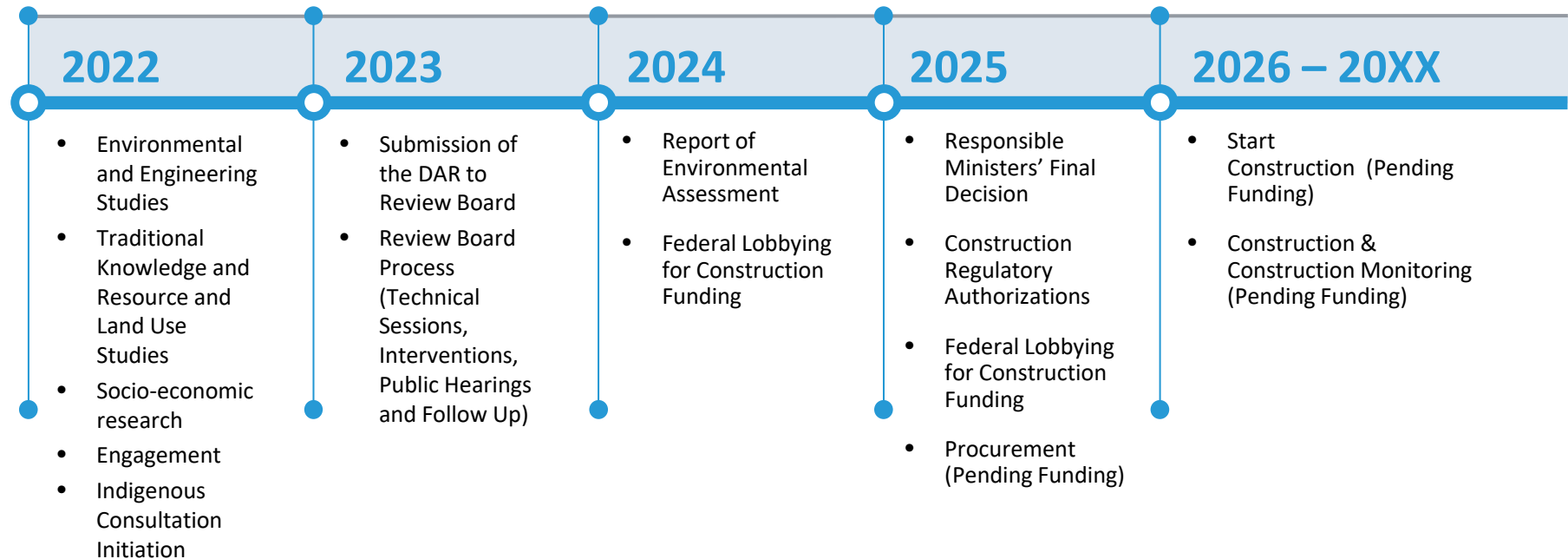
The Review Board will conduct technical sessions and public engagement to provide affected parties and Project stakeholders with the opportunity to participate in the Project review and inform the Review Board's recommendations on the Project. Following the Review Board's Report of Environmental Assessment recommendations, the Responsible Minister will make their decision. The timelines for the Review Board processes are legislated, as is the timeline for the Responsible Ministers Final Decision, upon receipt of the Review Board's Report of Environmental Assessment.

## ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE



It is anticipated that the Review Board’s recommendation will be issued in 2024, followed by the Minister’s decision in 2025. If the Project is approved, the timeline for construction of the road will be dependent on securing federal funding and obtaining regulatory authorizations. Construction could start by 2026.

## ANTICIPATED DEVELOPER’S ASSESSMENT REPORT TIMELINE





# Closure

The GNWT would like to thank all the community members of the Sahtu and Dehcho regions, the organizations who provided meeting spaces and services, and the interpreters and translators for their invaluable participation in our engagement efforts on the Mackenzie Valley Highway Project.

Please check our website for up-to-date project information:  
[www.inf.gov.nt.ca/en/MVH](http://www.inf.gov.nt.ca/en/MVH).

# Appendix A—Mackenzie Valley Highway Project: Engagement Feedback and Early Findings in the Environmental Assessment



# Mackenzie Valley Highway Project

Engagement Feedback and Early Findings in the Environmental Assessment

November 2022

Government of  
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# Agenda

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- Mackenzie Valley Highway Project Update
- What We Heard So Far
- Project Design – Topics for Discussion
- Preliminary Environmental Assessment Findings
- Engagement Opportunities
- Next Steps

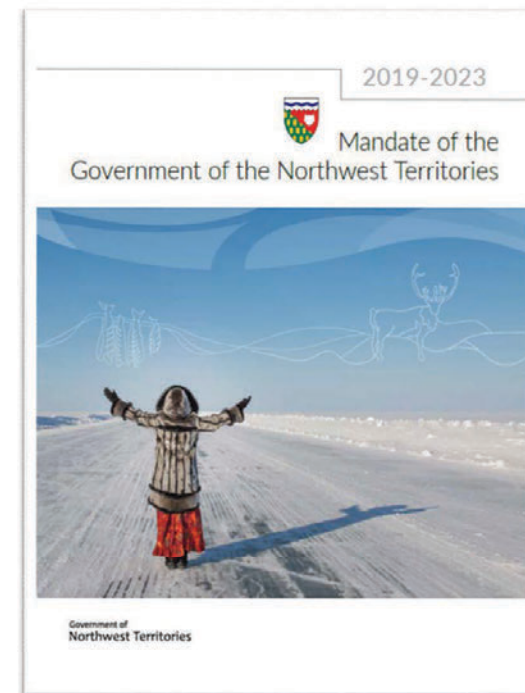


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## GNWT Strategic Initiatives

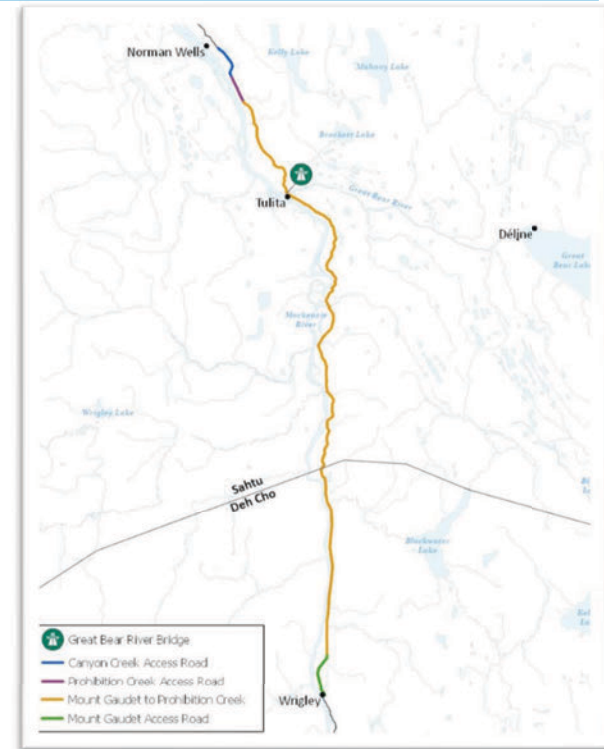
*“These projects will provide the foundational infrastructure to support an improved quality of life and lower cost of living for NWT residents, as well as support the expansion and diversification of the economy.”*

- **Mackenzie Valley Highway**
- Slave Geological Province Corridor
- Taltson Hydro Expansion



## Mackenzie Valley Highway at a Glance

- All-season road between Wrigley and Norman Wells
- Mackenzie Valley Highway Environmental Assessment
  - Developer's Assessment Report
  - Environmental and Engineering Studies
  - Archaeological Studies
  - Wildlife Related Studies
  - Traditional Knowledge Studies
  - Socio-Economic Impact Assessment



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## April to July 2022 Engagement – What We Heard

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Feedback during engagement activities has included:

- Safety
- Permafrost, Erosion & Stability
- Overflow
- Camps, Waste & Wastewater
- Fish & Wildlife
- Cultural Protection
- Socio-economic Conditions
- Lessons Learned



## April to July 2022 Engagement – What We Heard

There is general support to construct an all-season road. Feedback broadly centred on 8 themes.

### Theme 1: Safety

- Participants identified a number of safety concerns with the existing winter road.

Discussion topic: road cuts



## April to July 2022 Engagement – What We Heard

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### Theme 2: Permafrost, Erosion & Stability

- Permafrost thawing, erosion, and landslides are of concern.
- Concerns were raised about slumping along the banks of Mackenzie River.



## April to July 2022 Engagement – What We Heard

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### Theme 3: Overflow

- Participants recommended avoiding areas with known ice and water overflow and road washouts.

### Theme 4: Camps, Waste & Wastewater

- Concerns were shared about the capacity of municipal facilities.



## April to July 2022 Engagement – What We Heard

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### Theme 5: Fish & Wildlife

- Protection of caribou, fish, moose, other fur-bearing animals is a priority.

### Theme 6: Cultural Protection

- Protect culturally important areas (Bear Rock, known burial sites, and cabins), and keep winter road access.
- Discussion topic: effects to wildlife, fish, and land use areas



# April to July 2022 Engagement – What We Heard

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## Theme 7: Socio-Economic Conditions

- Concerns regarding construction and camps were shared.
- Concern was expressed whether there are adequate emergency response services.

## Theme 8: Lessons Learned

- Lessons learned from other northern road projects should be considered.



## Breakout Group Topics

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We have posters to introduce the following discussion topics:

- Water Sources and Water Use– where and how water will be used
- Locations of Road Cuts and Quarries
- Effects on Caribou and Moose and Other Wildlife
- Effects on Fisheries and Water Resources
- Effects on Traditional and Non-traditional Land Use and Harvesting



## New Topics for Discussion

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### Location of Water Sources

- Proposed water sources to be used for camps and road construction and maintenance

### Location of Road Cuts

- Road cuts improve the safety of the highway
- They can be a source of granular or rock material



# Developers Assessment Report – Preliminary Assessment Findings

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## Caribou and Moose

The assessment will look at the following potential effects during construction and operations/maintenance:

- Change in habitat
- Change in movements
- Change in mortality risk
- Change in health



# Developers Assessment Report – Preliminary Assessment Findings

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## Fisheries and Water Resources

The assessment will look at the following potential effects during construction and operations/maintenance:

- Change in water amounts (flow or volume)
- Change in water quality
- Change in fish health or mortality



# Developers Assessment Report – Preliminary Assessment Findings

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## Traditional and Non-traditional Land Use and Harvesting

The assessment will look at the following potential effects during construction and operations/maintenance:

- Change in availability of resources
- Change in access to resources
- Change in cultural or traditional land use sites



## Next Opportunities for Input

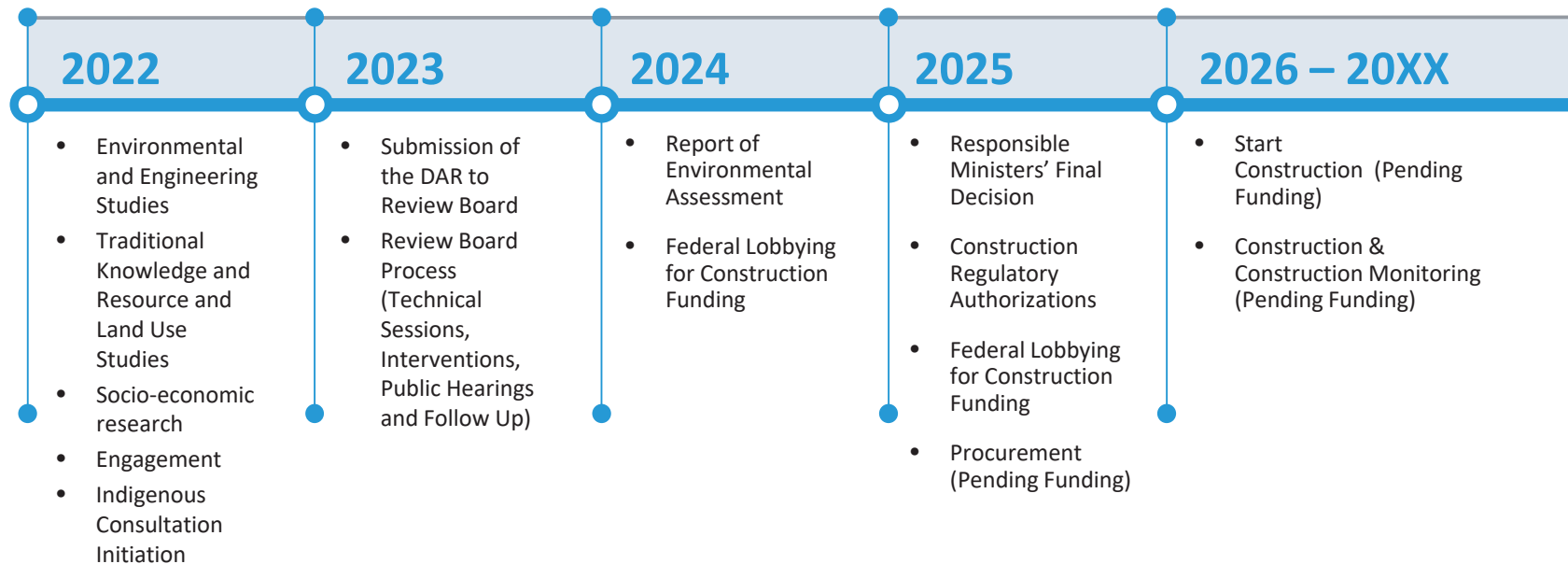
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We will be back in a few weeks. Our goals are to:

- Recap what we heard from you
- Review mitigations – the actions that GNWT will take to reduce effects to the most important aspects of the environment



# Mackenzie Valley Highway Timelines



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# Questions?

Email: [MVH@gov.nt.ca](mailto:MVH@gov.nt.ca)

Project Website: [www.inf.gov.nt.ca/en/MVH](http://www.inf.gov.nt.ca/en/MVH)

Have Your Say: <https://haveyoursay/nwt-tno-ca/Mackenzie-valley-highway-project>



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# Appendix B—Summary of Engagement Activities

| Activity  | Number of Participants             | Date                                | Location   |
|---|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Email correspondence<br>Project email: <a href="mailto:mvh@gov.nt.ca">mvh@gov.nt.ca</a> | 76 emails exchanged                | October – December 2022             | Yellowknife  |
| Infrastructure Project Website  | Approximately 1,500 website visits | November 3, 2022 – February 2, 2023 | <a href="http://www.inf.gov.nt.ca/en/MVH">www.inf.gov.nt.ca/en/MVH</a>   |
| <i>Have Your Say</i> Online Engagement Platform: Information                            | 536 page visits                    | November 3, 2022 – February 2, 2023 | <a href="http://haveyoursay.nwt-tno.ca/mackenzie-valley-highway-project">haveyoursay.nwt-tno.ca/mackenzie-valley-highway-project</a> |
| Public Drop-in Open Houses (4)  | 5 participants                     | November 7, 2022                    | Norman Wells   |
|   | 13 participants                    | November 8, 2022                    | Déline   |
|   | 12 participants                    | November 10, 2022                   | Tulita   |
|   | 8 participants                     | December 5, 2022                    | Fort Simpson   |

| Activity                | Number of Participants | Date              | Location                                      |
|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|---|
| Community Meetings (6)  | 17 participants        | November 9, 2022  | Colville Lake                                 |
|                         | 18 participants        | November 8, 2022  | Déłıne  |
|                         | 10 participants        | November 7, 2022  | Norman Wells                                  |
|                         | 22 participants        | November 10, 2022 | Tulita  |
|                         | 42 participants        | November 9, 2022  | Fort Good Hope                                |
|                         | 4 participants         | December 5, 2022  | Fort Simpson                                  |
| One-on-One Meetings (5) | 1 participant          | November 7, 2022  | Town of Norman Wells                          |
|                         | 5 participants         | November 7, 2022  | Norman Wells Renewable Resources Council      |
|                         | 1 participant          | November 8, 2022  | Déłıne Renewable Resources Council            |
|                         | 19 participants        | November 10, 2022 | Tulita Elder's and Knowledge Keeper's Council |
|                         | 6 participants         | December 9, 2022  | Norman Wells Land Corporation                 |



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**Territoires du Nord-Ouest**