



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

Project Mitigation and Monitoring | Atténuation et surveillance dans le cadre du projet

SEPTEMBER 2023 | SEPTEMBRE 2023

Le présent document contient la
traduction française du sommaire.



Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
SOMMAIRE	5
PROJECT OVERVIEW	7
ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW	8
WHAT WE HEARD	9
Moose, Caribou, and Other Wildlife	10
Moose	10
Caribou	10
Other Wildlife	10
Fish and Water Resources	11
Fish	11
Water Resources	11
Traditional and Non-traditional Land Use and Harvesting	12
Traditional Land Use	12
Cabins	12
Non-Traditional Land Use	13
Harvesting	13
Tulita- Bear Rock (Pet̓n̓n̓ah) Realignment	14
Public Concerns and Interests	15
Socio-economic Considerations	15
ENGAGEMENT APPROACH	17
Who Was Engaged?	17
Engagement Activities	18
Public Drop-in Open Houses	18
In-Person Community Meetings	18
One-on-One Meetings	18
Have Your Say Engagement Webpage	19
Email Correspondence	19
Posters, Wall Maps, and Mapbooks	19
WHAT COMES NEXT	20
Engagement Timeline	20
Developers Assessment Report Timeline	21
CLOSURE	22
APPENDIX A—MACKENZIE VALLEY HIGHWAY PROJECT: MITIGATING EFFECTS OF THE PROJECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT. 23	
APPENDIX B—SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES	44



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
Review Board	Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board
SRRB	Sahtu Renewable Resources Board

Executive Summary

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) Department of Infrastructure conducted engagement between November 2022 and February 2023 to gather input on mitigation measures and monitoring plans for the Mackenzie Valley Highway Project. This was done in support of the Environmental Assessment and Planning of Mackenzie Valley Highway (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, Fort Simpson, Fort Good Hope, and Délne where they invited Indigenous Governments, Indigenous Organizations, and other affected parties, including community members and residents of the Northwest Territories, to engage on mitigation measures and monitoring plans, and share their interests and concerns on the Project. Engagement occurred through fifteen one-on-one meetings with the Project team, five drop-in public open houses, and five community meetings. In total, 180 individuals participated in the in-person engagement sessions.



Engagement findings included the following:

- Protection of caribou, fish, moose, other fur-bearing animals, and their respective habitats is a priority for community members. Communities support wildlife management and monitoring plans.
- Communities support fish management and monitoring plans to examine any effects the Project will have on local fish populations and habitat. Specific interest was raised in implementing these plans around bridge construction to monitor whether all season access will invite overfishing.
- Communities are interested in working with the GNWT to explore the effects of the Project on harvesting, in monitoring these effects, and creating mitigation methods.
- There is support from Tulita Elders and the Tulita Renewable Resource Council on the proposed Bear Rock (Petııııah) realignment, and new quarry location. The new realigned route will provide desired gravel material for the community and the road.
- Some community members (youth between the ages of 25-35) were less in favour of the proposed Bear Rock (Petııııah) realignment explaining it will take the highway through a less scenic route, possibly reducing regional tourism. They prefer the route option that follows the existing Mackenzie Valley Winter Road.
- It is important to the affected communities that they receive local workforce training to prepare themselves for the construction of the Project.
- There are socio-economic concerns regarding construction of the highway and camps. Concerns expressed include safety, substance abuse, community interactions with foreign workers, and economic and employment benefits for local community members.
- There are concerns that there are inadequate resources (social workers, education, etc.) to combat current drug and alcohol problems within communities and that the Project will increase the problem.

Feedback received regarding mitigation measures and monitoring plans 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 2022 à février 2023, le ministère de l'Infrastructure du gouvernement des Territoires du Nord-Ouest (GTNO) a mené des échanges à propos des mesures d'atténuation et des plans de surveillance 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, Fort Simpson, Fort Good Hope et Délne, ainsi que d'autres parties concernées, notamment les membres des collectivités et les résidents de l'ensemble des TNO, à s'exprimer sur les mesures d'atténuation et les plans de surveillance, 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 : 15 réunions individuelles, cinq séances d'information publiques et cinq réunions communautaires. Au total, 180 participants ont assisté aux échanges en personne.



Voici certains commentaires recueillis :

- La protection du caribou, de l'orignal, d'autres animaux à fourrure et du poisson et de leurs habitats respectifs est une priorité pour les résidents de la région. Les collectivités soutiennent la mise en place de plans de gestion et de surveillance de la faune.
- Les collectivités soutiennent la mise en place de plans de gestion et de surveillance des poissons afin d'examiner tous les effets que le projet aura sur les populations locales de poissons et leur habitat. Des participants souhaitent tout particulièrement que de tels plans soient mis en œuvre pour la construction du pont, de façon à déterminer si un accès toutes saisons à la région entraînera une surpêche.
- Les collectivités souhaitent collaborer avec le GTNO pour examiner les effets du projet sur la chasse, les surveiller et créer des mesures d'atténuation adaptées.
- Des aînés et le Conseil des ressources renouvelables de Tulita soutiennent la déviation proposée au niveau du site de Bear Rock (Petinıᓂah) ainsi que l'emplacement de la nouvelle carrière. Le nouveau tracé permettra d'avoir accès au gravier nécessaire, pour la collectivité comme pour la route.
- Une partie des résidents de la région, en particulier ceux âgés de 25 à 35 ans, sont moins favorables à la déviation proposée au niveau du site de Bear Rock (Petinıᓂah), car ils estiment que la route traversera alors des paysages moins pittoresques, ce qui pourrait nuire au tourisme régional. Ces participants préfèrent que le tracé de la route suive celui de la route d'hiver existante de la vallée du Mackenzie.

- Il est primordial pour les collectivités concernées que la main-d'œuvre locale reçoive une formation afin de se préparer à la construction du projet.
- La construction de la route et des campements suscite des préoccupations socio-économiques. Les inquiétudes concernent notamment la sécurité, la consommation de substances psychoactives, les interactions des résidents avec les travailleurs venus d'ailleurs, ainsi que les retombées liées à l'économie et à l'emploi pour les résidents de la région.
- On craint que certaines ressources (travailleurs sociaux, éducation, etc.) soient insuffisantes pour lutter contre les problèmes de drogue et d'alcool qui sévissent dans les collectivités, et que le projet vienne aggraver la situation.

Les commentaires reçus concernant les mesures d'atténuation et les plans de surveillance 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 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 report¹, as are engagement activities that occurred in November to December 2022 regarding preliminary assessment findings and Project effects.² At the request of Pehdzéh Kǰ First Nation, the GNWT did not complete virtual and/or in-person engagement with their members in Wrigley when the GNWT reinitiated engagement on the DAR. The 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.

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

2 GNWT. 2023b. What We Heard Report: Mackenzie Valley Highway Engagement Summary – Assessment Findings and Project Effects.



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 proposed mitigation measures and monitoring to reduce or avoid effects on caribou and moose, effects on fish and water resources, and effects on traditional and non traditional land use and harvesting, and any other public concerns or interests.

A total of 180 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 progress and seeking input on the mitigation measures and monitoring plans proposed for the Project. Those who participated in engagement activities were asked to share their interests, concerns, and recommendations related to the following aspects:

- Moose, caribou, and other wildlife
- Fish and water resources
- 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.



MOOSE, CARIBOU, AND OTHER WILDLIFE

MOOSE

Participants in the Sahtu Region stated that moose are likely to leave when the Project is being constructed but will eventually come back as they like willows in the vicinity of the proposed highway. Participants stated that moose are not hunted in the summer as it negatively affects raising calves; instead, moose are hunted in autumn. Participants expressed interest in discussing a three-to-five-kilometre (km) buffer along shorelines and known moose habitat to ban hunting. Residents explained that moose are present on the islands in Mackenzie River (including at Old Ford Point), and near Big Fish Creek and Blackwater River.

CARIBOU

Participants informed the Project team that caribou are found near the Canyon Creek area. They expressed concern that the highway may affect the caribou population and increase hunting from outside the community, including around the N'Dulee area north of Fort Simpson. Participants stated that non-local harvesters have come to the area to harvest Bluenose-East caribou in the past.



Participants explained that barren-ground caribou (Porcupine herd) do not like crossing the Dempster Highway and have changed their migration path. Participants expressed concern the Project will cause migration path changes in the caribou. Participants also expressed concern about diseased deer migrating north from areas like Alberta, which could affect the caribou population.

There is a perception that collisions with caribou may become more frequent when the highway is built, and participants recommended that collisions be tracked and monitored.

OTHER WILDLIFE

Participants expressed the importance of respecting the environment and wildlife species and giving them due consideration during Project planning.

Participants reported that there are rabbits present in the Lynn Creek area and stated that the grizzly bear population is increasing in the Project area. They expressed concerns about the population of bees and songbirds. Participants also expressed concern about the Project introducing foreign and invasive species, including plant species that could harm wildlife.

Participants support the development of monitoring and management plans for all wildlife. They recommended installing wildlife cameras from Wrigley to Norman Wells to understand the amount of wildlife usage prior to clearing and other Project activities. Participants stated that the highway may be used by wolves for easy travel.



FISH AND WATER RESOURCES

FISH

Participants support the development of a fish management plan and recommended using a monitoring program like the Indigenous Guardians Program³.

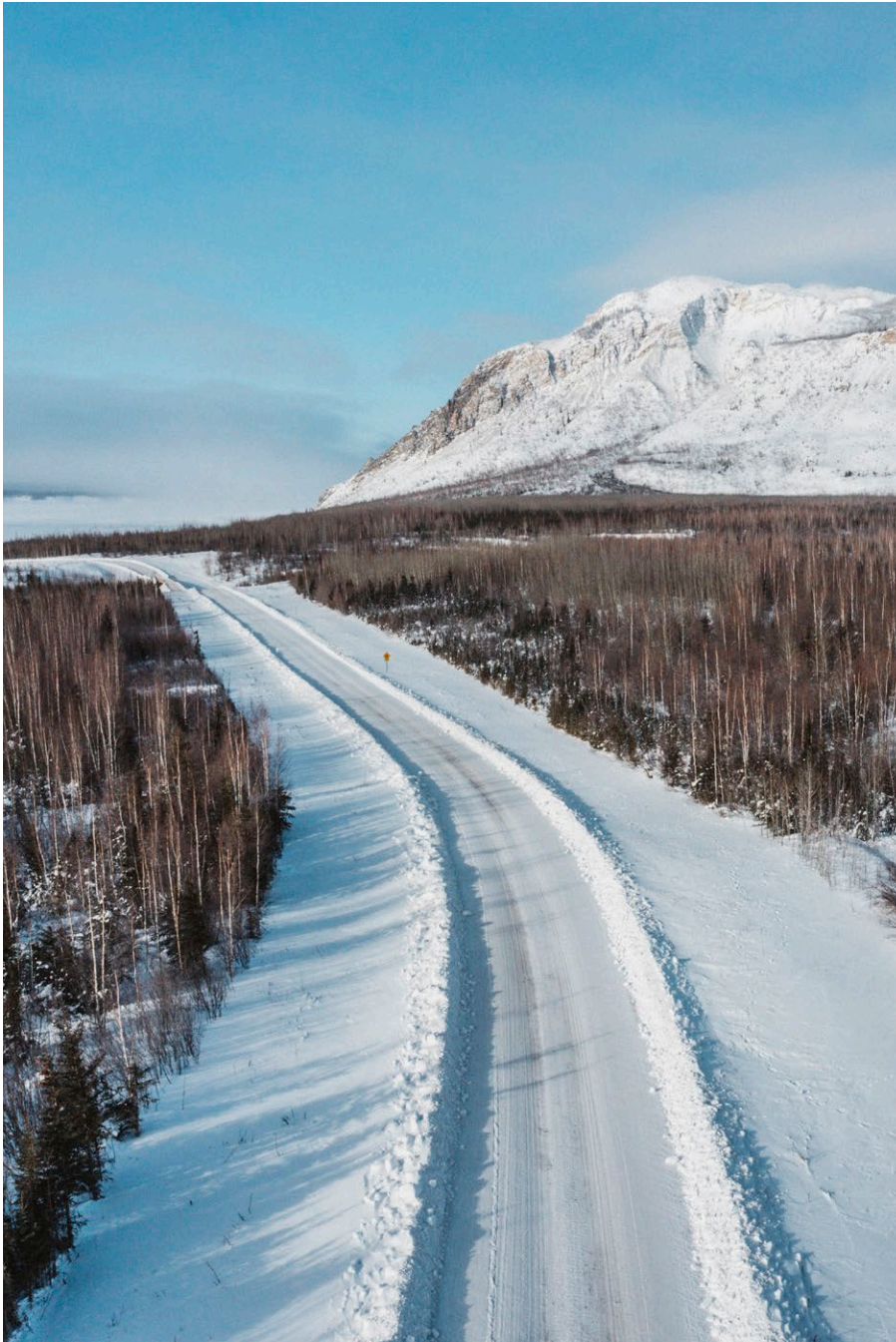
Participants identified Blackwater River, Big Smith Creek, and Trout Lake as containing important grayling fish habitat. They stated that residents are likely to use the highway to access fish harvesting areas. However, participants expressed concern that when the highway opens tourists will come to fish and local fish populations will decline. Participants recommended the GNWT contact people who live in fish harvesting areas to understand the current fish stock and determine whether access should be limited. Participants also requested that Fish Lake be avoided as it has many creeks with fresh fish that are important.

WATER RESOURCES

Protection of water and maintaining water levels were identified as priorities by participants. They stated that dust suppression along single lane bridges and roads could affect water quality as could erosion near rivers. Participants want the highway built as far away from lakes, rivers, and creeks as it can be. Participants expressed concern about the potential for a landslide during construction along the Mackenzie River affecting the river, and voiced the importance of maintaining the water quantity and quality around Great Bear River, as that is near the Tulita catchment source.

Participants want to make sure there is active water monitoring, including in the Keele River area. Participants from Fort Good Hope, in particular, would like to see local monitors or territorial monitors as they are downstream from a lot of the highway work.

³ 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://www24.international.gc.ca/indigenous-guardians-2019-01-22).



TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL LAND USE AND HARVESTING

TRADITIONAL LAND USE

Throughout this engagement period the Project team received many comments and stories, as well as guidance regarding traditional land use. Participants voiced concerns over changes in cultural and traditional land use sites once the highway is open. Participants requested that local guides take members of the Project team to the Project area to identify concerns, noting that there are things on the ground that cannot be seen through aerial photographs. A request was also made to fly Elders along the proposed route to point out areas of significance and participants identified Willow Lake as one area of importance. Participants voiced worries over change in cultural and traditional land use sites once the highway is open. Participants requested partnering with the GNWT on permafrost modeling and monitoring.

CABINS

Participants discussed the importance of cabins to the communities, and how hunting cabins maintain the traditional life. Participants requested year-round access for local cabins via the existing Mackenzie Valley Winter Road. Some participants expressed concern that the highway will result in lack of privacy as the road will make it easier for travelers to access cabins.



NON-TRADITIONAL LAND USE

During engagement activities, access to land and surrounding lakes and rivers, as well as environmentally and culturally sensitive areas was discussed. Participants noted that there will likely be more non-local workers and tourists accessing traditional lands.

HARVESTING

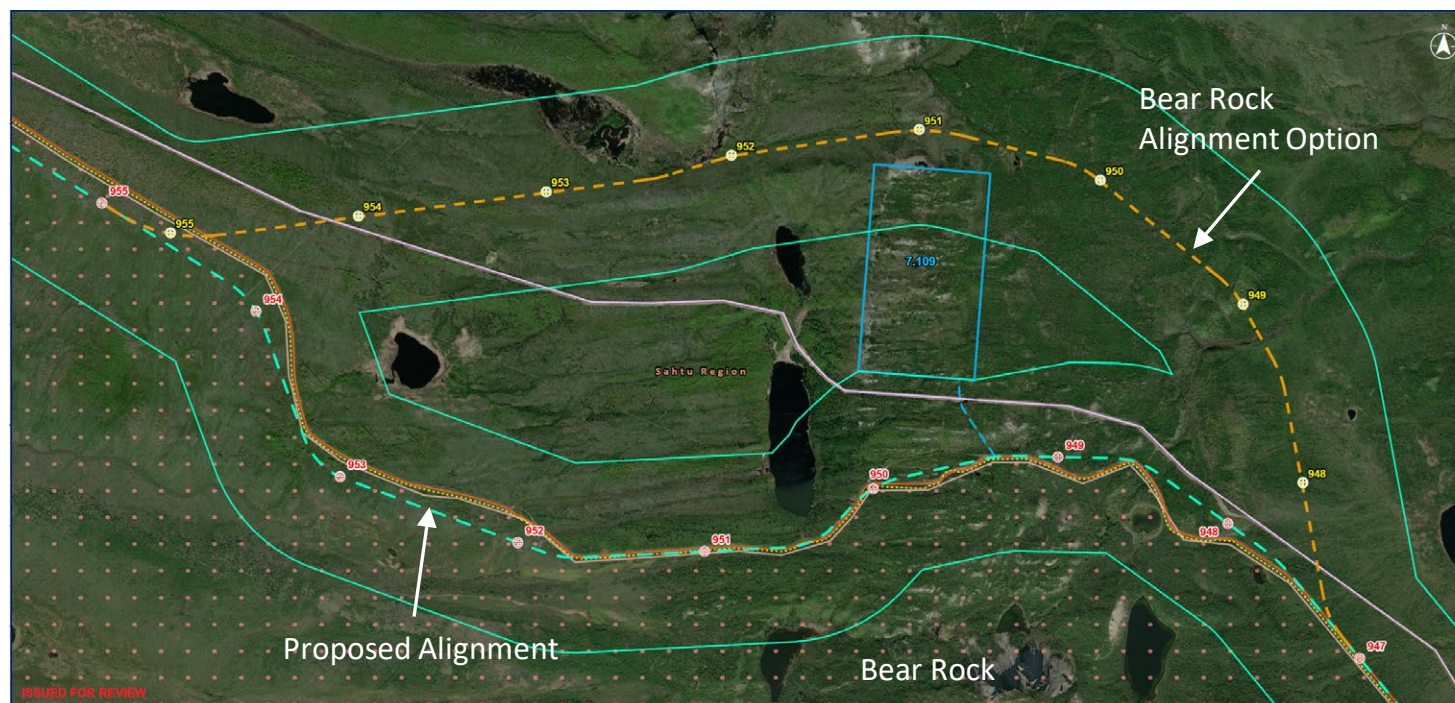
Participants from the Sahtu Renewable Resources Board (SRRB) expressed that they would like an Indigenous harvest study to assess baseline conditions using a community approach to gather data on what and where harvesting is currently taking place. SRRB is seeking information from the GNWT on the resources required to train and hire staff to carry out Indigenous harvest monitoring.

Participants requested vehicle checkpoints along the Project route to monitor what people are hunting and harvesting and from what location. Participants expressed concern about non-local and transient construction workers coming into communities, accessing traditional lands, and poaching.

TULITA - BEAR ROCK (PETINI?AH) REALIGNMENT

Participants in the Sahtu Region, including the Tulita Elder's Circle, shared the importance of Bear Rock (Petini?ah) as a cultural and spiritual area and requested that the Project avoid the area. Following this feedback, the Project team presented a proposed routing option that realigns the highway further away from Bear Rock (Petini?ah). It includes a new quarry access location and the potential for the community to make use of the gravel material obtained from blasting of the new route in the future. Participants within the Elder's Circle and Tulita Renewable Resource Council indicated support of the proposed realignment option as a preferred option compared to the original Mackenzie Valley Winter Road route and they stated that they are in favour of utilizing materials from the blasting route to support the road construction.

During community engagement meetings, some participants stated that the current proposed route following the Mackenzie Valley Winter Road closer to Bear Rock (Petini?ah) should still be considered as an option because it is more scenic than the realignment and may result in more tourism.



PUBLIC CONCERNS AND INTERESTS

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

Participants provided feedback, expressed concerns, and provided recommendations regarding several socio-economic considerations.

Employment and Economy

Participants commented that with the current high cost of living, the highway should reduce the cost of goods, including groceries and fuel. They added that they will likely not need to wait as long for items since hauling can occur year-round.

Inquiries were made about Project funding and the benefits that communities will receive. Communities recognized the benefit of tourism to the local economy if managed properly. They also acknowledged the Project has the capacity to connect partners (economic development, food development, trades), which would provide benefits to communities.

Infrastructure, Services and Institutional Capacity

Participants expressed concern about an external Project workforce because of housing shortages; they also expressed concern about the potential for increased violence and substance abuse due to an external workforce and increased tourism and travelers. They explained that the Project is likely to increase access to drugs and alcohol in communities and create more issues with substance abuse. The shortage of medical care, mental health support, social workers, law enforcement, and other services along the Project route have participants concerned about the lack of emergency response infrastructure and services.

Participants noted that it is not yet clear what the Project benefits and social impacts include and recommended that a social impact fund be established.

Education, Training and Skills

Participants discussed the need for education and training for communities. They stated that investing in young people is the most important investment. Many expressed that younger people need to work since traditional activities like trapping are waning because of lower fur prices and limited access to education. Participants are concerned that the community does not provide training and general safety certificates. They recommended that the GNWT consider past success stories such as through Aurora College and the Norman Wells expansion project for training and community preparedness. Participants added that Aurora College should align its courses with what big projects need so that residents do not need to travel to Alberta or other areas for hands-on learning opportunities. They added that once the road construction is completed, residents should receive driver education.

In addition to community preparedness for Project construction, participants also expressed the need for communities to receive business training in order to be ready for increased tourism, including restaurants and hotels.

Participants stated that Project contractors need to invest in local businesses and a local workforce because it is more cost effective to hire and train locally than to fly people into the community and secure housing.

Project-specific Engagement Concerns and Considerations

Throughout this engagement period, the Project team received many comments regarding engagement methods. In-person meetings were held whenever possible. The public expressed an interest in being updated more frequently with Project timelines and requested that the Project team reshare information about the proposed Project route, including areas and locations of Project activities in advance of engagement activities. Concerns were raised about the timeline of the Project, as many are worried it is taking too long or the Project will not happen at all. They expressed concern that local elections in some communities may bring on new leadership who may not support the Project.

Participants inquired about the status of engagement with Wrigley as well as the status of the proposed Great Bear River Bridge project.

General Feedback

During these engagement sessions, participants had general questions and comments outside of the main themes.

Participants inquired whether there will be a spill contingency plan for the Project as there were concerns about fuel spills during construction. The GNWT is developing a spill contingency plan for the Project.

While there is general support for the Project, some participants expressed concern that other infrastructure projects are getting more attention from the GNWT than the Mackenzie Valley Highway Project, and that they may receive funding before the Project.

Participants in Norman Wells and Tulita expressed the desire to have an active community liaison between the GNWT and the communities to distribute information and provide updates on the Project. The GNWT has developed a community engagement liaison position with the Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated to liaison to support Project engagement activities in the Sahtu Region.

Participants in Fort Good Hope recommended that the GNWT consider building a winter road from where the highway ends in Norman Wells to Inuvik.

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 having conversations on the Project's progress and focus on mitigation measures and monitoring plans as it relates to environmental factors. 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 road 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, Délı̨ne, Fort Good Hope, Norman Wells, Colville Lake, and Fort Simpson
- Residents of the Northwest Territories

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

The following table summarizes engagement activities between November 2022 and February 2023. Additional details about each activity are included in Appendix B. In total 180 participants shared their thoughts through meetings and workshops, while another 45 provided feedback online or by email. Following the table is an explanation of each activity.

Table 1: Summary of Engagement Activities: November 2022 – February 2023

Activity	Number of Participants
Email correspondence	45 emails exchanged
Project Website	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	35 participants during 5 open houses
In-person Community Meetings	68 participants during 5 meetings
One-on-One Meetings (in-person and virtual)	77 participants during 15 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 2022 to February 2023, GNWT hosted public open houses during the day. These open houses were open to the public. 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


The GNWT also hosted in-person community meetings during each community visit. 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.





[www.gov.nt.ca](#)
[Français](#)


Government of Northwest Territories


All Public Engagements
About
Sign in

Home / Mackenzie Valley Highway: Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Mackenzie Valley Highway: Impacts and Mitigation Measures

[Cliquez ici pour consulter la présente page en français.](#)



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 – Délı̨ne 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 to 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

EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE

A dedicated email address for receiving Project feedback has been in use since 2019. This email address is publicly available and listed on all engagement materials and advertisements. The email address was used as a channel to participate in engagement activities, and for the public to communicate feedback or questions to the Project team. The Project email (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. During in-person visits, Indigenous Governments, Indigenous Organizations, and other affected parties were provided with hard copy wall maps and mapbooks of the road location study area to facilitate sharing of site-specific feedback.

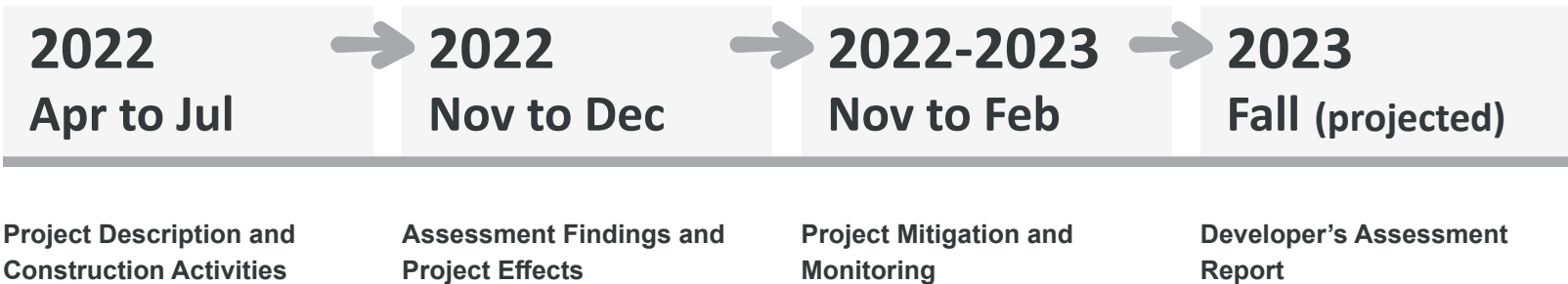
What Comes Next

Feedback shared by participants during the engagement on Project mitigation and monitoring has been reviewed and considered in the context of Project planning and design and integrated into the Project description and assessment of impacts to the environment in the DAR.

The GNWT will continue to advance the environmental and engineering studies for the Project in 2023. The GNWT anticipates the DAR will be ready for submission to the Review Board in Fall 2023. 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.

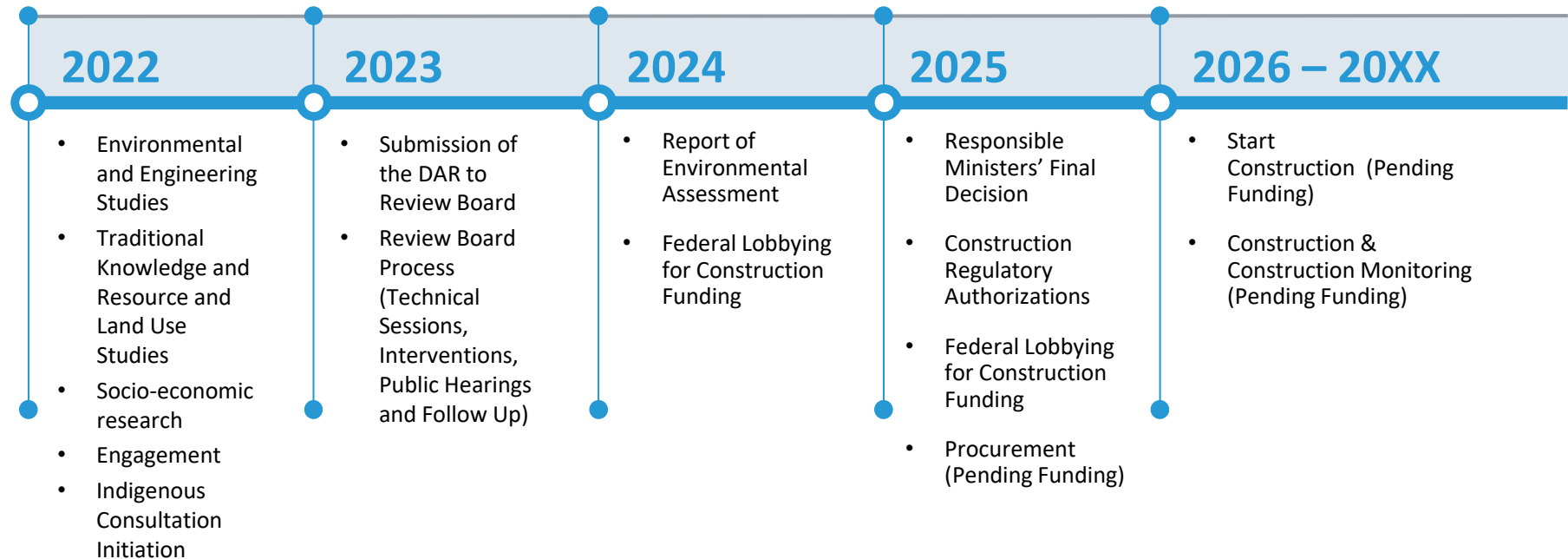
The Review Board will conduct technical sessions and public engagement to provide affected parties and Project stakeholders with the opportunity to participate in the Project review and inform the Review Board's recommendations on the Project. Following the Review Board's Report of Environmental Assessment 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. Consultation on the Project was initiated in August 2023 and will proceed at the same time as the Environmental Assessment review.

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.

DEVELOPERS 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.



Appendix A—Mackenzie Valley Highway Project: Mitigating Effects of the Project on the Environment



Mackenzie Valley Highway Project

Mitigating Effects of the Project on the Environment

November 2022

Government of
Northwest Territories



Agenda

- Mackenzie Valley Highway Project Update
- What We Heard So Far
- Mitigating the Effects of the Project on the Environment
- Capacity Building Projects Update
- Next Steps

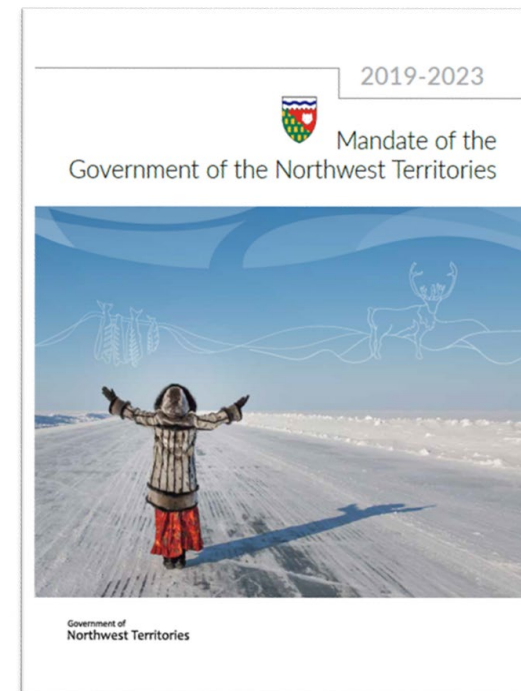


Government of
Northwest Territories

GNWT Strategic Initiatives

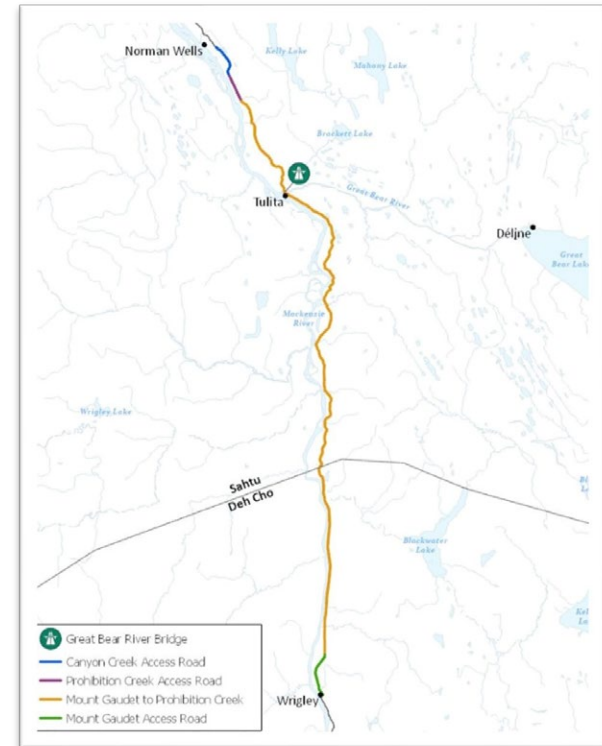
“These projects will provide the foundational infrastructure to support an improved quality of life and lower cost of living for NWT residents, as well as support the expansion and diversification of the economy.”

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



Mackenzie Valley Highway at a Glance

- All-season road between Wrigley and Norman Wells (~321 km)
- 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



Government of
Northwest Territories

4

November Engagement – What We Heard

There is general support to construct an all-season road.

Feedback during our most recent engagement activities included discussion around the following themes:

- Fish & Wildlife
- Cultural Protection
- Quarries & Borrow Sources
- Socio-economic Considerations



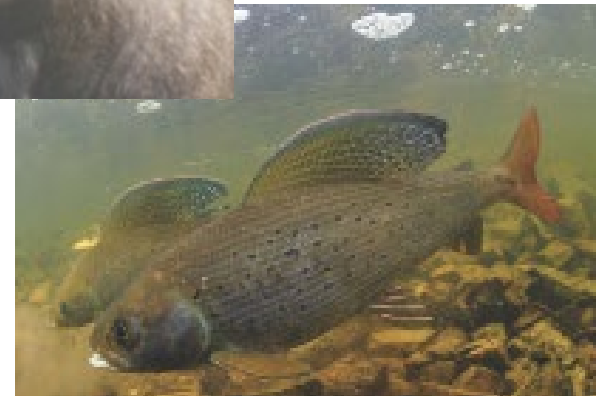
November Engagement – What We Heard

Theme 1: Fish & Wildlife

- We heard more about habitat and species of importance

Theme 2: Cultural Protection

- We heard about the importance of cultural areas



Engagement – What We Heard

Theme 3: Quarries & Borrow Sources

- We heard about potential borrow sources and quarry sites for Project construction

Theme 4: Socio-economic Considerations

- We heard a lot about community readiness and opportunities that the Project will bring



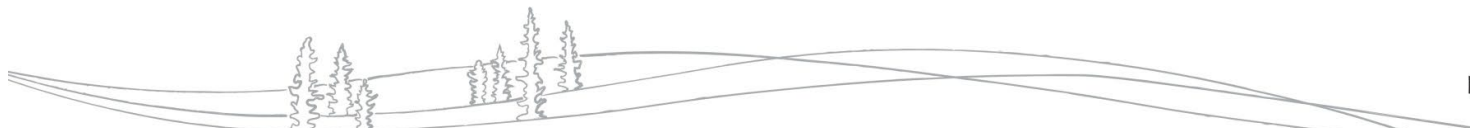
Mitigations and Monitoring

Mitigations: Actions GNWT will take to reduce the effects of the Project on the environment

Monitoring: Data and observations collected to improve or verify effects predictions and to make sure mitigations are working

Today we will discuss these for:

- Land and special places
- Caribou and Moose
- Fish and water resources



Mitigations – Reducing Effects of the Project on the Environment

Mitigations, monitoring and responsibilities are detailed in the following key Environmental Management Plans

- Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan (Tier 2)
- Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan
- Permafrost Protection Plan
- Quarry Operations Plans (for each site)
- Waste Management Plan
- Spill Contingency Plan
- Heritage and Sites Protection Plan
- Follow-up and Compliance Monitoring Plan

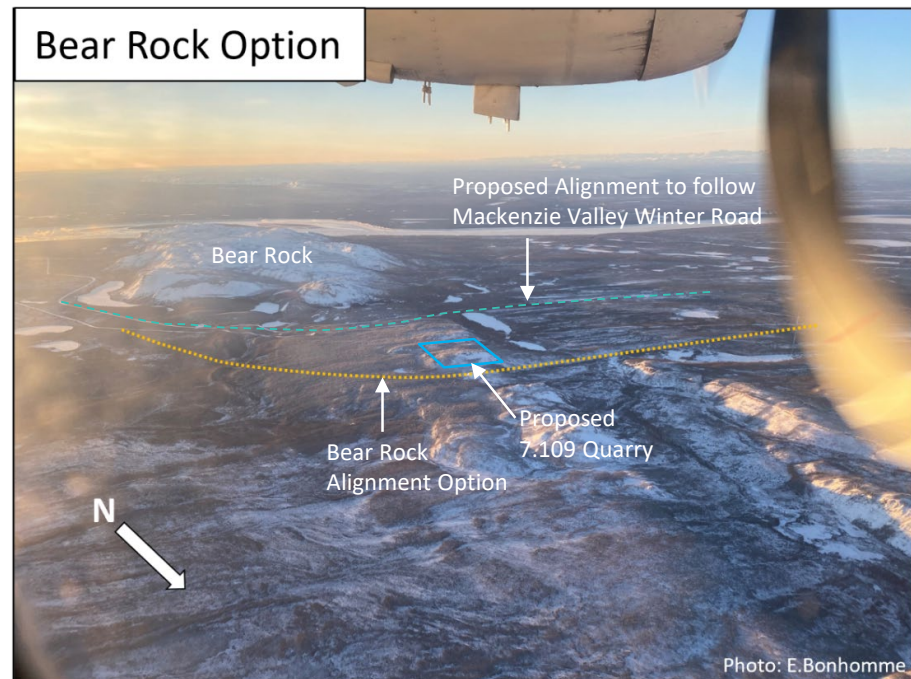


Government of
Northwest Territories

Mitigating Effects to Special Places – Bear Rock

Project Options North of Bear Rock

- Goal: to reduce disturbance near Bear Rock
- Highway alignment option approximately 2 km to the north
- Material source options:
 - Road cut
 - New quarry close to alignment



Government of
Northwest Territories

10

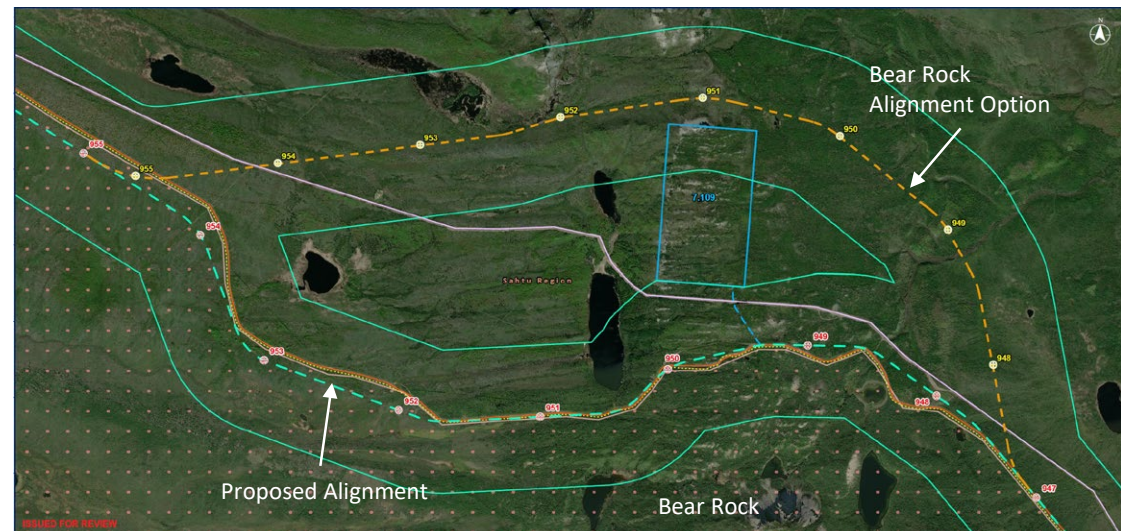
Mitigating Effects to Special Places - Bear Rock

Proposed Highway Alignment

- Reduces new disturbance
- Road cut provides material for 13 km of highway*
- Requires development of new 7.109 quarry

Alternate Highway Alignment

- 2 km further from Bear Rock
- Road cut provides material for 23 km of highway*
- New quarry may not be needed



* At 6% design grade; quantities approximate

Mitigating the Effects on Caribou and Moose



Changes to Habitat, Movements, Mortality Risk and Health

- Follow the Mackenzie Valley winter road and limit areas of new clearing as much as possible
- Close and reclaim areas after use
- Apply dust control
- Reduce project vehicle and equipment speeds
- Reduce noise
- Reduce activities when caribou or moose are nearby
- Store fuel and equipment away from water
- Follow measures in the Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan and Spill Contingency Plan
- Maintain current tag system for harvesting
- Stop blasting when calving caribou or moose are nearby

Monitoring the Effects on Caribou and Moose



- Confirm location of important habitat features prior to construction (such as mineral licks)
- Employ Wildlife Monitors during construction
- GNWT-ENR and resource managers will continue doing moose and caribou surveys
- Collect data on wildlife collisions
- Continue harvest reporting (ENR and co-management organizations)
- Wildlife health will continue to be monitored through local initiatives and specimens from hunters

Mitigating the Effects on Land Use and Harvesting

Changes to availability of traditional resources, access to resources, changes to sites and harvesting

- Follow the Mackenzie Valley winter road and limit areas of new clearing as much as possible
- No hunting by Project employees
- Restrict access on Project roads during construction
- Maintain access to cultural use sites
- Avoid existing cabins
- Notify Indigenous governments of project activities and schedule
- Avoid areas of important plants if possible
- Protect archaeological and cultural sites



Monitoring Effects to Land Use and Harvesting

- Feedback from Indigenous Governments and Indigenous organizations during ongoing engagement throughout the Project
- Continue harvest reporting (ENR and co-management organizations)

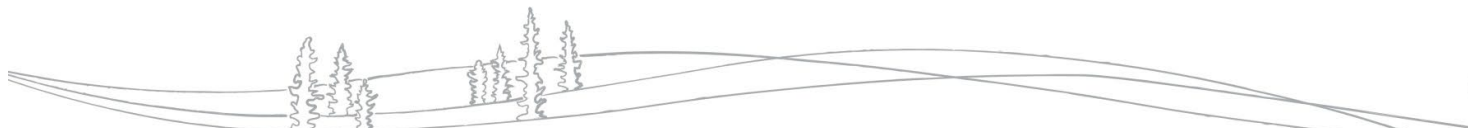


Mitigating the Effects on Fish and Water Resources



Changes to water quality and quantity and fish

- Use erosion and dust control measures
- Preserve riparian vegetation where possible
- Design culverts to maintain flow and fish habitat
- Adhere to Fisheries and Oceans Canada's codes of practice for water withdrawal and beaver dam removal
- Store fuel and equipment away from water
- Avoid excavating in areas with high water table
- Locate pullouts away from creeks with sport fish
- No fishing by Project employees



Monitoring the Effects on Fish and Water Resources



- Water quality monitoring during culvert installation
- Regular culvert inspections
- Erosion and sedimentation monitoring
- Observe runoff and drainage patterns
- Bathymetry surveys and streamflow monitoring at water sources
- Need for fish harvest monitoring will be reviewed with regulators and co-management boards

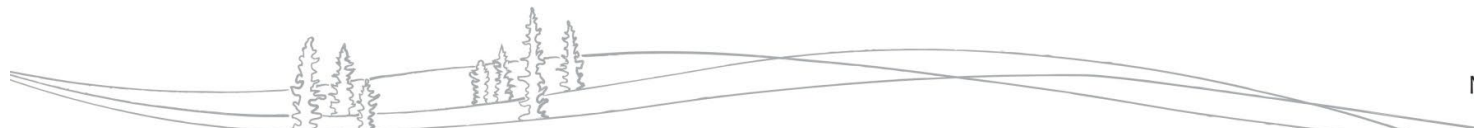
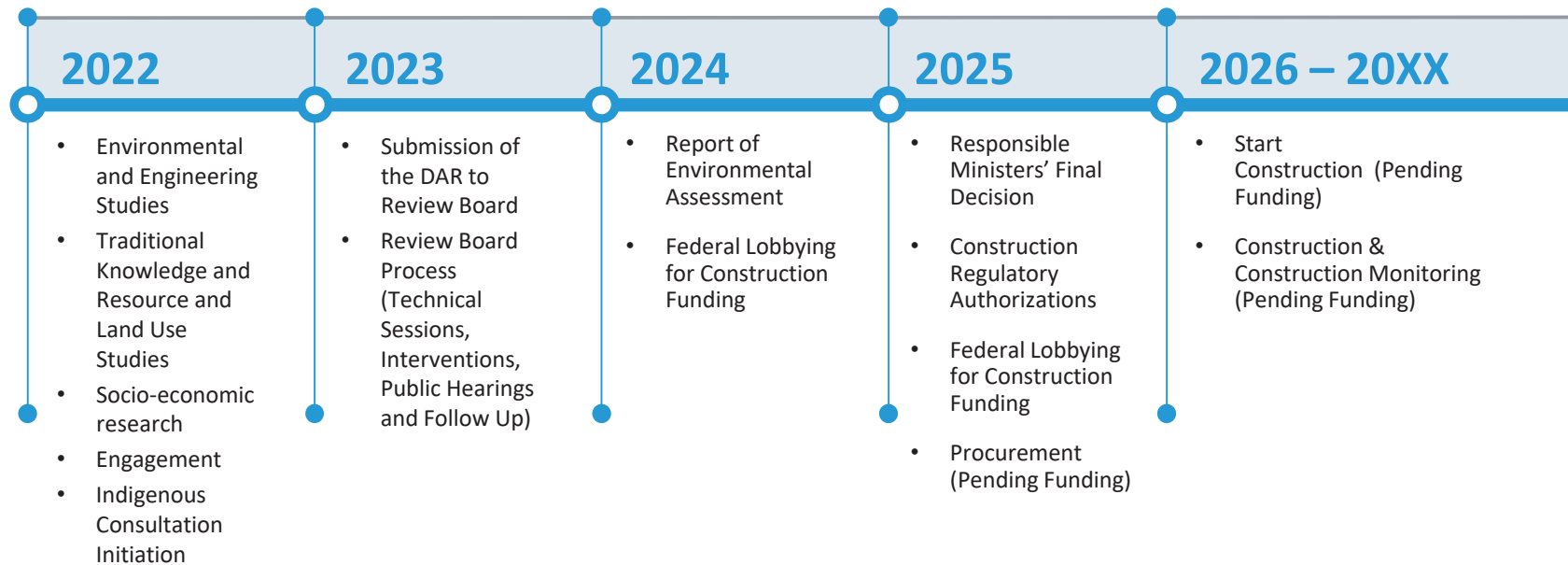
Update on capacity-building Projects related to the Project

Four projects to provide training, contracting, and employment opportunities to the local communities.

- Canyon Creek All Season Access Road
- Prohibition Creek Access Road
- Great Bear River Bridge
- Mount Gaudet Access Road



Mackenzie Valley Highway Timelines



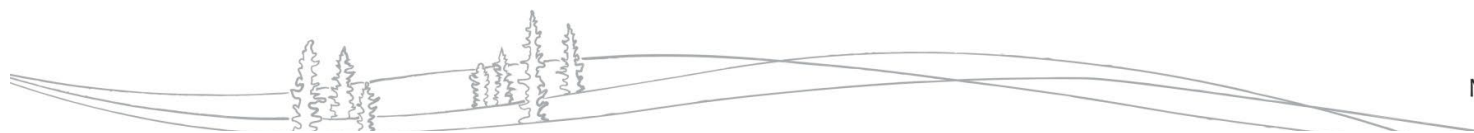
Government of
Northwest Territories

Questions?

Email: MVH@gov.nt.ca

Project Website: www.inf.gov.nt.ca/en/MVH

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



Government of
Northwest Territories

Appendix B—Summary of Engagement Activities

Activity	Number of Participants	Date	Location
Email correspondence Project email: mvh@gov.nt.ca	45 emails exchanged	November 2022 – February 2023	Yellowknife
Infrastructure Project Website	Approximately 1,500 website visits	November 3, 2022 – February 2, 2023	www.inf.gov.nt.ca/en/MVH
<i>Have Your Say</i> Online Engagement Platform: Information	536 page visits	November 3, 2022 – February 2, 2023	haveyoursay.nwt-tno.ca/mackenzie-valley-highway-project
Public Drop-in Open Houses (5)	3 participants	November 29, 2022	Norman Wells
	10 participants	November 30, 2022	Tulita
	3 participants	December 1, 2022	Tulita
	3 participants	January 30, 2023	Déljine
	cancelled	January 31, 2023	Colville Lake
	16 participants	February 1, 2023	Fort Good Hope

Activity	Number of Participants	Date	Location
Community Meetings (5)	3 participants	November 29, 2022	Norman Wells
	21 participants	November 30, 2022	Tulita
	5 participants	January 30, 2023	Déłjñę
	cancelled	January 31, 2023	Colville Lake
	31 participants	February 1, 2023	Fort Good Hope
	8 participants	February 2, 2023	Fort Simpson
One-on-One Meetings (15)	2 participants	November 25, 2022	Hamlet of Tulita
	8 participants	November 29, 2022	Mackenzie Mountain School, Norman Wells
	2 participants	November 29, 2022	Town of Norman Wells
	3 participants	November 30, 2022	Tulita Land Corporation
	14 participants	November 30, 2022	Chief Albert Wright School, Tulita
	4 participants	December 1, 2022	Sahtu Renewable Resources Board
	12 participants	December 1, 2022	Tulita Renewable Resources Board
	14 participants	December 1, 2022	Tulita Elder's and Knowledge Keeper's Council
	4 participants	December 12, 2022	Sahtu Renewable Resources Board
	2 participants	January 30, 2023	Déłjñę Got'ine Government
	1 participant	February 1, 2023	Fort Good Hope First Nation
	4 participants	February 1, 2023	K'asho Got'ine District Land Corporation, Fort Good Hope
	4 participants	February 2, 2023	Łíídlı́ Kúę First Nation, Fort Simpson
	2 participants	February 2, 2023	Fort Simpson Métis
	1 participant	February 24, 2023	Sahtu Land Use Planning Board



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