



# **NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**5<sup>th</sup> Session**

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## **HANSARD**

**Tuesday, February 22, 2011**

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**The Honourable Paul Delorey, Speaker**

# Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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(Hay River North)

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**YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES****Tuesday, February 22, 2011****Members Present**

Mr. Abernethy, Ms. Bisaro, Mr. Bromley, Hon. Paul Delorey, Mrs. Groenewegen, Mr. Hawkins, Mr. Jacobson, Mr. Krutko, Hon. Sandy Lee, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Michael McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. Menicoche, Hon. Michael Miltenberger, Mr. Ramsay, Hon. Floyd Roland, Mr. Yakeleya

The House met at 1:32 p.m.

**Prayer**

---Prayer

**SPEAKER (Hon. Paul Delorey):** Good afternoon, colleagues. Welcome back to the Chamber. Orders of the day. Item 2, Ministers' statements. The honourable Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

**Ministers' Statements****MINISTER'S STATEMENT 113-16(5):  
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES TOURISM  
MARKETING PLANS**

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, tourism brings over \$100 million in new spending into our Territory each year. Today I will highlight the development of two key marketing activities that will strengthen the Northwest Territories tourism sector and attract even more visitors to enjoy this beautiful land we call home.

Supporting the tourism industry is one of the key activities the Government of the Northwest Territories is pursuing as part of its Maximizing Opportunities Strategic Initiative. Through these efforts, we continue to work towards the Assembly's goal of diversifying our economy and supporting the development of sustainable local economies through community-based industries like tourism.

The Government of the Northwest Territories recognizes tourism as a valuable renewable resource. It is critical that we market the Northwest Territories outstanding range of tourism products and that we continue to invest in research, products, training and infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, with these goals in mind, I am extremely pleased with the development of Tourism 2015: New Directions for a Spectacular Future. This plan will guide investment by the Government of the Northwest Territories in the tourism industry over the next five years. The second plan is the Northwest Territories Tourism's 2011-12 Marketing Plan, which outlines marketing initiatives for this fiscal year. Later today, at the appropriate time, I will table these documents.

Mr. Speaker, while the recent global recession drove down travel numbers throughout the world, there is some good news to relate. Travel from Canada's international markets is up significantly in this past year following the Winter Olympics and Paralympic Games in Vancouver. Our own campground numbers were up over 5 percent and current reports from our aurora operators indicate a significant increase in Japanese visitors over last winter.

However, the tourism industry is extremely competitive and we need to continually position ourselves as a travel destination of choice. The Northwest Territories Tourism's 2011-12 Marketing Plan and Tourism 2015 will help us accomplish this. Both the marketing plan and the investment plan are about building on our achievements to realize our growth potential by targeting markets and products for increasing tourism revenues within the Northwest Territories.

We are also excited about the recent announcement of an investment of almost \$3.5 million by the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency for "Canada's North Marketing Campaign," a pan-territorial tourism marketing initiative to promote and position Canada's North as a unique and dynamic place to visit. We have already had great success working in partnership with the territories on Canada's Northern House, and we anticipate this funding will continue to help us bring more tourists north.

Partnerships continue to be the cornerstone of our tourism marketing efforts and I would like to thank all of the tourism operators who provided input, for their invaluable contribution to drafting Tourism 2015 and to Northwest Territories Tourism and the Tourism Marketing Advisory Committee for the leadership they have shown in developing the 2011-12 Marketing Plan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 3, Members' statements. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

**Members' Statements****MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
HOUSING ISSUES IN NAHENDEH**

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My riding has the highest percentage of households in core need in the Northwest Territories. There have been some wins, but we are losing ground in other areas like an independent appeals mechanism, maintenance program for elders, mould. One of my constituents finally got access to a home repair program after fighting for seven years, Mr. Speaker, and that's great news. But after seven years of fighting, others still don't have access. My constituents are frustrated. There is no appeal process. They appeal to the person who told them no in the first place. It's hard on the clients and it's particularly hard on the staff. We need to create a way for clients who are not happy with the program or arrears to plead their case and have somebody review it.

The Minister has announced that the Housing Corporation would launch an appeals process on April 1, 2011. I would like to see some program detail on how it would work, especially to address program eligibility and appealing old arrears. A lot of constituents are refused the program because of arrears, so sometimes they run into serious immediate maintenance issues but no support is available to them because of this.

Last week I talked about how an elder found himself in such a situation. We need to reinstate a seniors maintenance care program to stop these situations from happening. A seniors maintenance care program would go a long way to improving the condition of our public housing units. We're still short housing units in many communities. Many units in my riding are inadequate because of black mould. People come to me saying they have respiratory problems caused by mould in their units. We could look at ways to address this issue through our Small Communities Employment Program to get workers into these homes to do some cleaning.

The Housing Corporation should also consider mould-free construction techniques in their designs. I'm pleased with the front-line workers in my region, but I think we can make progress in Nahendeh. If we address these issues, I think we'll see a drop in the number of households in core need. Our people are worth it, Mr. Speaker. Mahsi cho.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

**MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
TOURISM 2015**

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the Minister of Tourism, Bob McLeod, for his opening remarks today because it works well with my Member's statement.

As the Minister has said, on April 1, 2011, the GNWT and NWT Tourism are set to launch their Tourism 2015: A New Direction for a Spectacular Future. Tourism 2015 builds on the Tourism 2010 Plan, as said earlier, and certainly makes an effort to continue the great opportunities that are available in our tourism market.

When the mayor of Edmonton was in Yellowknife a few weeks back, he asked why the GNWT doesn't focus tourism campaigns on his particular city. I think the Minister today said it very well when he said they need to recognize our growth potential by targeting priority markets, and I don't think it could be said better than that.

Mayor Mandel continued to say that he thought there would be significant interest in his city to have sort of a tourism initiative targeting his large city, which is simply a one and a half hour flight away, with a million people. He thought a lot of people there would be very interested in coming to the North.

For years Yellowknifers and all northern residents alike continue to flock to our southern gateways in Edmonton and Calgary and it's about time we started seeing some of that return. Maybe a very precise and targeted tourism campaign could market to those particular cities to draw interest in the North.

We have a lot of tourism product here and I believe it would offer great variety to the southern residents to give them something unique and interesting to take home from memory. Many people talk throughout Canada about both Yellowknife and the North as truly on their particular bucket list of things to do before they sort of end their travel days. I would encourage the Minister of ITI to work with NWT Tourism to target those people who see the North as a particular area they wish to visit that, again, is on their bucket list. I can tell you from my experience of travelling over the years, that many people talk about the dream to come North and I would hope the Minister in today's question period will talk about initiatives on how we can target Alberta, specifically Edmonton and Calgary, to draw more of them up, especially with them so close. That would be a great market to tap into.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
MULTI-YEAR FUNDING FOR THE  
NWT SENIORS' SOCIETY

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to tell a bit of a sad story today. Once upon a time there were a group of seniors and elders who wanted to ensure that NWT residents stayed in the North as they aged. They wanted to ensure that our elders would be well looked after and to preserve an appropriate quality of life for all of us as we age. So they banded together and formed a society to work on their goals.

Seniors are a tenacious lot and this group was no exception. They petitioned the government-of-the-day for funding for their group and kept on petitioning until the government, bless them, realized the value of the society and granted them some money. Thus began a beautiful relationship which endures to this day.

The government and the society signed a contract, a one-year contract, and then the contract was renewed and extended for one more year, then one more year, then one more year and so on. Then at the urging of the Seniors' Society and their MLAs, the government relented and for a brief, short time the group had a multi-year contract. For a few short years there was funding security for the society to run their programs and to know that they could keep their staff. Then the government reverted to a one-year contract and that's where the NWT Seniors' Society is at today. Back to square one.

The time that our NGOs have to spend negotiating and developing contracts with the government is huge. Many NGOs receive funding from more than one government department and they must have a contract with each one. The imposition on an organization, which usually has little administrative capacity to begin with, is large.

It's time for this government to rethink how we fund our NGO partners. Why must they apply for many pots of money to accomplish their goals? I believe we should be considering multi-year core funding to provide a stable funding base for our NGO partners. If necessary, they could then make applications for program funds which are beyond their normal scope of activities.

The work, the services and the programs that NGOs do on behalf of the GNWT is invaluable and certainly could not be done as cheaply if the government were doing the same work. If we really value NGOs as much as our Ministers keep telling us, we must put our money where our mouth is and make the financial life of our NGOs easier.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
NWT GREENHOUSE GAS STRATEGY

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Environment and Natural Resources committed, a number of months ago, to completing a new Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy this spring. But where are we today? We apparently have a new Greenhouse Gas Strategy renewal process plan, which fails to acknowledge even old opportunities. It's a hollow document, long on process and lacking essential analysis or actions.

Take territorial building standards. Higher construction costs are a hard sell, but when you have the numbers, they are plain sense and lower operating costs buying back upfront costs. Support programs can make this work but we need the numbers and a plan. Take distributed energy both for public and private buildings. We've used it for years. Yet again, no numbers are provided to assess possible gains. Same thing with waste heat energy recovery.

The Minister has supported a roundtable this Friday to explore the facts and advantages of carbon pricing. Though a very hard sell, detailed analysis for the progressive redistribution of cost will at least help assess potential gains from this tool. When my colleague Mr. Krutko and I saw Nordic countries' universal adoption of building standards, distributed biomass energy and carbon pricing with the huge emission reductions they achieved, we knew a plan was needed here to nail down similar economic and environmental benefits. But we still have no such plan.

Feedback I've received from the most recent strategy consultations is not positive. A brief report from the Minister's office says participants agreed that "the goals, objectives, principles and targets of the strategy need to be revised and clearly articulated." I say, no kidding, Mr. Speaker. Where participants expected basic measures like higher energy efficiency, building standards and carbon pricing to be highlighted and assessed, they had to suggest them for the umpteenth time. Another process checklist but no action plan.

We've made big improvements to GNWT operations but we must now extend them across the NWT. To convince citizens and industry to come along, we have to prove it's the best way to go. The task is large and requires a serious effort. Instead we had a lack of senior people at the January meeting, a lack of analysis, short notice of the meeting, a lack of costed actions, and time is short.

I'll have questions for the Minister, Mr. Speaker, but as an aside, I want to mention that leading the way on environmental responsibilities brings big tourism gains as well. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Member for Hay River South, Mrs. Groenewegen.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
HAY RIVER ALTERNATIVE  
EDUCATION PROGRAM

**MRS. GROENEWEGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is Education Week. It's an annual celebration of all aspects of teaching and learning, and it is a time for students, teachers and parents to celebrate excellence and achievements and reflect on what more we can do to address challenges.

The Diamond Jenness Secondary School alternative education program, called the Storefront School in Hay River, opened in October of 2009, and runs in leased space on the ground floor of the highrise, which is right beside the high school. Students receive instruction and programming on an individual basis for a variety of needs and work in a supportive and flexible environment. Students are comfortable with the personalized education and are able to work around other commitments in their lives. For example, there are single parents with responsibilities at home as well as students who are working to support themselves who cannot attend school during regular classroom hours.

In just over one year of operation, the success of this program has been tremendous. There are currently 42 students enrolled in the 2010-11 year. There were 24 students active during just this past week. One hundred and seventy credits have been completed during the first semester of this year and an additional 214 potential credits could be completed by June 2011. Students who otherwise would not have access to a way to complete their high school education are now studying hard and succeeding, and this year we may see up to eight graduates from this program.

The South Slave District Education Council did not receive start-up funding for alternative education programs. All costs for the programs were from regular formula funding. Without adequate funding, alternative education cannot continue to maintain operations at its current level. The recent announcement by the government to change the funding allocation for alternative education jeopardizes the stability of this program.

It is not easy to find employment or advance in the workplace to a level that provides sufficient income to support oneself or raise a family if you do not have at least a basic level of education, grade 12. It has taken several years to establish a program for at-risk students, and this method of education is working. It has proven to be a necessary program in northern communities to ensure that as many of our young people as possible are prepared for their future. I encourage the government to find ways to fund this program and to continue to support Hay

River's storefront school and other schools like it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mrs. Groenewegen. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
NORMAN WELLS BLOCK LAND TRANSFER

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to speak today about the Department of MACA and the deal for 36,000 acres of land coming from the block land transfer in Norman Wells. Mr. Speaker, in my statement today my questions regarding the disposal of the 36,000 acres has nothing to do with the aspirations of the Norman Wells Land Corporation, and I wish them all well in their pursuits. What my questions are intended to do is find out what the rules of engagement are for MACA when it comes to disposing of Commissioner's land. What happened in this deal and how it happened are important for all other communities around the Northwest Territories to know and to understand.

First off, the exchange I had with Minister R.C. McLeod a few weeks back and the media reports would indicate that the 36,000 acres were sold, but in reviewing the documents it would appear the deal was a lease. Subsection 3.3) of the Commissioner's Land Act states that no Commissioner's land shall be sold until the duly approved plan of survey of the land has been filed in the land titles office for the registration district in which the land is located. Section 17 of the CLA also states that payment for Commissioner's land must be paid in full or requires a 20 percent down payment.

I would have to question whether the transfer is in keeping with Section 3 and Section 9 of the regulations, which require that the land be no larger in area than is reasonable for the purpose for which the land is required and that the sale or lease is fair and equitable and in accordance with public interest. Mr. Speaker, there is also the principle of discouraging speculation in the land pricing policy. Given the minimal information provided in the application, it is hard to understand how MACA could have determined whether the amount of land is reasonable. The Town of Norman Wells' interest in the land for future growth, possible road for access to Bosworth Creek as a water source and the availability of lots within the municipality, it becomes absolutely questionable whether public interest was given adequate consideration. The vagueness of the application's stated purpose for acquiring the land and general references to economic potential also raises the question of market speculation.

Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the Minister of MACA at the appropriate time. Thank you.



**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
ELDERS PROGRAM AND SERVICES

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have to realize that one of the most important populations that we have is our elderly population in regards to the years that they have served the Northwest Territories, but more importantly, the knowledge, the culture and the ability to show us how to basically respect not only one another but show us the way of how life should really be lived. Mr. Speaker, we have to realize that is a special component of our population, ensuring that we are also able to support them in living out their remaining days with dignity, respect, and more importantly, that giving them the dependency that they require by way of services and programs and meet the needs of the elderly and aging population in the Northwest Territories, including the personal care and use of handicapped accessories and making sure that the elders that basically require the assistance and physical and mental disabilities that may occur as they age is there to give them the supports they require.

Mr. Speaker, a lot of our elders still stay at home but, again, they still require the supports and not only the dependency but also ensuring the dignity and the ability to be independent is there and there are also programs to take care of those individuals, but more importantly, the individuals who require respite care regardless of their ailments in regards to their disabilities also have to be taken into consideration regardless if it is a disability or an aging format regardless if it's a physical or mental disability. Again, we have to ensure the essential programs and services are there to meet all our elders' needs regardless of where they live and making sure we keep them active, keep them involved in community activities, and more importantly, ensure that their physical well-being is taken care of, if that means Meals on Wheels or giving them a ride to the community base, a music festival.

Again, Mr. Speaker, it is a society that can show how they treat the most vulnerable in our society. It shows what type of governments we are able to provide to the rest of the Northwest Territories, but more importantly, to show the Canadian citizens that we really do have respect for our elders by way of programs and services.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will be asking the Minister of Health and Social Services questions on this matter. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
NWT PUBLIC HOUSING ARREARS

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I listened with interest to the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation's opening remarks on the 2011-12 budget, as well as the questions and answers during Committee of the Whole. Housing programs have been a hot topic throughout the life of the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly. Significant changes have resulted, including the transfer of responsibility for the public housing from Education, Culture and Employment back to the NWT Housing Corp where they used to be located. This was a positive step, Mr. Speaker.

However, it's not the only area of concern. Although progress is moving in a positive direction, which is ultimately good for our residents, a lot of work is still required. Regardless, I am happy with a number of the Minister's comments and answers. Specifically, I was very happy to see that the Housing Corp is finding solutions which will help individuals move into homeownership, where their income is only slightly over a set limit but they meet all the other criteria; that the Housing Corp is allowing secondary intakes at housing choices where housing units are available after a first intake; that the Housing Corp is converting some of its existing vacant housing into public housing units, especially in communities where no current public housing units existed previously; and that the Housing Corp is increasing flexibility in some of the programs.

These are all good steps that the Housing Corp is taking, but there are some areas that I remain concerned about. Specifically public housing arrears. In October I asked the Minister to find some solutions to the perceived false arrears that exist within some of the individual LHOs. These arrears resulted from assessments conducted during the transition period, both during and after the program transferred to ECE. Many people feel that they do not owe as much as they are being requested to pay, that their arrears are not real.

Mr. Speaker, later this afternoon I'll be seeking some clarity from the Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation on their and the LHOs' progress in assessing public housing arrears to help those individuals with perceived false arrears and address their concerns. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
IMPORTANCE OF CULTURAL  
PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I often speak in support of culture and Aboriginal programs and the needs for these programs to preserve and

to hold onto our traditions, especially in our educational institutions. My Member's statement today will focus on the importance of these same programs that contribute to the achievement of our children and our youth. We need to continue to walk in our ancestors' footpath of success, which is adept to whatever is in front of us.

Last year, in the Auditor General's report, it was clear from the Alberta Achievement Tests in the last three years that NWT students' achievement have progressed very little. Something is wrong, Mr. Speaker.

As well, our high school graduation rate is only 55 percent compared to 71 percent across Canada. Is the glass half full or half empty? Mr. Speaker, in order for a young person to have the discipline to succeed, they must think their future is worth the effort. Is it worth it to have a solid education? I say yes. Learn all that you can because it's in our blood to succeed, not to fail. Our grandparents would not give up or fail us, nor should we do that with our children.

It has been proven that to be successful in life or excel in whatever work you desire, you first have to know yourself and to be proud of who you are and where you come from. Children need to know their identity and feel self-worth. This gives them their self-esteem. Mr. Speaker, this is where culture programs come in. Students need to learn today knowledge, but they also need to learn about their culture. More importantly, practice their culture. They need to know that they are worth the life they are born into, no more, no less. They need to know the lessons, the wisdom and the strengths and challenges in their culture, finding out about the culture to know who they really are. It's what gives them strength and reason to work and to study. That's why programs such as teaching language and culture in our schools are so important.

I want to thank all the teachers in the Sahtu and the parents for continuing to raise their children to be somebody in this world. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON  
VICTIM IMPACT SERVICES  
OUTREACH PROGRAM IN NUNAKPUT

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It has come to my attention that the funding for the Victim Impact Services Outreach Program in Inuvik and Paulatuk may no longer have enough to cover services in Sachs Harbour, Ulukhaktok, Tuktoyaktuk and Aklavik. I understand that the way the services are delivered are under review by the Department of Justice, and the federal funding will end March 31<sup>st</sup>.

In July 2010 the Inuvik office hired staff to provide outreach and support. It was apparently a pilot project. The funding is running out.

Most communities in the Northwest Territories have little or no local support for people dealing with traumatic experiences related to criminal offences. In many cases, victims are left to cope with their trauma alone.

At the same time, they often have to deal with the complicated legal system. This puts tremendous pressure on the people who are already suffering and have done no wrong. This is unacceptable.

The Inuvik outreach office receives referrals from victims of crime, mainly by the RCMP, but sometimes from health centres, counselling services and other services as well. Through victims outreach, people get to complete the impact statements for court. These are read in court when the accused is found guilty. This gives the victim a service, a voice that they otherwise would not have.

Staff at the outreach office also assists victims with their applications for victims of crime emergency funding. If they need immediate help, they can cover such expenses as broken exterior doors, locks, windows, so that they can return to their home and feel safe. When they have been hurt, little things like getting their glasses fixed and getting groceries and having diapers for your kids can make a real difference.

In many measures, the emotional support of outreach staff provides victims and families a third party and impartial support that can even include court with the victim, if it's requested.

The Victim Services Outreach Program provides administrative and emotional support for people who really need it. After the crime is committed in remote communities, when they need help, they have nowhere else to go and it would be a huge loss of service if this was cut off.

I will have questions for the Premier at the appropriate time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. The honourable Member for Yellowknife South, Mr. Bob McLeod.

**Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery**

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to recognize in the gallery today Ms. Jenni Bruce, the chair of NWT Tourism; Mr. Larry Jacquard, board member of NWT Tourism; Mr. Gerry LaPrieur, executive director of NWT Tourism; and Mr. Doug Doan, assistant deputy minister of ITI and also a member of the Tourism Marketing Advisory Committee.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to recognize Charlie Furlong who is a mentor of mine who invited me into Aboriginal politics in 1985, 26 years ago, when he was the president of the Mackenzie Delta Regional Council and I was the vice-president. It's been some time and I'd like to thank Charlie publicly for breaking the trail and leading me astray in some cases, and for all the work that Charlie's done for the residents of the Mackenzie Delta and the Northwest Territories. He is also serving as the chief of the Aklavik band and is now president of the designated Gwich'in organization in Aklavik. Thank you very much, Charlie.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Robert McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Krutko already recognized him but I would like to recognize Charlie Furlong, who we didn't know until now was responsible for this.

---Laughter

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm really pleased today to have a constituent in the gallery. Ms. Jenni Bruce is a constituent from Frame Lake. Welcome, Jenni.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. I want to welcome everybody in the gallery today. I hope you're enjoying the proceedings.

Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

### Oral Questions

#### QUESTION 506-16(5): PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR ELDER

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Health and Social Services in light of the declining programs and services in the area of seniors' care. I think we have to be cognizant of the aging population in the Northwest Territories. In my riding alone there are some 120 elders over the age of 70 in Tsiigehtchic, Aklavik and Fort McPherson. Yet we have to realize that as we age we also require more specialized programs and services. In light of that, we have to enhance the existing dollars. Right now in most communities all we have is home care. I think we have to expand programs and services to assist those people with regard to their mobility problems and disabilities, physically, mentally, emotionally, to

assist them as we improve the quality of life for seniors.

I'd like to ask the Minister what her department is doing to improve the quality of life of elders in our communities and all communities of the Northwest Territories.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is quite right in saying that we need to do more to support elders in our communities. For example, in Aklavik right now one home care worker is supporting 35 elders, as the Member stated on the radio this morning. We believe there are many more seniors in a community like Aklavik who could do a lot better with support from the government. What we propose to do is redesign the program so that we increase the level of home care in the community so that we can support as many as 100 elders in the community right now, just in Aklavik. We also want to be able to provide elder programming out of the Joe Greenland Centre. We want to be able to do a lunch program there and have a closer relationship between the home care support and the health authority office there, whether it be managing chronic disease, providing support, or organizing an elders program there. This is more an expansive way of looking at how we provide for elders.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Again I think we also have to realize that we have to deal with the emotional and physical restraints that elders are under. We have to provide those types of programs in the communities to vitalize the elders and keep them active, keep them involved in different community activities and events, and keep them mobile. I'd like to ask the Minister what we're doing to enhance the physical aspects of elders' care in communities so that we do keep them active and full participants in our community activities.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Currently we are spending about \$800,000 at the Joe Greenland Centre, not taking into consideration extra money that we have to spend there. The program is currently budgeted under the Beaufort-Delta for \$800,000. That is serving two elders in the Joe Greenland Centre. What we propose to do is use half of that money, \$350,000, back into the community.

When I was there with the Member in January, we committed to the community and the community group that we will sit down with the community and design an elders program together, and it could be recreational activities, social activities, providing lunches for the elders, because they need a point of contact. We have lots of elders in Aklavik that need support throughout, and we need a point of contact and meeting place where care providers can keep

an eye on them and be in constant contact with them.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Again I think it's important that we do deliver sort of elders day care programs and improve the quality of life for seniors in our communities. I think it has to be encompassing that you look at Meals on Wheels or the physical activities. We have to provide programs similar to the other segments of our population and ensure that we have a scheduled program in place in our communities so elders realize they are an important segment of our population and they are included in activities in the Northwest Territories. I'd like to know where we're going to enhance elders day care programs in our communities and using the facilities that we have in our communities.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** The Housing Corporation and the department will continue to support community programs for elders at the Joe Greenland Centre. We also plan to use the common area of the Joe Greenland Centre for an elders day program and continue access to the common area, kitchen, and specialized bathing equipment within the building which will be used by home care. The Beaufort-Delta Health Authority will continue to operate and there are also plans to use the common area and kitchen to provide a lunch program for elders every day, because we want to be in touch with the elders so that we have the constant capacity to look out for the elders.

There are many elders who are able to stay home and take care of themselves but they are being increasingly isolated without daily contact with the community support. This is what we are planning on doing in Aklavik.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Final supplementary, Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think other important programs that we have to consider for all communities is the area of respite care and palliative care. I think those are the type of programs more associated with large regional centres. I think the communities have to have the access and ability to have those programs also delivered so that people will live out their days in the comfort of their own homes in their home communities, and work with the families to make life as comfortable as they can. I'd like to ask the Minister where we are going with those two programs for the communities.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** The Member knows we were told when we were in Aklavik in January that there is one home care worker and he's worked off his feet just driving elders around. He definitely needs more support and we are proposing to create two additional home care workers so that three home care workers can support the elders there. There is also a need for respite care program territorial-wide model and, as the Member knows, we are

reviewing that. Part of that process, this is actually a very exciting roll-out for us that would depend on a lot of resources. Right now we need to be on the ground, and home care workers' support and health care officials will give us more insight into exactly what the needs are as we work to expand this as the resources allow.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Member for Great Slave, Mr. Abernethy.

QUESTION 507-16(5):  
PUBLIC HOUSING ARREARS

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of the NWT Housing Corporation. They follow up on my Member's statement earlier today.

In October I asked the Minister about some outstanding arrears that individuals in the Public Housing Program have and particularly concerned about the perceived "false" arrears that are out there. The Minister committed to working with the LHOs to have people come in and do reassessments to determine whether in fact their arrears were accurate or not. I was wondering if the Minister could give us a bit of an update on the progress of that.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Robert McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've been very encouraged by the number of people that have been coming into the LHOs to get reassessments. The percentages of people that are coming in are improving each time. We have made some progress in writing off what is perceived to be artificial arrears, and as long as they come and verify their income... In one particular case a person came in and verified all their income for a period of that time and left the LHO owing zero arrears. We do note that is helping some people and we'll continue. Once I get the updated numbers, I'll provide them to the Members.

**MR. ABERNETHY:** That's, actually, really good news. I'm especially excited to hear the sample provided where the individual went in for the assessment and it turns out they didn't owe anything.

In the information that the Minister has committed to providing, could he provide us with a bit of a breakdown of some of the results of those assessments? How many are actually showing zero or no arrears and how many are owing what they were told they owed beforehand? A bit of an analysis of what's owed and what's not and what the findings are.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** That would be a huge undertaking, given the amount of public housing

tenants we have across the Northwest Territories. If we have to go on a community-by-community basis, for the most part we have a lot of folks that are in arrears. It would be a huge undertaking. I'll see what kind of information I can pull together to share with the Members. If there are more examples of people who left the LHO owing a lot less than they originally thought, then I will give that information to the Members. It is a huge undertaking but I will commit to seeing what we're able to provide.

**MR. ABERNETHY:** I know the LHOs are incredibly busy and adding a whole bunch of work may not be good for them, but I think there can be some generalization done as to what the findings are, whether or not people are finding themselves not in arrears.

I was wondering, given the good news that we've received, whether the Minister would commit to putting some additional pressure on the LHOs to get out there and do the assessments. I mean, the news is good, right? I mean, we have individuals who don't owe. Let's use that information to help encourage more people coming in. I was wondering if I could get the Minister to commit to take that little bit of extra pressure on the LHOs, even though I know they're doing a lot of work and they're busy, but to get some more assessments done. I think that the results will be positive. Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, the better news is the LHOs are not going chasing after these people. These folks are actually coming into the LHO office and they are verifying their income and they're getting reassessments done. People have taken it upon themselves to come into the LHOs, which is really encouraging, and if the LHOs find that there's somebody that they need to see, well, obviously, they'll contact them and tell them they need to come in. So the communication is there, but we do have clients that are coming into the LHOs and getting reassessments done and in some cases it's working out for them. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Your final, short supplementary, Mr. Abernethy.

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just being really quick, I'm very happy to hear that individuals are coming in, but I'm sure there are still some individuals that are not coming in because they're uncertain about the process. I think we have some real positive results here and I was just wondering if I could get the Minister to, once again, sort of commit to using the data we have to create some sort of campaign or awareness campaign to suggest to come in, come in and be assessed. I think that the news is positive. I'm happy to hear people are coming in, but let's try and grab the rest of them and get rid of those arrears where they're not real. Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I can commit to doing that. I mean, the word is out there that they need to come and get reassessed. They see it as an opportunity to get their arrears straightened out if they believe that they've accumulated during the time it was over at ECE. But I can tell the Member and I can tell this House, actually, that we do have a couple of communities, the preliminary numbers we got when we first did the transfer over back in June, there was one community where, the highest community where, the highest community, I think, was 37 percent of the people still had to come in, which was our highest number. That means 63 percent have come in. Numbers may have improved since then. A community in Tu Nedhe has 1 percent of the tenants have to come in. The numbers are all quite positive. We have three numbers that are fairly high but we're working on those. Once I get an update as to the number of people that were reassessed, I will pass it on to the Members of this Assembly. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

QUESTION 508-16(5):  
MULTI-YEAR FUNDING FOR NGOS

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are addressed to the Minister of Health and Social Services. I'd like to follow up on some of the information that I presented in my statement.

I referred to the current situation that NGOs have now been taken back to one-year agreements with the government as opposed to multi-year agreements. I expressed my displeasure with that, I think. I'd like to ask the Minister why we have penalized our NGO partners and reverted to one-year agreements. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're not penalizing any NGO. Mr. Speaker, as part of the department's budget review, we've implemented that all agreements would be for one year to allow for evaluation of how we are spending our funds and on the outcomes. That said, as I stated earlier, I think Member Hawkins asked this same question. We're not saying no to multi-year agreements. We are reviewing our agreements as we go forward and we will make the decision at the end of this fiscal year.

As the Member knows, my department is under huge fiscal pressure and we are reviewing all the agreements. As I indicated in the letter to all Members, we will be sitting down with the NWT

Seniors' Society and work with them on how we move forward. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks to the Minister. I can appreciate that the department is reviewing, but I guess I'm really disappointed that as part of review we have to go backwards in order to do a review.

In a recent letter to the NWT Seniors' Society, the Minister stated that the department recognizes the multi-year contribution agreements provide a certain degree of funding security. If that's the case, I'm wondering why the Minister cannot, as a matter of policy, use multi-year contracts with NGOs like the NWT Seniors' Society. Thank you.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Because, Mr. Speaker, as I stated, we are reviewing our budget for 2010-11. We are reviewing all the agreements we have with some of the NGOs. We are evaluating to see how we are spending money and what the outcome measures are. We will be renewing the contracts with those organizations and we will sit down with them. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** I guess the Minister and the department feel that the only way they can do a review is if they put people on a one-year leash. I'd like to know from the Minister why the department couldn't do the review of their budget and keep multi-year agreements as NGOs like the NWT Seniors' Society had in the last year or so. Thank you.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** As the Member knows, even multi-year agreements are subject to funding approvals. I'm sure the NGOs feel more comfortable in having multi-year contracts, but as I stated in the House, we're not saying no to multi-year agreements. We believe that there is merit in that. Right now we are reviewing our budgets or our agreements and we will talk to the NWT Seniors' Society in due course. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. Your final, short supplementary, Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the Minister. I understand that she thinks that the NGOs are more comfortable. They are absolutely more comfortable with multi-year funding. I mentioned in my statement about a different method of funding and I wondered if the Minister would commit to consideration of a different method of funding. Specifically, will she discuss with her Cabinet colleagues the possibility of multi-year core funding for our NGO partners? Thank you.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** As I stated, we are reviewing all of our agreements and it will be based on the review. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

QUESTION 509-16(5):  
TAKE A KID TRAPPING PROGRAM

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask the Minister of ITI, with this program Take a Kid Trapping, I said in my Member's statement the value of cultural and Aboriginal programs into the schools. I want to ask the Minister of ITI if in the future the success of this program will also include the success in terms of increasing the funding so that this program can be more permanent into the educational programs in schools.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. The honourable Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Take a Kid Trapping Program has been one of our more successful programs. We work in partnership with a number of departments including MACA, ECE, ENR and ITI. By working together in partnership, we work in the best interests of the youth and it also allows them an opportunity to have a choice and option in determining which way they want to go. We think there are some significant advantages, because it allows them to develop self-esteem, it allows them to develop a good work ethic, and most importantly, it shows them the value of hard work and also the culture and way of life that people have experienced for many years. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister of ITI, in terms of the success for the program Take a Kid Trapping, if he would sit down with his colleagues and see if they would review this program to see how they could include it into curriculum into the schools, into a more permanent core curriculum or program that would support our students to learn both on the land and in school, in terms of their education.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** We undertake a review of our program and the Member would be pleased to know that some of the communities, when the children or the youth go out on the land, one of the teachers actually goes out with them. For example, in Colville Lake where the teacher went out with the youth and spent two or three weeks out there, so I'm sure the educator learned a lot as well. Also, in the past when we've done these reviews, we saw fit to expand our program, so that in 2009-10 we also added Take a Kid Harvesting Program. We find that it has been successful. As we review it, we will endeavour to make it more and more a larger part of our education curriculum. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Speaker, I understand the teacher from Colville Lake really didn't want to come back to town. He wanted to stay out there and be a trapper. Mr. Speaker, would the Minister undertake the issue to meet with this colleague, Minister of Education, to see if this Take a Kid

Trapping or Take a Kid Harvesting Program could somehow be included and part of the education in terms of solidifying this program like a trades program that some of the young people do want to become trappers? That is an honourable career choice of theirs to do something for themselves. Would the Minister sit down with the Education Minister and have this discussion?

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I know that the Department of Education already has on-the-land programs with their students. I will be pleased to meet with the Minister of Education to make sure that all of our programs work more closely together. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister indicated that he plans to sit down with the Minister of Education. Would the Minister look at, again, the review more comprehensively and see if some of the things that they do with the Take a Kid Trapping Program that they would look at building some credits to this program here so that will be going towards a Grade 12 diploma?

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Mr. Speaker, I recall that, in previous life, when I was involved with the Fur Institute of Canada, there had been a harvesting program or high school programs that were developed so that they could be incorporated into schools and I will follow up on that and follow up with the Minister to see if we could continue that work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Weledeh, Mr. Bromley.

QUESTION 510-16(5):  
NWT GREENHOUSE GAS STRATEGY

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to follow up on my Member's statement and ask questions to the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources. There is an urgent need for an improved effort towards a new and well-founded Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan. I have mentioned that feedback from the January round of consultations was not positive. Senior people were not there. There were no clearly costed proposals to review and it was short notice.

Mr. Speaker, essentially we hauled our partners in to show them a blank page. I am wondering what is the Minister going to do to get this potential train wreck back on track. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. The honourable Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Truly, the Member's glass is half empty as it pertains to this issue. If I could just very

briefly touch on the fact that, in the life of this government, we put \$60 million into alternative energy, into biomass, hydro, solar strategy, Water Strategy, wind, geothermal. I think we have done very good work in recycling. We have redone building standards. We have projects all over the place on the ground in our own buildings in communities. We have worked with all of the communities to look at energy plans. We as well committed to redoing the Greenhouse Gas Strategy. That work is underway, clearly not up to the Member's standards.

I am listening to the Member's comments, advice and feedback. We are making note of those and we are going to be adjusting as we move forward here to make sure that is an effective process. We mustn't lose sight of the fact that this Assembly has done an enormous amount of work in this area of greenhouse gases, our carbon footprint, energy efficiencies and sensitivity to the environment. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Mr. Speaker, and enjoyed benefits along the way, I am the first to admit, and I don't want to detract from the work that has been done and the dollars that have been saved and so on. Put that in perspective, of course, is an important part of the equation. We have had very modest goals and we have achieved those very modest goals, I think. We are waiting for the evidence to accrue there, but I am pretty sure that is happening.

I would like to compare cases, Mr. Speaker. We have a gas pipeline of questionable economics four years down the road, maybe, and we seem to know every economic fact down to shoe sizes. We have a Greenhouse Gas Strategy that was out of date when it was printed, no omission reduction targets, no costing and no plan. We have all the time in the world for increasing greenhouse gas production and none for avoiding the climate change they cause. The Minister understands the consequences of change in climate. Can he assure us that the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy will balance this equation? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, the final Greenhouse Gas Strategy would be a product of this government, this Assembly. The Member sits on the Climate Change Committee that has had a hand in this to a good degree. We have to make sure that the products that comes out of this Legislature that are put forward into this House reflect the consensus that we can reach on going forward on a territorial-wide Greenhouse Gas Strategy. Thank you.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister mentions the Climate Change Committee. I think we would agree that, in fact, we have been pushing for the work to be done so that this consultation can be meaningful. That includes listing the tools and

determining doing the analysis to determine what those tools can achieve us in terms of greenhouse gas reduction. Consultations are not showing if that work has been done. Can the Minister assure us that work being done will be shortly presented to people for some real consultation to finally begin? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, we have embarked on a process that will result in a Greenhouse Gas Strategy. We are listening to the feedback we get in this House and other venues and making note of that. We want to have the best, most comprehensive process possible so that we end up with a product that will have some meat, some substance that will address specifically recommendations going forward, targets we want to achieve and hit and how we are going to do that. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Final, short supplementary, Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister's status report indicates that the goals, objectives, principles and targets of the strategy need to be revised and clearly articulated. That work had not even started, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister promise to devote the limited time remaining in this mandate and sufficient staff resources to assemble the full set of facts, tools, analysis and consultation to at least set up our successors with strong recommendations in our transition plan? Mahsi.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Speaker, I can assure the Member that every staff member in Environment and Natural Resources is working flat out on a whole host of issues, including this Greenhouse Gas Strategy, and the folks that are working on this strategy are fully applying themselves with their shoulder to the wheel, their nose to the grindstone and unremitting efforts to bring this process to a successful conclusion. I will commit that we will have a Greenhouse Gas Strategy at the end of the day that will hopefully meet the very high standard that the Member has set for himself and all the rest of us mere mortals. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

QUESTION 511-16(5):  
NORMAN WELLS BLOCK LAND TRANSFER

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have some questions today for the Minister of MACA getting back to my Member's statement where I talked about the 36,000 acre land deal in Norman Wells. I had questions a few weeks back where the Minister suggested that it was a sale, and in media reports the suggestion was a sale but just yesterday in the House during Committee of the

Whole, I believe the deputy minister referred to it as a lease, in response to my colleague Ms. Bisaro's questions. The Minister, in a statement to Ms. Bisaro, called it a purchase and then called it a lease. I would like to just get it out there. Is the 36,000 acre deal a lease or a sale to the Norman Wells Land Corporation? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. They had originally intended to purchase the property but it worked out in the end where it was decided that it was a lease, so it is a lease. Thank you.

**MR. RAMSAY:** That leads to a little bit more confusion, because when I asked the Minister a few weeks back what the selling price was, it was \$1.6 million. Would the Minister be able to divulge the financial obligations of the Norman Wells Land Corporation as it relates to that lease? Is it \$1.6 million for a 30-year lease, or what are the financial parameters surrounding that lease? Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** The intent is to lease the property for the next three years; to purchase it after three years. Thank you,

**MR. RAMSAY:** Again, there are a lot of questions that I could ask surrounding this. The whole process has left a lot to be desired when it comes to consultation and transparency and if you look to the legislation and the policy, it's really short on guidance to the department on what it can and can't do in terms of consultation. I'd like to ask the Minister why MACA has refused to let the Town of Norman Wells have a look at that lease. Thank you.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you. Obviously there are a lot of questions we could ask about any issue debated in this house. This was one issue where all the proper processes were followed in accordance with disposal of Commissioner's land. I'm not sure what the Member is talking about, the Town wanting to see the lease. I'd have to follow up on that and see if there's been a request for the Town to view the lease. I know the lease was just signed recently. So I'll follow up with that and see if there was ever a request to have a look at the lease. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think it's very important as we move toward a post-devolution setup here in the Northwest Territories, that we have rules and policies in place so that all communities know exactly what the rules of engagement are when it comes to disposal of Commissioner's land in and around communities.



I'd like to ask the Minister if he could entertain looking at special consultation requirements and principles that would apply to transfers of community block transfer lands where the transfer is to be made to a third party and not a community government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you. We have followed all the proper policies, all the proper processes in this case and we continue to do so. People may not agree with them, they might not like the decision that was made at the end and they continue to question the decision, but as far as following all the proper processes, that has been done. We followed them, the Norman Wells Land Corporation has followed them. There still is a lot of land that is available in the community, Commissioner's land that's available to the Town within their municipal boundaries and the Norman Wells Land Corporation want to acquire this land for a future economic base for their membership. How can we deny them that? We're continuing to work with them to see that they have due processes that are followed and I'll stand here, Mr. Speaker, and continue to defend the fact that all processes were followed. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

QUESTION 512-16(5):  
VICTIMS SERVICES OUTREACH  
PROGRAM IN NUNAKPUT

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today my Member's statement was on support for victims services in my riding in the Inuvik region. Mr. Speaker, what's happening with the federal funding with the support services in the Nunakput region and what's being done about it? For the Premier, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. The honourable Premier, Mr. Roland.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm informed that the victims services work that was done was in conjunction with federal funding that is due to lapse, but the Department of Justice and the Minister have been working with the agencies to seek a renewal of that funding. Thank you.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you. What is the status of the review of the victims services in the Nunakput region? Thank you.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you. The review that's ongoing and the funds that flowed affected a number of communities around the Northwest Territories, and again, the work that's been going on to seek a renewal from the federal government, we're expecting a decision on that in the near future and I believe it's tied to the federal budget process. Thank you.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you. What changes are being considered to deliver the victim services to the victims of Nunakput? Thank you.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you. My understanding is the Victim Services Program is delivered in the Nunakput region tied to the Inuvik office. There are three positions; two out of Inuvik and one part-time out of Paulatuk. The work that's ongoing to renew the funding at this point, the victims can access a support through the Inuvik office in the interim. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. Your final supplementary, Mr. Jacobson.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What's being done to ensure the people in the remote communities continue to get the help they need while they cope with crimes committed against them and support mechanisms? Thank you.

**HON. FLOYD ROLAND:** Thank you. Again, the current services available are still there in the interim until we find out the funding and the funding levels that will flow out of the federal budget. Again, in the interim, the victims services are available out of the Inuvik office. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Roland. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

QUESTION 513-16(5):  
MARKETING THE NWT TO ALBERTA

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today in my Member's statement I talked about tourism and, more specifically, tourism in Edmonton about attracting Edmontonians and perhaps even Calgarians to the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, my questions would be the for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment and what I'd like to ask today is: is Edmonton, Calgary, or even just the Alberta market a tourism target market for the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. The honourable Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Edmonton is a significant market for the Northwest Territories. We think there are a lot of advantages to working with Edmonton and Alberta. Our primary contact with regards to marketing is NWT Tourism and seeing as Edmonton is only less than two hours and probably about a \$300 to \$400 ticket away, and since we're interested in increasing business and personal travel to the Northwest Territories, it's a natural fit. Similar to what we've done with Vancouver and B.C. where we have our aurora visitors go through there and have direct flights, we're looking for international connections; we're hoping that we can work through Edmonton to establish a European connection. The mayor,

when he was up here, as the Member knows, was very interested in our Come Make Your Mark program and was asking a lot of questions about that. Certainly, Edmonton for many years has built itself as the Gateway to the North. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you. The Minister highlighted some things about the Edmonton mayor and what he had heard, and I should also take this opportunity to point out that the team from ITI did a bang-up job about informing the mayor about opportunities in the North and that should be said certainly and clearly on the record that they did a great job. I think they did such a good job, the mayor was sparked with many other ideas about what could be done for our territorial market. He came here with an open hand saying how could he help, and again, tourism was a particular area he kept highlighting, saying more could be done.

Mr. Speaker, I guess my question for the Minister of ITI is: has ITI ever looked at discussing a particular issue with NWT Tourism about opening up a tourism bureau or some type of office, a permanent presence in Edmonton to help build on that gateway concept, I guess, here to the North? Thank you.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you. Because we're so close to Edmonton, we feel that we have our tourism bureau right here in Yellowknife operating out of Edmonton. But to be more specific, we do work very closely with the Edmonton market through NWT Tourism, and NWT Tourism has developed some very specific promotions with Edmonton as well as some generic promotions.

The specific promotions are we'll be participating in the Edmonton RV Show this year as well as the Edmonton Boat and Sportsman Show. As part of that, we will be operating a fly-fishing pond and a movie screen, so that means we'll have preferential promotional materials and operators that want to rent the booth will have discount prices. We'll also feature some of our celebrity TV stars from Ice Pilots NWT, who will be there promoting the show and promoting the North.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Those are all fantastic things and I wouldn't want to detract from them. I guess I would follow up in the same type of manner as my earlier question, which is: has the Minister or the NWT Tourism ever considered establishing a permanent presence in Edmonton? That said, that presence could work with the City of Edmonton's economic development, because again the mayor of Edmonton seemed quite keen on wanting to partner in a way that could benefit the whole North.

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** I've sent an e-mail to the mayor and asked his Edmonton Bureau of Tourism to be in contact with NWT Tourism. Anybody that we can get to work with us and promote the North

we're very interested in and we're very eager to follow up on that with the mayor.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final supplementary, Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the Minister for that answer. Just to build on it slightly a little further, the Minister talked about the presence that the NWT and the other two territories had in Canada Northern House where they worked collaboratively and successfully, if I may add, in sort of a pan-territorial perspective. I've mentioned about a pan-territorial tourism commission many times and how to build upon sort of the North as a giant vision from a tourism point of view. My question for the Minister is that we have \$3.5 million put into this potential marketing campaign. How does the Minister see us helping develop with our two territorial partners, again working in conjunction with the City of Edmonton, about launching the North not just to the world but on what I would call our direct target market of Alberta and their million population in Edmonton?

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** We have a pan-northern tourism marketing approach with the other two territories. We're targeting not only Edmonton but four other major Canadian cities so that we can get southern tourists to come and visit the North. We'll be launching a promotional campaign both on TV and the print media. You may have seen some of the ads that have already been placed in southern papers. I should add, on top of that we are developing package tours that will emanate from Edmonton so that we will get visitors to come to Yellowknife and the Northwest Territories.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

QUESTION 514-16(5):  
NEED FOR SENIORS  
HOME REPAIR PROGRAM

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask questions to the Minister of the NWT Housing Corporation, specifically to a seniors home repair program or lack thereof.

In 2006-2007, the NWT Housing Corporation consolidated its program into four programs and when they did that they took the seniors and elders' repair element out of all the programmings and didn't give them specific recognition. I'd like to ask the Minister of the NWT Housing Corporation what his department is looking at, how we can address the needs of our seniors and elders in our small and remote communities.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. The honourable Minister responsible for the NWT Housing Corporation, Mr. Robert McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The territorial government puts a lot of

money into the care of our seniors and their homes. We have a preventative maintenance program that's very well subscribed so that allows seniors to have work done on their units. Also through the CARE program, seniors that qualify can receive up to \$90,000 in assistance to do the work in their homes and seniors usually are priority with the NWT Housing Corporation.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** That's not the response I get when I work with the Housing Corporation. They say specifically that there is no seniors program available. In the past we've had six successful programs. There was a Seniors Home Repair Program, a Seniors/Disabled Preventive Maintenance Initiative, Elders on the Land, Adaptation for Seniors' Independence, Seniors Independent Living Strategy, and a Senior Housing Initiative. Those programs are non-existent in our Housing Corporation anymore. I believe that we should look at that and reinstate that. I've had situations in my riding where seniors are not eligible. They had to get in line with everybody else. I believe that these programs should be looked at, reinstated, or at least something similar.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Those programs, as the Member said, were all discontinued. They were rolled into our basket of programs. As I said, the senior preventative maintenance is still geared towards seniors. Our CARE repair program, seniors would qualify for a lot more than they would under some of the old programs, from \$20,000 to \$90,000. The Member said they had to wait with everybody else and that's usually what happens, but seniors are given a priority, as I pointed out to the Member.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Seniors are given the priority but that doesn't appear to be the case. I've got a senior in Trout Lake who applied for programming but exhausted all programming available that the NWT Housing Corporation has, even though he's an elder and a senior. I asked specifically, he's a senior, he needs emergency repairs, what can be done. They said, no, he's exhausted all areas. That's why I believe we should reinstate at least the seniors and elders repair program to address these specific needs.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** We all have seniors in our ridings that would like to access some of the programs. Some of our seniors get turned down because of the income. If the particular person has exhausted all the programs that we have to offer, then there would be no need for repairs in this particular case. I'm pretty sure in this particular case we're able to assist the senior and that again goes to show that even though they've exhausted all the programs that we have to offer and the money that comes with it, we're still willing to assist a senior that needed our help.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final supplementary, Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Despite that I still believe that our Housing Corporation should gravitate towards a seniors and elders program designed specifically for maintenance and care and even replacement of small household items. I'll be making a motion to that later on in the day.

We had 416 elders up taking the seniors program in 2005-2006. Can the Minister even detail how many elders are up taking our programs this fiscal year?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** I will get the information together for the Member. I know this particular year we've had over 800-and-something applications territory-wide. I'm sure we can break it down and get the numbers that the Member is requesting.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

#### QUESTION 515-16(5):

##### NORMAN WELLS BLOCK LAND TRANSFER

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just have a few more questions to the Minister of MACA. I know in response to some questions he had earlier when I asked whether it was a sale or a lease, and he had mentioned that it is a lease now but it initially was a sale. I'd like to ask the Minister, if it was initially a sale, how the application proceeded so far along without a survey of the land being conducted.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. The honourable Minister responsible for Municipal and Community Affairs, Mr. Robert McLeod.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The sale wasn't final until a survey was going to be done. So a survey had to be done and then the sale would have been final.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Has a survey been done of the 36,000 acres that are being disposed of by the department?

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** No, the survey has not been done. It is the intent of the Norman Wells Land Corporation within the next three years to have a legal survey of the land done and then at that time they will purchase the property.

**MR. RAMSAY:** I think, you know, obviously we need to learn how this happened and why it happened, because I think it's important for communities around the Northwest Territories to understand how this works. In looking through the legislation and policies, there's not even a requirement for the department to advise Cabinet of a decision to dispose of land, let alone Regular Members. I think that's a hole in our policies and legislation that needs to be shored up. Even the

deputy minister's authority, I think we need to be taking a look at this. They have the authority on the size of parcels, pricing of the parcel. I'd like to ask the Minister how the price was arrived at on the lease for the 36,000 acres.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** I sign off Commissioner's lands transactions three or four times a week. We have properties all across the Northwest Territories where people are applying for Commissioner's property. Now, is it the Member's wish that I inform the Members, even though it's not their particular riding, of all the transactions that take place or is there a size limit to it? If that's his wish, then it's something we can do. The price that was arrived at in this was in accordance with the land pricing policy of the Government of the Northwest Territories.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Final supplementary, Mr. Ramsay.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It wouldn't be my belief that the Minister should be informing us on every transaction, but I think we're moving into a new area, a new realm of how we do business and again it's going to be a bigger issue post-devolution.

The majority of issues the Minister would sign off on are quarries, residential lots, things of that nature. When we're talking about attractive land, three parcels of land totalling 36,000 acres, I think it's a different ballgame. I think going forward we need to ensure that we have the legislation and policies in place that are going to let communities know what the rules of engagement are when it comes to disposal of Commissioner's land. I'd just like to ask the Minister if we could review how we deal with large tracts of land and transactions in that regard.

**HON. ROBERT MCLEOD:** I will commit to the Member that we will have a look at how land is disposed of. Again I just want to assure the Member and Members of this House that this land was all disposed of in accordance with and all the proper processes were followed. They had expressed an interest, they got a hold of us, we worked with them and a deal was worked out. Though some people may not like the decision, that's just the way this whole thing played out and the Norman Wells Land Corporation has some development plans for the future to benefit their people and if there's an opportunity there for us to help them, then we will.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to opening address. Item 11, petitions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

## Petitions

PETITION 11-16(5):

SAVE THE JOE GREENLAND CENTRE

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to present a petition dealing with the matter of saving the Joe Greenland Centre. The petition contains 193 electronic signatures. Of those, 109 signatures identify themselves as resident of the Northwest Territories. The petitioners request that the Government of the Northwest Territories continue to operate the Joe Greenland Centre in Aklavik as a long-term care facility.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. The honourable Minister responsible for Industry, Tourism and Investment, Mr. Bob McLeod.

## Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 145-16(5):

TOURISM 2015: NEW DIRECTIONS FOR  
A SPECTACULAR FUTURE,  
FEBRUARY 2011

TABLED DOCUMENT 146-16(5):

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES  
MARKETING PLAN 2011-2012

**HON. BOB MCLEOD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following two documents entitled Tourism 2015: New Directions for a Spectacular Future, February 2011, and Northwest Territories Marketing Plan 2011-2012.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Item 15, notices of motion. The honourable Member for Frame Lake, Ms. Bisaro.

## Notices of Motion

MOTION 37-16(5):

EXTENDED ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE  
TO FEBRUARY 28, 2011

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Thursday, February 24, 2011, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Thebacha, that, notwithstanding Rule 4, when this House adjourns on Thursday, February 24, 2011, it shall be adjourned until Monday, February 28, 2011;

And further, that any time prior to February 28, 2011, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and the Members of the Legislative Assembly, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, the Speaker may give

notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as it has been duly adjourned to that time. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

MOTION 38-16(5):  
SENIORS HOME REPAIR PROGRAM

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on Thursday, February 24, 2011, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Sahtu, that this Legislative Assembly strongly recommends the NWT Housing Corporation reintroduce a home maintenance and repair program for seniors. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

### Motions

MOTION 36-16(5):  
JOE GREENLAND CENTRE,  
CARRIED

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS the Department of Health and Social Services plans to discontinue long-term care service as it currently exists at the Joe Greenland Centre in Aklavik;

AND WHEREAS the Joe Greenland Centre has been an integral and important part of the community, providing essential services to elder for decades;

AND WHEREAS there are currently 76 elders aged 60 and over, half of them over age 70, in Aklavik;

AND WHEREAS keeping elders in the community is critical to the social and cultural fabric of Aklavik, and central to the long-term care is resulting in elders being moved to Inuvik or elsewhere;

AND WHEREAS caring for our elders is one of the most important values in both the Gwich'in and Inuvialuit cultures;

AND WHEREAS 14 full-time and part-time jobs for local people will be lost, accounting for almost 10 percent of the community's entire working population;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the honourable Member for Nunakput, that this Legislative Assembly strongly recommends the Department of Health and Social Services reverse its decision and continue to provide long-term care service as it currently exists for elders at Joe Greenland Centre.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. To the motion. The honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta, Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, the reason I bring the motion forward is realizing that we also have to have an integrated system of care throughout the Northwest Territories and not continue to take these services out of our smaller communities and provide them elsewhere.

Mr. Speaker, for too long we have taken our children out of our communities and basically sent them somewhere else to be either educated or cared for through programs and services of the government-of-the-day that meant well. Yet, Mr. Speaker, the consequences of those decisions are long lasting in regard to the social, economic and emotional effects on individuals, communities and families.

Mr. Speaker, in this case, in regard to elder care at the Joe Greenland Centre, and more importantly, the long-term care component, which really deals with the fabric of elder day care and improving the quality of elders and seniors in communities and in these types of facilities.

Mr. Speaker, the Northwest Territories, back in the early '90s, had a plan in place to establish long-term care facilities in most regions in the Northwest Territories. They had a facility in Deline, Fort Resolution, Fort Simpson, Aklavik and then in early 2000 a facility was built in Tuktoyaktuk to provide these types of care facilities so that we can accommodate the elders in our home communities, but more importantly, the ones that are the most vulnerable in regard to the physical and mental disabilities that they acquire as they age.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I think it's important that we have to find a unique way to retain these elders as long as we can in our home communities providing the essential services that they need, regardless if it's keeping them active, keeping them fed by way of Meals on Wheels, providing the community home supports that they require and the supports that they need in regard to day-to-day activities that are required to ensure that the services are there.

Mr. Speaker, in my riding alone, as I mentioned, I have 120 elders over the age of 70. Mr. Speaker, one of the things that we've seen in our aging population is the demographics have shown right across Canada and here in the Northwest Territories that where we're looking at some 10 to 15 percent today, in the next 10 to 15 years that will jump to 20 to 25 percent of the demographics of our aging population. Again, this problem is not unique just to the constituents I represent but the whole Northwest Territories. I believe that we have to find a way to basically not continue to cut programs and services.

Again, the whole area of communication in this case was definitely lacking in regard to how this was handled, regardless if it's dealing with the community affected, the affected MLAs, and more importantly, the communities that provide this essential service in the different regions in the Northwest Territories.

Again, with that, I would like to continue to require the support for the motion, but more importantly, have the elders in our communities and in the Mackenzie Delta live out their days in comfort and not have to continue to be removed from their home communities and communities to provide the essential service that they require. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The honourable Member for Nunakput, Mr. Jacobson.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Speaking to the motion today, I am in full support of my colleague Mr. Krutko for keeping the Joe Greenland Centre open. The elders in the families in the communities, it's hard enough for us to send our loved ones out of our home communities. It just puts a strong strain on the families. Not everybody has jobs. Not everybody has vehicles to go see their family either in Inuvik or in Aklavik, but at least we know if they're in our region we can send meat or fish or something to try to help out and take care of them.

The people themselves, when they are taking elders from your home, like Ulukhaktok sending people into Inuvik, you know, when you're paying an \$800 plane ticket one way to go see your family, it's tough. We have to take care of the people in regard to our elders a lot better than what we're doing by taking this out of Aklavik. I know the people in that Joe Greenland Centre take pride in what they're doing for the community and for the region. I think if it's possible to leave funding in there for this year and keep on seeing if we can get extraordinary funding to run that facility, I think it would be a really good start.

Long term, the people and their jobs in the community of Tuk we did get an elders facility in the community and it wasn't filled up for a few years but now it's full. It is being utilized by elders and the community sends people in to help them out, clean up and stuff like that, but at the end of the day we wanted this to be a facility where we don't have to send our elders out. We have families in Tuk that we send people out into Inuvik and the Joe Greenland Centre, which we're really thankful for. To support the cause, I guess, to take care of our elders because they took care of us in the start, and by this I think we're failing our elders and we're failing the community of Aklavik and the Joe Greenland Centre if this facility shuts down.

Mr. Speaker, I will support the vote and I support my colleague Mr. Krutko in trying to keep this facility open. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. To the motion. The honourable Member for Nahendeh, Mr. Menicoche.

**MR. MENICOCHÉ:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of my honourable colleague's motion to maintain the facility and jobs in their community. I'm very supportive of all the many members throughout his community that took the time to sign petitions, get a hold of their MLA to highlight the issues in the media. I think that is how our consensus style government should work. I am supportive of it. I am always saddened to see regionalizing or centralizing our goods and services, particularly those that provide services to people. I hate to see it happen, but hopefully the government can listen to this motion, listen to the people and find another way of doing their work of trying to save money, which is their immediate concern but sometimes the concern of the people has to outweigh money. Mahsi cho. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Menicoche. To the motion. The honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of this motion. I realize that it is a very passionate particular issue in the community of Aklavik. Mr. Speaker, one of the issues that has been drawn out of this particular case that removing them from the community doesn't take into consideration is the social impact the community will have as well as those people in care, the detriment offer to them losing their close ties to their community that many of them were born in, had lived their whole lives. Many of them hoped to sort of spend their final days in that particular community.

Mr. Speaker, when we talk about impacts of the community, we have to discuss, or at least not forget, the impact of loss of jobs and how difficult it is to find jobs in communities like this. Quite often we talk about trying to ensure that we get jobs out of the regions, and even headquarters here in Yellowknife sometimes, where they make sense in small communities. The Joe Greenland Centre is a practical solution to sort of the mantra of what we are trying to serve here, which is taking care of our seniors and elders. If it is a quality programming issue, then we should be discussing that. If it is a matter of does the building suit the needs of today, does that building or situation suit the needs of tomorrow, and if the answer happens to be no, then we should be evaluating that and discussing that.

Mr. Speaker, 14 full-time and part-time people need to re-evaluate their life and those are the people that are offering support in this particular case to the Joe Greenland Centre. Has the Department of Health's consideration taken into that effect? What are we doing to those particular people and that impact created?

Mr. Speaker, again, many times we talk about how important elders are and trying to keep them in their homes and in the communities, and the fact is sending to regional centres is, I think, a step backwards. Mr. Speaker, one of the challenges we live here constantly day in and day out at the Assembly is about trying to find ways to roll out services to communities, again, where it makes sense. Mr. Speaker, this seems as if it is a rolling up of services to that community. I think the community would perceive this strictly as a slap in the face about the type of services and care they are trying to provide their community members. The Joe Greenland Centre may not be the most idyllic situation, but yet it is a true one that has compassion to the people that are there and the community feels strongly about having them there.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, as I have sort of highlighted about the social component but about the spiritual wellness of these individuals as well as the community, uprooting your elders and sending them off somewhere is a wrong message. It is not a positive commitment that we have all made here in one form or another, that we will cherish and respect the generation before us. I think that sends a message that we are not trying hard enough.

Mr. Speaker, as I have said earlier, I will be supporting this motion, not just supporting Mr. Krutko but supporting the community of Aklavik as they strive forward to keep that commitment there. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. To the motion. The honourable Member for Sahtu, Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Speaker, in doing my research, in the Sahtu we did have a long-term care facility. It opened in 1991 and in 1993 it opened a long-term care facility. In 1991 it was a personal care facility. In 1993 it was a long-term care. In 1996 the facility closed in the Sahtu. I still today get inquiries as to that facility, the amount of training that people took, the amount of work and effort it took to have it in Deline in the Sahtu. I can only imagine what people in Aklavik are going through in terms of this facility. Ours in the Sahtu closed right down.

I also, in the same breath, want to say how excited I am to read in the 2010-11 capital estimates that the Sahtu is now in the stage of planning, designing and construction of a long-term facility. I am very happy when they get that back in the books. I want to say that the people are delighted. We are looking at facilities in the Northwest Territories. We know the price of health care in the Northwest Territories. We had a big debate on the supplementary health. We know the costs are coming up. Mr. Speaker, we also know the needs of our elders. In the Sahtu right now there are 254 elders who are 60 years and over. As I stand right here, Mr. Speaker, in this

House, our elders want to attend a long-term care facility like the dementia centre in Yellowknife. They have to take money out of their own pension cheques, buy a ticket and fly down here, plus put a month's rent in advance. That is shameful, Mr. Speaker. That is what is happening right now.

Another point is that they want to go into the Aven Manor Centre or Inuvik or Fort Simpson. They have to pay their way to get into that facility. Mind you, those facilities take pretty good care of their people, of what I hear. They look after them pretty good. It is also a blessing, because people are talking and say it gives the families a break. It is a lot of work to take care of their elders, loved ones. The beautiful week, the second week it gets tiring. We know people are saying we should have these facilities in our regions and in our homes. More respite care, more home care services, more to take care of them.

I think I have an understanding as to what people in Aklavik are going through. We went through that in Deline. They are still angry because that facility was shut down. But I am also very happy at the same time, because now we have in the capital estimate budget for 2011-12 for Sahtu to get their long-term care facility.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to say that I hope this government here looks at the home care services in our communities, keeping them closer to home. I still have a little bit of hurt feelings when I look at the Aven Manor Centre here in Yellowknife when I go by it, because my grandmother was in there and my father was in there. Both have passed away in there and not going home to be with their people. It bothers me sometimes when we have facilities like that. If you are coming from my region and don't have facilities, it is not a good feeling sometimes when we take the elders out of the community to live somewhere. You don't know if they are going to come back alive or not. It is a difficult decision.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that I hope there is a solution that could be sought through the Aklavik dilemma in terms of looking after their elders and keeping them there. We in the Sahtu really need a facility. I hope that Mr. Krutko and the department find a solution along with a plan to keep their elders in their community. I wanted to say that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. To the motion. The honourable Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Lee.

**HON. SANDY LEE:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The decision to change services, not shut down the Joe Greenland Centre -- just for the record, provided by the Joe Greenland Centre -- was a GNWT decision. It is a complex decision as the Joe Greenland Centre was built in 1977, more than 30 years ago when it was customary to admit seniors into care with low-level needs. Today, Mr. Speaker, seniors

with low-level needs can and are able to remain at home or in elders housing and receive the care they need from home support workers. In addition, the Joe Greenland Centre does not provide care to the level necessary to meet the needs of long-term care residents. The centre was never designed, equipped or staffed to meet the complex care needs of long-term care residents who require levels 3 to 5 care.

Mr. Speaker, seniors who require level 1 and 2 care can age at home with extended family or accommodated in elders housing and be supported by their loved ones with home care support as required. What we are trying to do here, Mr. Speaker, and what we are doing will keep our elders in communities longer.

I just want to speak a little bit about what we have planned for Joe Greenland Centre programming. The Department of Health and Social Services has been working with the NWT Housing Corporation on a transition plan for the Joe Greenland Centre. The department is transitioning from full-time care programming only for the residents on the west wing to a day program, and expanded home care to support all Aklavik seniors as required. The focus on community independent living and day programming will ensure services are available for all elders in Aklavik to help them maintain wellness and independence as long as possible. The Housing Corporation and the Department of Health and Social Services will continue with the efforts to support community programs for elders in the Joe Greenland building. These programs may involve the use of the building's common area for the elders day program and continued access to the common area, kitchen and specialized breathing equipment within the building.

The Beaufort-Delta Health and Social Services Authority will continue to operate the elders day program out of the Joe Greenland Centre. The elders day program is presently available to all elders in the community through home care enhancement plans for 2010-11. There are plans to use the common area and kitchen to provide a lunch program for elders. The health authority will consult with elders on what the day programs would best offer to meet the widest needs, including the elders lunch program.

The Beaufort-Delta authority will also ensure that 50 percent of \$779,000 of current Joe Greenland Centre funding is maintained for provision of home care and supported living services in the community of Aklavik. Residents in the independent living side will continue to receive home care and weekly nurse visits provided through the authority.

There is currently only one full-time home support worker position in Aklavik. Two additional home support worker positions will be added, increasing the staffing to three home support workers for

Aklavik. This will provide more capacity for Aklavik's home support program to provide home support services to elders. These types of programs continue the independence of elders by offering needed care, support, nutritious meals and opportunities for socialization and recreation. These enhancements will support more seniors and elders to continue to live independently at home.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, Beaufort-Delta authority staff have been working with the two remaining residents and their families to determine appropriate placement. As well, the authority, with the support of the Department of Human Resources, have met with the staff and we are committed to retaining and retraining the workers. Every effort will be made to place affected staff in suitable positions.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, through the Foundation for Change, we will enhance continuing care to ensure that clients across the NWT receive consistent quality care and enter the continuum through a coordinated referral and assessment process; Northerners have access to home care when they need it, and Northerners have fair and consistent access to long-term care no matter where they live.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I need to say, as this motion is a recommendation to the government, Cabinet will be abstaining from the vote. Thank you.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Ms. Lee. To the motion. The honourable Member for Weledeh. Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to speak after the Minister has spoken and my colleagues and before the wrap-up here. Mr. Speaker, our elderly are increasing in numbers throughout the NWT and we will be discussing these sorts of topics more and more. I think important perspectives and debate is being brought forward here by my colleagues and I thank them for that. Many of our cultures are facing challenges in retaining their traditions. The absolute strengths of our cultures reside amongst our elders and it is key to keep our elders in our communities as much as possible. To take our elders from our communities only underlines so many of our goals that government has in terms of cultural strength, passing and passing along and retention of traditional knowledge and the life experience our elders have and can speak to and share with the community residents.

The dilemma is, as posed of course, that as our society changes and the expectations rise, we are faced with a desire for standards we can't always achieve. I think that's been portrayed by the Minister here today. I support Health and Social Services' efforts to provide exceptional levels of elder care in the most efficient way in regional centres, and as close to home communities as



possible, and ultimately, hopefully, in home communities.

So I reluctantly, but realistically, believe their action with respect to the Joe Greenland Centre, though poorly executed, is acceptable. Therefore, I will not support this motion. However, Mr. Speaker, many of the concerns raised by Mr. Krutko and Mr. Jacobson are indeed real and important and need to be further recognized and addressed. Therefore, I will not vote against this effort and I'm happy to see them raising these points here today and commit myself to working with my colleagues to maximize ways to keep our elders in communities to the extent possible. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. To the motion. I'll go to the mover of the motion for some closing comments. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, colleagues. Mr. Speaker, again, these are troubling times in a lot of our communities and like I say, 14 jobs in the community might not sound like much, but when its 10 percent of your workforce, that's a major impact to the communities. Again, in this case, the 14 individuals that are going to lose their jobs do have mortgages, do have children, but more importantly, their 14 jobs and the income they bring in supports something like 100 individuals in the community of Aklavik and it's going to have a major detrimental effect to the residents and the families in Aklavik, and more importantly, the employees that will be losing their jobs. It's one thing to say you're going to add two more home care support workers, but again, that doesn't replace the 14 individuals who are well qualified, who are trained and have put a lot of pride and effort into their jobs. More importantly, they've taken care of the elders that were under their care and responsibility.

Again, Mr. Speaker, you're talking about taking some \$700,000 in wages out of a community. The detrimental effect of that is going to be long-term and impacting not only to the individuals but the community as a whole and the territorial government in regard to its responsibilities and obligations under those mortgages and houses that individuals have acquired through the Housing Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's important to realize that this was a publicly sponsored event which took place through the media, to the e-petitions that were filed and also there was a petition with over 200 names, which was given to the Minister of Health and Social Services in Aklavik when we had over 100 people in attendance in a public meeting, which was three and a half hours long. Again, there was a lot of emotional debate and discussions and it was very clear from those individuals making their presentations known and their voices heard, that they do have a very close connection and

relationship with the Joe Greenland Centre and the effect it's going to have on them and their families, and more importantly, the community of Aklavik. We need to find ways to work it through.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would like to request a recorded vote. Thank you.

#### RECORDED VOTE

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. The Member is requesting a recorded vote. All those in favour of the motion, please stand.

**PRINCIPAL CLERK OF COMMITTEES (Ms. Knowlan):** Mr. Krutko, Mr. Menicoche, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Hawkins, Mr. Jacobson.

**MR. SPEAKER:** All those opposed to the motion, please stand. All those abstaining, please stand.

**PRINCIPAL CLERK OF COMMITTEES (Ms. Knowlan):** Mr. Bromley; Mr. Abernethy; Mr. Yakeleya; Ms. Lee; Mr. Miltenberger; Mr. Roland; Mr. McLeod, Deh Cho; Mr. McLeod, Inuvik Twin Lakes; Mr. McLeod, Yellowknife South.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Results of the motion: in favour, five; opposed, zero; abstaining, nine. The motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Tabled Document 4-16(5), Executive Summary of the Report of the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project; Tabled Document 30-16(5), 2010 Review of Members' Compensation and Benefits; Tabled Document 38-16(5), Supplementary Health Benefits – What We Heard; Tabled Document 62-16(5), Northwest Territories Water Stewardship Strategy; Tabled Document 75-16(5), Response to the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project on the Federal and Territorial Governments' Interim Response to "Foundation for a Sustainable Northern Future"; Tabled Document 103-16(5), GNWT Contracts Over \$5,000 Report, Year Ending March 31, 2010; Tabled Document 133-16(5), NWT Main Estimates 2011-2012; Tabled Document 135-16(5), Response to the Standing Committee on Social Programs Report on the Review of the Child and Family Services Act; Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Social Assistance Act; Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Conflict of Interest Act; Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Fire Prevention Act; Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act; Bill 18, An Act to Repeal the Settlements Act; Bill 19, Municipal Statutes Amendment Act; Bill 20, An Act to Amend the Evidence Act; Minister's Statement 65-16(5), Devolution Agreement-in-Principle, Impact on Land Claims and Protection of Aboriginal Rights; Minister's Statement 88-16(5), Sessional Statement, with Mr. Bromley in the chair.

By the authority given me as Speaker by Motion 31-16(5), I hereby authorize the House to sit beyond the daily hour of adjournment to consider the business before the House.

### Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** I'd like to call Committee of the Whole to order. We have before us today consideration of tabled documents 4, 30, 38, 62, 75, 103, 133, and 135; as well as Bills 4, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20; and Ministers' statements 65-16(5) and 88-16(5). What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The committee would like to proceed with Environment and Natural Resources, and once that's concluded, to proceed with Transportation. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. We'll continue, then, with Tabled Document 133-16(5) and start with the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, but first we will take a break.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** I'd like to call Committee of the Whole back to together. We have before us the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, committee. I'd like to ask the Minister if he has any opening remarks.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am here to present the 2011-12 main estimates for the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. The plan proposes total operational expenses of almost \$67.5 million for the upcoming year, an increase of 2.6 percent.

The mandate of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources is to promote and support the sustainable use and development of natural resources and to protect, conserve and enhance our environment for the social and economic benefit of all residents.

A range of activities is proposed to uphold this mandate and I would like to take this opportunity to highlight a few key investments planned for the coming fiscal year.

Mr. Chair, during 2011-12, ENR, working in collaboration with our partners, proposes to spend \$1.5 million to implement the NWT Water Stewardship Strategy. This includes continued community and Aboriginal Steering Committee engagement on the implementation of actions to conserve and protect our waters as well as support

for the negotiations of transboundary water agreements with neighbouring jurisdictions and the implementation of the Canada-wide Strategy for Municipal Wastewater Effluent.

As a government we have committed to conserve energy through the use of alternative energy technologies. ENR's commitment to the Energy Investment Plan in 2011-12 includes the Business Support Program and the support for geothermal technology.

The Business Support Program is one of the commitments of the electricity review to assist NWT businesses in implementing projects that would reduce their power, transportation and heating costs.

ENR will provide the Arctic Energy Alliance with \$350,000 in funding to develop, pilot, implement and monitor strategies aimed at barriers preventing businesses from using efficient and renewable energy practices to reduce both costs and greenhouse gas emissions.

The department will build on analysis done last year on the potential use of deep geothermal heat energy to generate electricity and community/residual district heating. During 2011-12, ENR will invest \$400,000 to work with interested communities to further define the potential on a local scale. In particular, ENR will work with the Acho Dene Koe in Fort Liard to develop a detailed feasibility analysis of a geothermal plant, which could meet the electricity needs of the community.

Mr. Chair, another major initiative the department is proposing for 2011-12 is the implementation, if approved, of a new Wildlife Act to protect, conserve and manage wildlife in the Northwest Territories. Activities needed to implement the new legislation include officer training, development of new forms, permits, hunter education, public awareness programs, as well as harvest studies and reporting systems. The department's main estimates include \$500,000 for these activities.

A new five-year Barren-ground Caribou Management Strategy will guide actions related to caribou management. ENR proposes to invest \$1 million during 2011-12 to implement the strategy and build capacity for community involvement, work with all partners to develop a caribou management plan for the herds in the North Slave, increase patrols to ensure compliance with management actions and continue a public education program and materials to promote hunting excellence.

Establishing protected areas with northern tools is a priority of this government as part of the Protected Areas Strategy. During 2011-12, we propose to invest \$427,000 for this key tool for environmental stewardship. The funding will be used to establish and support critical wildlife areas working groups, to

consult with Aboriginal governments and to develop and implement monitoring programs.

As Members are aware, a large part of the department's budget is spent on prevention, detection, monitoring and suppression of wildfires in the Northwest Territories. During 2011-12, the department will table the final report on the Forest Fire Management Program review. This report and its recommendations will be reviewed with standing committee and, together, decisions will be made in how best to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of this program.

Mr. Chair, this concludes my opening comments for the department's 2011-12 main estimates. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to appear before committee and would be happy to address any questions Members may have. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. I would ask, do you wish to bring witnesses in?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Yes, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Minister. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you. I would ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort the witnesses into the House.

I would ask the Minister to please introduce his witnesses.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have with me Gary Bohnet, deputy minister of Environment and Natural Resources; and Nancy Magrum, the director of finance and admin services for ENR and ITI.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Minister. Welcome, Mr. Bohnet and Ms. Magrum. I think we'll start with general comments. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's nice to be able to provide a couple of comments regarding the Minister's opening remarks, and quite namely, a few things inside his opening remarks did cause some interest and I would like to hear perhaps a little more detail.

In one of the paragraphs, the Minister mentioned about the transboundary water agreement with neighbouring jurisdictions. One of the challenges is we have become keenly aware, of course, as being downriver, we see the effects of the other jurisdictions. Although it has been some time since I sat on the committee that would oversee this department, I do recall off memory that we do have

a transboundary agreement with the Yukon, but yet it still seems to be an outstanding issue with Alberta for one reason or another. I shouldn't coin it as an issue per se, but for one reason or another, as I understand it, Alberta still won't come to the table. I hope the Minister can provide an elaboration as to why our neighbour to the south still resists that.

As we heard Mr. Yakeleya mention in this Member's statement and certainly his questions yesterday about the concerns about being downriver of not just development but we are talking about major development that does play a heavy toll on our water and the water we'll be receiving for many years to come and the impacts of that. One of the particular issues to wield against Alberta is who will be theoretically responsible for contamination.

I know that, in the past, I have come to the Minister of ENR to ask him about what we do for water monitoring specifically in that particular area as the benefactors of some of that development that is going to put challenges on our water system. As we all know, it is the lifeblood of all land, which is water and, of course, that seeds and fuels both our forests, our people, our animals and things like that. It is obviously critical that it is developed and protected, of course, in a way that makes a lot of sense. That said, I think the transboundary water agreement with Alberta is quite significant. I would not speak to assume in any lesser manner that the transboundary water agreement with British Columbia would be of less concern, but I am not familiar enough with the individual tributaries that pour out of northern B.C. into the Northwest Territories that has the same effect now. I am aware that they fuel the Liard River, of course, but does it have the same effects? I am sure to some degree it does. I can't imagine that that area should be overlooked in one way or the other. I am just speaking more from a position of saying that my first thought and concern, of course, being the Alberta side.

Mr. Chairman, switching issues of concern to raise, and hopefully the Minister of ENR can elaborate a little further on the work developed, under our caribou. The caribou harvesting industry has been, for lack of better terms, shut down. It will continue to be shut down for some time. I am wondering as to what type of work has been done in studying the numbers. In some cases, we hear the numbers aren't as bad as they first thought. What has the department done to further track caribou to make sure that numbers are being studied and they are being studied properly? What investment is being done to help foster that? I see that he has a Caribou Management Plan to work with partners regarding caribou management of herds in the North Slave area for patrols and whatnot, but I would like to find out more specifically as to the numbers. Really, the numbers are what are

speaking to why there is a caribou ban for non-Aboriginal people as well as the harvesters, the businesses such as the lodges. Of course, as I have spoken before, they are in a really difficult position. They know how important the caribou is. If you are a lodge, obviously, your bread and butter is dependent on that type of tourism market, which has been shut down. Of course, they are still concerned about the realities of that. They have never denied their concern, although the numbers have obviously always been disputed from their point of view. That said, I support what the government's primary concern is, which is to make sure that the viability of the herd always exists going forward. I think it would be a mistake to not take that precautionary principle in this initiative. And yet, there are a lot of people and their livelihood as well as corresponding people who work indirectly with those industries who have taken a bit of a hit. It is very difficult for them to find new markets to expand into. That is, again, one of the issues of that area of concern, caribou.

Mr. Chairman, I think those are the only two particular areas that I kind of like the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources to expand a little further on. I look forward to hear his comments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. We are at general comments of Environment and Natural Resources. Are there any further comments? Mr. Jacobson.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to thank the Minister already for the one energy coming up in Tuktoyaktuk and soon to be Ulukhaktok. The \$1 million for the caribou herds, I brought that up this past week. I have concerns with people having to travel so far with the hunting zones. What we have to do is to see if we could have any extraordinary funding to provide people with gasoline, ski rods and the high-fax runners for their snowmobiles, because they are having to go farther. People are spending \$350 for gasoline having to go get caribou and sometimes they are getting skunked. They are not getting any caribou. They are coming back into the community when they could use that \$350 for food from the Northern Store, but at the end of the day, our hunting zones and people in my community of Tuktoyaktuk are honouring that. Some people have big families so it is making it tough on them. I am just hoping if we could with the caribou herds, maybe one or two extra flights be cancelled because we know the reborn are coming back and then we could put towards something sort of funding for the hunters, increasing the funding development for the Wildlife Act that \$100,000 is good to see. The Aboriginal concentration in providing the policy advice is good to see that is happening and working together with ENR in our NWT, the Water Strategy for the communities. All in all, the energy electricity supply

are ongoing initiatives for the polar bear management and making sure that our sport hunters and that, we can help them out in regards to... for the tags and with the Minister of ITI and ENR to make sure we get our work together to get that worked out, and potential for the increase of the caribou herds is good to see again. I look forward to going page by page with the Minister on this. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. Again, committee we are on general comments of Environment and Natural Resources. Anybody for general comments? Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The number of issues that this department has to deal with are very important to people in the North and people in my region. We are starting to see some of the impacts of the warming up of the environment, some of the concerns that my elders in Colville Lake are raising in regards to climate change, especially with the weather. It is very rare that elders would stop you and talk to you about the weather. They don't like to talk about it in their cultural beliefs. That's the first time that the elders said we've got to talk about it. When the elders say that to a young leader or anybody, it means something. I'm very happy that the department is having some discussions. I look forward to where our elders would get together and talk about the land, the water, the animals, everything on the climate.

They also want to talk about building the relationships with our government, the First Nations people in terms of working with animals, especially the caribou. They were concerned about the scientific method of monitoring and watching over caribou and the use of collars on the caribou. Their stories, I think the department has heard from our elders about the damage that the scientific method of monitoring caribou and collaring of them. Chief Kochon pointed to the illustration of this method by stating it's like you walking in the bush and a grizzly bear comes right at you and starts attacking you. You get all scared and you get all frightened. He was saying that was just like us putting collars on caribou, it's like that. Now, I give a lot of weight to Chief Kochon because people in Colville Lake know about caribou. Our elders know about caribou and this is what he's been told about the collaring of the caribou.

So I look forward to a strategy from this department in terms of a caribou strategy and putting weight from the First Nations people into that Caribou Management Strategy, respecting the First Nations, the first peoples on this land, their traditional knowledge.

I do want to thank the Minister and his department for taking the lead in traditional knowledge. You went really far and I wanted to congratulate you for

that. You've done a good job. It's a good piece of work that needs to continue to be worked on.

The energy programs, I'm starting to receive some interest from the Sahtu on the energy programs. The biomass, the mass force of possibly looking at manufacturing wood pellets in my region, stoves, just helping the communities to cut down costs and to look at opportunities in business for the energy.

I do want to say that the waste management recovery has been a success by the department and I know the Minister has been dealing with an issue with me in Tulita on the recycling program. I have a concern that the Minister is well aware of in terms of this issue. Hopefully I'll get some answers going through the detail by detail. I'm starting to notice a lot of old vehicles in waste sites in and around the communities, in the dumps. It would certainly be good if you looked at future planning to commit some dollars to having a machine come into the Sahtu and go up to the community dumps and chew up these old vehicles, package them up and send them down south somewhere. There are a lot of old vehicles in our dumps that have been there, I guess since the opening up of community dumps. So that would be a good initiative that this department can look at, waste reduction. It's something they could think about.

I spoke a little bit about the Water Strategy, about protecting our water. The territorial government, through this department, has a Water Strategy initiative going on. I passionately believe that if we are not doing anything drastic right away, that we would live to see the prophecies of Chief Kodakin and Chief Paul Wright when they spoke in the '70s. I've spoken about this many times when I sat down with leaders in the Sahtu in Tulita where these two chiefs stood up and talked about the Mackenzie River being polluted and checking their fish nets and having no fish or fish spoiled or rotten and dead in the fish nets. I never thought that far in advance of what they were really talking about. But according to my research that put information in front of me, there is pollution coming down the Mackenzie from various sources. I pointed out yesterday one specific location, the Alberta tar sands. You can talk to people in Fort Chip, you can talk to a lot of people down that way and you can talk to the Minister and in his riding, too, about the quality of water that we have coming into our communities.

I look forward to some discussions with the Minister on resource management and the issue of devolution and the impacts on my region in the Northwest Territories when we go through this budget.

I do want to say in closing, Mr. Chair, that I continue to support the Minister in his initiatives to bring forth the Wildlife Act. It's a good initiative. It's been there how many years it's been on the table. The Wildlife

Act is something that needs to be put before us, dealt with and then we can start anew.

So I wanted to say I look forward to going through the budget items in this department. It's a very important department. I look forward to the Minister's continued support to protect our land and our water and I looked at areas in the Sahtu that need protection. Our land and our water are our life, Mr. Chair. It's so important. You're talking about the life of my people. So the Minister of Environment has a very important role in this government. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Committee, we're at general comments, Environment and Natural Resources, going once, going twice. Seeing no more I will ask... Oh, sorry, Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There was a particular area I left off by accident and in listening to Mr. Yakeleya when he talked about the car shredding, I've raised in the past, as well as other Members, but I certainly have raised in the past my concern about battery recycling here in the Northwest Territories and whether that be both large and small batteries, that's a particular initiative that I was hopeful that this time around the government would show some interest in and I'm curious as to where that has let in. As well as computer recycling. There is a concern in the community, not just in the Yellowknife Centre riding but in the community of Yellowknife, as well as when I travel in the North. People are curious as to what to do with computer technology that continues to be obsolete.

Mr. Chairman, the other issue that I would be remiss if I did not throw it out there is there continues to be a concern about tire shredding and the possibility of bringing that into some type of program that shows up every two, three, four years up and down the valley. Again, material that could be shredded down and found to have another use.

I just want to raise those three particular issues that I would consider very important. Again, computer waste, battery recycling and tire shredding. I think those would be good environmental stewardship programs that the Department of ENR would be involved in. I would certainly hope it's their focus going forward in this budget year. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. I believe that concludes the general comments. I'll ask the Minister now for his response.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will try to be as concise as possible. With regard to the water issue raised by all three Members that offer general comments, we are hard at work on the transboundary negotiations. We are engaged with Saskatchewan, Alberta, British

Columbia and ourselves, as well as the federal government as we map out the rules of engagement and set up the negotiating processes that are going to be required. For the information of Member Hawkins, in fact the Alberta government is very willing and interested to come to the table. In fact, both the Alberta government and the Northwest Territories government have written to British Columbia, for example, to indicate that we would like to have legally binding water agreements in place before site C proceeds on the Bennett Dam.

Once again, for Member Hawkins, the headwaters of the Peace are, in fact, in British Columbia, which provides about 70 percent of the Slave and the Slave provides about 70 percent or so of water into Great Slave Lake. So it's a very important jurisdiction for us.

We are also, in terms of water monitoring, the federal government has committed now, after some recent studies and a lot of political pressure, to setting up a committee to oversee the implementation of what we hope will be a world-class monitoring system north of McMurray. It will be able to take a comprehensive look at the impact of that development. We are encouraging the federal government to have as wide a scope as possible. As I pointed out in this House yesterday, in fact we've had the good fortune to have one of our very best water people on that panel, Dr. Erin Kelly.

With regard to the caribou, we are doing presentations to committee here this week on the caribou strategy, the Barren Land Caribou Strategy for the next five years, 2011 to 2015. There has been some stabilizing of numbers in some cases. Indications are, for example, when the Porcupine, after waiting about eight years or so, their numbers will, in fact, be very consistent with the last count that would appear back in the early 2000s.

With the other herds, they have stabilized. Some have shown some modest rebounding, but our information tells us they are still in need of careful management and protection. We are putting money in the budget, as we've indicated, to continue the work to do the proper science, to do the counting, work with the co-management groups, Aboriginal governments, with the proper mix of traditional knowledge and scientific knowledge to monitor and count the herds so we can make the proper decisions. I would point out, as well, that part of that, even though there's concern in some quarters, it's absolutely critical for us to be able to use collars to make use of the best satellite technology and technology to be able to monitor the herd's whereabouts, at the same time as work very closely with the co-management board and the Aboriginal governments in communities to get on-the-ground reporting, but in terms of being able to cover large

areas of the country and find out and track the herds. It is very important technology for us.

We are committed to working forward with the wind energy in Tuk, along with all the other energy initiatives we have on the table as a government. We collectively, of course, as Mr. Yakeleya pointed out, are very aware and conscious of the weather and changes to the environment and climate that are happening. The feedback we are getting from across the North, not only feedback of an anecdotal basis but being able to see firsthand things that are happening to the environment and things that are going to require very clear attention from us and good planning.

I appreciate the interest in the Sahtu in biomass and potential business opportunities. There are going to be some workshops held up there in the Sahtu this coming year to pursue some of those discussions.

The broader challenge that's come up here a couple of times now is the whole issue of where are we with recycling. We've been focussing on extending the bag levy to make sure that we can restrict even further the plastic bags. We are working and just finalizing our work on e-waste. Other things like the batteries, cars and tire shredding are on our list, but once again it's a function of capacity and time. We will get there, but we're focussing this coming year on hopefully coming up with a good e-waste recycling process.

Finally, as I indicated in the House, the intention is after a lot of work and time to come forward, give notice of motion on the 7<sup>th</sup> of March for the introduction of the Wildlife Act, with first and second reading to be brought before this House and voted on in that week. Then the bill would become the property, if it passes, of committee to do the consultation and report back within their 120 days. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Does committee agree that that concludes general comments?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** And that we go on to detail?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, committee. I note that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources summary, operations expenditure summary, is on page 13-7, which we'll defer until after consideration of the detail. So we'll start on page 13-8 with the Environment and Natural Resources, information item, infrastructure investment summary. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Page 13-9, Environment and Natural Resources, information item, revenue summary. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Moving on to page 13-10, Environment and Natural Resources, information item, active position summary. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, committee. Moving forward, page 13-13. Environment and Natural Resources, activity summary, corporate management, operations expenditure summary, \$10.995 million. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I want to ask the department a question on the support for the communities. I hope this is the department. I'll ask a question here. It's regarding the support the department has given, very appreciatively, to the Sahtu region on the veterinary services in my five communities. I know each year the vets come up from the University of Calgary and they help a lot of people in the Sahtu with their dogs on a number of issues. They come up almost on a long-term basis, where they seek donations from the communities in terms of accommodations, meals and support. A lot of young people are really taking on a supportive role in terms of helping the veterinarians of handling the dogs in the communities, neutering them or looking after the dogs. I want to ask the department in terms of support... I'll back up here. They have given them support and more concrete support to make it a program that would be continuous ongoing to the people in the Sahtu. That's my take on it. I'd love to have an exchange here with the Minister in terms of how do we continue to support these vets that come up from the University of Calgary. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the more remote and isolated communities there is a lot of interdepartmental cooperation as well as cooperation with the communities' hunters and trappers groups, dog mushers, if they're there, to deal with issues like rabies, like shots, pooling our resources, because there's no specific clear program for this particular area that the Member's talked about. As well as working with those, working with those universities that have veterinary colleges and where we're able to work with veterinarians in the communities. So our intention would be to continue that collaborative approach. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Chair, they have done some research with this veterinary program last year.

They looked after 172 dogs last year, in terms of going to the communities. Again, Mr. Miltenberger said there were no programs in the department that speaks to these services. They do work very collaboratively with the veterinarians. It's the fourth year now they've been in the Sahtu to provide services for the people in the small, remote and isolated communities such as Colville Lake. I know there are other communities that can certainly use this service. Is the department anywhere close to looking at providing a new program, a new service of vets such like the one we have in the Sahtu or that requires more thought, more discussion? Because I know the Sahtu certainly has benefitted greatly and we appreciate it from the University of Calgary. As a matter of fact, there are several people, youngsters that are looking at even becoming veterinarians because of this program. Last year, personally, I had people come to my place and I fed them, offered them a good meal, and they helped me look after our little dog there. I see it very valuable. People are pretty happy and receptive to seeing them come into the community, and they work long hours.

Again, we want to show our appreciation to the staff at the Sahtu regional office of ENR for bringing these people in and helping them. It's just that it seems that there's a little more comfort in terms of coming into our region knowing that they would be supportive of a program that they can fall back onto when they come into the Sahtu region. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** As I indicated, we provide a support role in this particular area and we work with our community staff, our regional staff, the biologists. We provide a great many services in kind, boats and vehicles to assist. We guide them and assist them where necessary, but there's no, once again, sort of budget item in our budget that speaks to veterinary services. Although I do take note of the Member's concern that we at least maintain that type of collaborative approach, which we intend to do. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** The communities, through the Aboriginal governments and other non-government agencies and volunteers, also support the veterinarians that come up from the University of Calgary along with ENR, because there's no budget line item for this type of support they are doing, because it's good business, it's because you're helping dogs, you're helping dog owners, you're doing a service that's greatly appreciated by the people in Good Hope, the Wells, Colville, Deline, Tulita. And that if we have a bad year then, you know, it's a discretionary funding.

I think if the Minister maybe within his department can have some reconsideration to see if this makes sense. I don't know what goes on within the department in terms of putting programming budgets together or if it's high on the priority list. I'm

just asking that we're doing this service here, because it makes sense and it's because there are some real good people in the department in the communities that are making it happen and also with the University of Calgary being very successful putting this program together and to see if there could be a budget line item added to it. I think that we're late this year to do it and I'm hoping that we could do it maybe in the next government that will have some consideration to put some arguments, I guess, in favour or support into it to move it forward to another level. Or it may be something bigger than I'm talking about right now. I just see that this is a good program and while the government recognizes that it's a valuable service to the people, there is still no program or budget line item attached to it. I'm certainly willing to take that we missed the boat on this budget line item. It's not an issue for me. The issue is can we put it somewhere and they can have some discussion, because the department will still run whether we're here or not. The department will still run on doing things. That's what I'm asking for. I know it doesn't stop when we're asked to dissolve this Assembly and come back for a new Assembly. That's what I'm asking for, if they can give some serious consideration to put this program into a budget line item for consideration. Of course, it has to go through all the hoops to make in there, and that's what I'm asking, because I see the benefits, I've personally experienced it, and I think the dog owners would be very happy in the Sahtu. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** As we conclude this budget process and get geared up over the summer/fall, I will commit that we will consider the issue of how we provide support service in this area as we look at the business plans for 2012-13. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Minister Miltenberger. Next on my list is Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd like to comment around the area of traditional knowledge, but more importantly, the Traditional Knowledge Policy and if there's actually a policy. Because I think that one of the things that people used to always assume was that scientific knowledge was the basis for all information, but I think because of the traditional knowledge importance and the way that traditional knowledge is compiled over decades and not thousands of years, that you can basically realize the importance of that and also working in conjunction with the Aboriginal organizations and wildlife and renewable resource councils to regulatory boards the importance of traditional knowledge in any decision-making process is paramount to scientific knowledge. I think that we have to be able to show that we do put the same weight into traditional knowledge as we do scientific knowledge. I'd just like to know exactly, in regard to Traditional Knowledge Policy, where are we with

that, and more importantly, how often do we use traditional knowledge as the basis for acquiring information or compiling information or moving that forward in regards to any studies and reports in regards to research that we do? How much emphasis do we put on traditional knowledge when we compile that information? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Chairman, The Government of the Northwest Territories has a Traditional Knowledge Policy that applies across the government. It is reflected very clearly as well as in our GNWT's research agenda. As we look at the areas of study that we think are important areas of research that are important, there is clear recognition of the role for traditional knowledge working in conjunction with and in collaboration is alongside of the western science. This traditional knowledge across government is reflected in course education in a lot of our curriculum development. It is reflected in some of the health services. It is reflected in the work that ENR does. We use that every day with our officers on the ground. We use it as we do all our planning. It is reflected very clearly in the work that has been done with the Water Strategy. Departments like Transportation as well I think rely significantly on traditional knowledge. If the Member and I would look back to 1995 when we first got here and the debate, often rancorous debate, of even being able to talk about traditional knowledge and what that means and now over time it has become accepted and recognized as a critical part of how we do business as a government. Thank you.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Chairman, again, what we are finding even from the national organizations and also from the federal agencies and government is that they now have encompassed traditional knowledge in all of their discussions with the scientific community. I think that we have to embrace both types of knowledge regardless if it is scientific or traditional knowledge and working in conjunction with the scientific community and the Aboriginal communities to format the information, but make sure that we come at it from both sides looking from the scientific community and from the Aboriginal perspective on traditional knowledge. I think it is important that policy doesn't simply... The policy has to devolve as you develop. The more information, the more idea of how the process will be confined and how that information is going to be used. I think that, from the Aboriginal community and also from the scientific community, they finally come to realize that they are both just as important. If not, they operate on the same playing field. I think that we have to make sure that everything we do, regardless if it is caribou counts, plants be seized or water quality issues, I think that we have to be able to use it in the format that is useable, but more



importantly, retain as much of that information as you can.

I know the Aboriginal groups I represent have done a lot of logging information regardless if we are talking about plants or we are talking basically traditional clothing, and more importantly, the traditional activities in regards to migration patterns regardless if it is different types of animal species. I think that we have to not only use it or lose it, but more importantly, make sure that we have a continuance domain of how this stuff will be locked away and hide it on the shelf and put another report that can collect dust. I think that we have to develop whatever resources, but again looking at your budget, it doesn't seem like we are spending much money in this area. Again, I would just like to know why not. We spend a lot of money on consultants. We spend a lot of money on the scientific community who comes up here mostly from the different universities across the country. Again, I would just like to regulate what type of long-term capital investment are we making, but more importantly, ensuring that we have a policy and devolving over time, and more importantly, improving in regards to the process moving forward.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Chairman, we are, as a department, spending, I believe, about \$225,000 specifically on traditional knowledge. We have a Traditional Knowledge Policy as a government. We have a government-wide implementation plan. We are looking at best practices. In addition, there is traditional knowledge built into all the work that we are doing. When you look at all the money we are spending on Water Strategy, when you look at the work we are doing on caribou, when you look at the work that has been done on the development of the Wildlife Act in the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, it is part of our daily business and is not just a specific line item that stands off to the side. There is some money for that, but the reality for us is it now part of the fabric of the Environment and Natural Resources corporate way of doing business. It is reflected in just about every aspect of the work we do. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Thank you, committee. We are on page 13-13. Mr. Abernethy.

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not actually 100 percent sure this is the right area, but scanning through, I can't seem to find the area that might be applicable. Given that this is policy and strategic planning, this I think is the right area.

Early in the life of this Assembly there was talk about a land use framework. I thought or understood that would be coming forward from the Department of ENR for the end of the life of this

Assembly, but in looking through this document, I don't find any reference to it. I am wondering what is the status of that. Is that something that has completely disappeared or is that hidden in here somewhere where I can't see it? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Chairman, the land use framework is a critical initiative of the Government of the Northwest Territories. It is critical as we look going forward with the agreement-in-principle. It is a frame within which would fit things like the Water Strategy and a lot of our individual land use plans and our approaches of government to doing that. That particular initiative is driven and managed out of the Executive. Thank you.

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Mr. Chairman, I will make sure I ask the Executive then.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to follow up on the question from Mr. Abernethy on the land use framework. It may be led by the Executive, but from the information in business plans, there was a fairly large investment by ENR in 2008-09, not so much in 2009-10, but then an \$800,000 investment in this current year for develop and implement a land use framework. In the upcoming budget year, the information shows a reduction of \$83,000. What are the actions of ENR relative to the land use framework in budget year 2011-12? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Chairman, we have \$153,000 dedicated to our part of the work of the land use framework. The deputy sits on the working group. Many of the elements of the Water Strategy and the principles are being reflected and are reflected in the land use framework. It is an initiative that is, we think, very close to conclusion, but I will ask the deputy if he will speak a bit to some of the detail. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Minister. I will ask deputy minister to fill in the details. Thank you.

**MR. BOHNET:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The main role of Environment and Natural Resources in regards to work on the land use framework is a thing called land use framework decision support tools. This is really around the geomatics and the mapping this year. One thing we have found is between the Government of the Northwest Territories, within the Government of the Northwest Territories, INAC, regulatory boards and a number

of other agencies use a lot of different tools and mechanisms, geomatic systems for mapping out these types of things. That has been the main area we have been focussing on, is ENR and ITI are shared work thing promoting that particular issue. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Bohnet. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks, Mr. Chair, and thanks to both the Minister and the DM for the information. I guess I just would like to know with this reduction in funding specific to the land use framework, does that simply mean that this department is not putting quite as much into the land use framework and the other departments are taking over, or is this going to mean... I thought I heard that we're nearing the end of this project. So is that another reason why there is a reduction in funds? Thank you.

**MR. BOHNET:** No, in fact it hasn't fallen off the table at this particular time, or in the foreseeable future. I think we realize the importance of that particular work and it's just some of the money for that particular project shows up in the Department of Executive's budget rather than ENR's. The land use framework, as we move forward, is led by one of the strategic initiatives committees, Managing This Land. There's a lot of good work that has gone into it and still a lot of work and it's still a work in progress. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Bohnet. Committee, we're on page 13-13, Environment and Natural Resources, activity summary, corporate management, operations expenditures summary, \$10.995 million. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you. Page 13-14. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. In regard to traditional knowledge funding, like I stated, there's been a major reduction. In this it's down to \$65,000 from \$110,000. Just going back to the previous page in grants and contributions it was some \$415,000, but most of that was... I'd just like to know exactly, you mentioned that there's some \$225,000, why does that not show up in that line item where you're showing \$65,000?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's just the grants and contribution portion. I'll ask Ms. Magrum to give us where the rest of it is.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Ms. Magrum.

**MS. MAGRUM:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. A portion of the funding is in compensation and benefits and in other O and M in addition to grants and contributions.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Ms. Magrum. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Do you have that particular page or line item you're talking about? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you. I'll call on Ms. Magrum for details.

**MS. MAGRUM:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. That information is just part of the details of other expenses within the corporate management page.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you and I'll also go to Deputy Minister Bohnet.

**MR. BOHNET:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The whole issue around traditional knowledge, again, a couple of years ago there was no traditional knowledge coordination position in the Government of the Northwest Territories. All we had was the Traditional Knowledge Policy. Under Managing this Land Strategic Initiatives, we got some funding to develop a position, a coordinator of traditional knowledge. From there we developed and we looked at and reviewed the policy, we developed a number of cross-government, interdepartmental things as far as the best practices guidelines, an implementation plan, an annual report that is funded particularly here. So a lot of the money under the strategic initiatives for traditional knowledge is to build that coordination position, and we also use a lot of it to hold workshops and we're continuing to hold workshops in particular regions to develop that relationship with the holders of traditional knowledge in various regions among various tribal groups. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Bohnet. Anything further, Mr. Krutko? Thank you. Again, committee, we're on page 13-14, Environment and Natural Resources. Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Page 13-14, Mr. Chair?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** That's correct.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Chair, the traditional knowledge funding has dropped quite considerably from \$110,000 to \$65,000 for '11-12. Is that the funding that's going to be continued in the future or is that the last of the funding?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. It's sort of been asked and answered, but any additional details, Minister Miltenberger?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** No, Mr. Chairman, but just to reiterate for the Member that this is only part of the \$225,000. Under grants and contributions there's other money listed under compensation and benefits and other areas. The intent, as the deputy indicated, is to move forward with our commitment to traditional knowledge. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Minister. I'm sure there are quite a few other details we're provided as well that should be available in Hansard. Anything further here, committee, on page 13-14?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Let me just read out the specs, I guess. Environment and Natural Resources, activity summary, corporate management, grants and contributions, contributions, \$65,000. Agreed.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, committee. Moving on to page 13-15, Environment and Natural Resources, information item, corporate management, active positions. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Page 13-17, Environment and Natural Resources, activity summary, environment, operations expenditures summary, \$8.662 million. Agreed? Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Chair, the alternative energy initiatives that are happening around the North there, I wanted to ask the Minister in looking at the biomass energy, I know there are some reports that have been out there on the Alternative Energy Initiative and the communities that would benefit greatly. I wanted to ask the Minister if they've come to a conclusion in terms of establishing something in the Sahtu to help them with the high cost of living, with opportunities and to reduce the greenhouse and all the other good stuff that goes on with the biomass, maybe a manufacturing plant. I also understand that they're working in my community with some individuals and that they have implemented some initiatives to deal with woodstoves in our communities, or in the North here. When I look at the alternative energy initiatives, there's not very much happening in the Sahtu on mega projects. There are some discussions around hydro. They haven't gone very far. There are other projects that get a little more attention and our region is one of the highest costs, other than Nunakput. Our region, the Beaufort-Delta, has a high cost of living and doing business. So I wanted to see if there's some initiative from the department to look at some of their alternative energy initiatives. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Deputy Minister Bohnet.

**MR. BOHNET:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, and in fact I could report, too, that we plan on holding biomass workshops before the end of this fiscal year in all the Sahtu communities, taking a look at whether we have community and hopefully ultimately a regional biomass strategy plan for the Sahtu. There is some work going on by the Arctic

Energy Alliance since we created that regional pathfinder position in Norman Wells last year that is working with the communities for some new types of woodstoves and some other alternative energy projects that fall under their mandate. But we do plan on working with that community in this fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you. I look forward to the workshops and the meetings that are going to be held in the Sahtu and how they're going to work with this department and the other agencies to move forward.

On the woodstoves, I've been told -- and please correct me if so, Mr. Minister -- in terms of giving them to some of the people or putting them in some of the houses that need some professional, I don't know if they have professional installers or they need to look at it in terms of however, or whatever, it became an issue that in our small communities that is more like... Maybe in the larger centres they need to do something like this, but in our smaller communities it makes it difficult to be asked to do something that is quite hard on the homeowner. So that is what I have been told and that is why some of the woodstoves are not going into some of the houses that were intended to. There is sort of a hiccup, that is my understanding and I ask to be corrected if I am wrong on this issue here.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The installation of woodstoves brings with it a number of safety requirements and insurance requirements. One of the reasons, in recognition of that issue, funding was given to the Arctic Energy Alliance to help them assist and make sure we could get that level of care brought in to where stoves are being installed so they are put in safely and they would stand the test for insurance purposes as well. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** That is where the hiccup is in terms of having these woodstoves put into some of the houses for some of the communities. They have been using woodstoves for many, many years and I don't think some of the old-timers had to have, for insurance purposes, anybody come in there and look and say we can't put it in there. They just bought it and they put it in, so that is where there are some disagreements. I hope they can resolve that issue, and maybe not, I am not too sure how they could do it.

It seems to be something that seems to be putting a damper on a good thing by this department to help out with the high cost of energy and all the goals that we strived for in the opening of the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly. That is just something that I don't think will get resolved here. I just wanted to make sure that the department knew that this was told to me

when I went into the Sahtu about a week or so ago. No more comment.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Comment received. Next on my list I have Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also would like to talk about a similar issue in regards to energy management. I think that we have to realize that communities are probably a little ways ahead of us in a lot of this stuff and I know that the communities I represent, Tsiighetchic, Fort McPherson especially, are looking long term which they are looking at setting goals of 2025 of trying to cut their emissions down to 50 percent, and I think the communities are trying to do their part as communities in the Arctic that can show the rest of the world that we are doing our part when it comes to climate change and reducing our usage of fossil fuels and looking at alternative types of energy. One of the areas that they are looking at is the area of biomass residual heat and also trying to find alternative ways of generating not only power but also of generating heat in communities. I think that we have to work in conjunction with those communities and I know that there has been some work going on in the communities that I represent where they have held workshops and whatnot. Again, I think that because of the interest of the communities in the Arctic and the fact that we are seeing in regards to climate change and not being proactive for them, sends a message that we are not really showing the rest of the world we are trying to set the example for the rest of them. So realizing we are impacted by what other people are doing but also by showing that we can do our part, too, by basically reducing our usage of fossil fuels. I would just like to know exactly, I know you mentioned that you are looking at going into the Sahtu communities, but again, I think that we have to ensure that we are working in conjunction with them, because in your presentation it seemed that the only group that you mentioned is working in partnership with the Arctic Energy Alliance, but I think that you also have to work in partnership with the organizations and community groups that basically are already working in conjunction with what they are looking at. In Fort McPherson, for instance, they are already looking at using chippers, and basically chipping wood and using woodchips as the means of heating buildings in the communities. I think that that is the type of stuff that we realistically have to work with, and support them and not to continue to compete against them. If anything, we have to work in relation. I would just like to know, what are we doing as a government to embrace those communities and those organizations that are trying to do their part to put ourselves on the world stage showing that we are doing our part to reduce our dependency on greenhouse gases.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** I appreciate the Member's comments. The Arctic Energy Alliance is a delivery agent to assist with carrying out a lot of the priorities and work as it pertains to energy efficiencies and greenhouse gas reductions. We have, of course, worked closely with communities as they have developed their own energy plans and we are working with them all on an individual basis, recognizing that one size doesn't fit all. For example, looking at wind in Nunakput. But I will ask, Mr. Chairman, the deputy to speak specifically to some of the things that are going on in the Beaufort-Delta area. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Mr. Bohnet.

**MR. BOHNET:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have had a couple of workshops with the folks in the Gwich'in and in particular we have established some really good working relationships with the Aboriginal governments in the Gwich'in Settlement Area. Some of the things we have underway, we have a study and are working with the community of Fort McPherson, exploring the potential for some residual heat. We are also looking at developing, we are looking at a pilot project with the community, as far as the Willow Flats that we are dealing with the community of Fort McPherson. In fact, we have also felt it was necessary and we bought a wood chipper for the community, and we are doing a number of these initiatives with some of the smaller communities to start to get them interested in biomass, what it could be used for and those types of things. I am also meeting with all the Gwich'in chiefs this Thursday to further the Biomass Strategy for the Gwich'in Settlement Area. They want to work together and we encourage that. We have had staff in their communities a number of times and will continue to do so. We have established a good working relationship with the Aboriginal governments in the Gwich'in Settlement Area. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Bohnet. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the deputy for that. Again, it shows that by working together we can accomplish a lot, more importantly to ensure that we have the means of doing it.

Also in Fort McPherson, we already have basically residual heat system, and again the community, not only the tribal council but the hamlet of Fort McPherson, also very much want to get involved, because they realize that what they do to reduce their energy footprint, more importantly in regards to their energy use, it will save them money in the long run and they can put money back into the communities for programs and services, but also

looking at alternative ways of using that energy, because it is a high cost item for operation and maintenance of municipal government. Again, they are looking at biomass and residual heat to heat their facilities. They are looking at replacing either the garages or even how do they cut down on the cost of heating water in the water treatment plant, things like that. I think that we have to work with not only the Aboriginal governments but the community governments and work in conjunction with the community plan that, basically, groups are developing and also access not only our dollars but gas tax money and other resources that are out there. Again, we have to be conscious of these activities out there, but again, I think that we should basically continue on with that working relationship, but again, at the end of the day it all comes down to money and I know that we just went through a supplemental review in which a lot of dollars have been lapsed because the activities haven't really moved anywhere. Great ideas, but again, it is to re-establish, to re-invest those dollars to the groups that are ready and work with them to basically implement their ideas, but more importantly, start implementing some of these activities in the communities and the regions and move on these programs. I'd just like to know where do we see the additional capital dollars coming from in light of your expenditure amount. I notice it's been reduced by almost \$900,000 in regard to your energy management expenditure. I'd just like to know where are the capital dollars going to come from to implement these ideas.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This year the money that we've committed is about \$17 million across the various energy initiatives. I think there's one more year left after that. We're looking at partnerships, of course, and the 17<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly will have to determine their ongoing commitment to this area and the kind of money that's going to be available to put into it. In some of the cases, as we pointed out with our review of the supplementary appropriation, there have been some deferrals because work wasn't ready and when the work is ready, the funds will be made available, in some cases. We're going to have to look at all these different areas to make sure we've put the dollars we have to the best use and wherever possible try to leverage our dollars to access others. Thank you.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Chairman, again, I think it's important that we do identify climate change and impacts that we're seeing. I think one of the most obvious impacts that we can see is the erosion that we're seeing with the melting permafrost and the slumping that's happening throughout the tundra in regard to the coastline erosion and erosion in our mountain valleys, and more importantly, creeks that

are basically filling up with mud from slumping and sliding. I think that we have to realize that it's eventually going to continue to grow. I think that's one area that we can really show the rest of the world how climate change is affecting us, because it's happening right in front of us. You can actually see how large an area these slumps are turning into and they're huge.

I had an opportunity to go to a mining conference here in Yellowknife and you had a presenter from your office who was presenting a study that they did just outside of Fort McPherson along the Dempster Highway, and it was amazing how fast just this summer the erosion that took place in a matter of a couple of months and the amount of precipitation that we've had by way of rain and how heavy the rains are becoming, which is speeding up the process of melting permafrost, but more importantly, the affect it's having not only on the land but it's also affecting the water, it's affecting the fish habitat, it's affecting the downstream affects, and also it's affecting the temperature of the water in the river systems and lakes, and more importantly, even eventually it's going to be in the ocean. I think that we have to be realistic here, that whatever's happening out there will have a detrimental effect to all of us regardless if it's the human species or animal species or bird species, because we are going to be affected one way or the other.

Again, I'd just like to know what are we doing to basically put out more video coverage or promote the impacts that we're seeing nationally and around the world so that the rest of the world can realize that what's happening is not simply a slogan but it's reality. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** As the Member pointed out, the ENR staff was presenting the results of some of the studies that were being done in the mountains in his constituency. We have, through our research agenda, we've laid out this whole area as an area that requires study, and there are world-class experts like Dr. Pomeroy from the University of Saskatoon that have spent 30 years up here working and there's enormous interest from the scientific community to find out what's happening for all the reasons the Member has mentioned, as well as just some of the incredible releases of carbon and methane that may result with the melting. As the government, as the Member well knows, over the last number of years we've been dealing with just the permafrost issues just with piles alone and our roads, the issue or the erosion that you talk about. The North is very clearly moving at a rate of change that is many times faster than the rest of the world, so there is an enormous amount of attention here, as well, and we're still feeling some of the residual attention from the International Polar Year, as well.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. And that's the University of Saskatchewan, I believe, in Saskatoon. Next, I have on my list Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have a question here related to the money in the budget for geothermal. At the time of business plans there was a statement... I'll back up. The Minister is well aware that the City of Yellowknife is putting intensive efforts into determining the feasibility and possibility to go forward on a geothermal project there in Yellowknife. I think the Minister probably should also know that the federal government has promised almost \$15 million or up to \$15 million based on whether or not the City is willing to sort of put in the other necessary funds. My question to the Minister at this point is: is this government supportive of the project that the City of Yellowknife is undertaking and what contribution has this government made in terms of geothermal to the City of Yellowknife project? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I've met with the mayor and his people about this project along with ENR staff. We've provided some modest assistance doing some preplanning. We, of course, are looking at, if this goes ahead, the impact that it would have in terms of savings to energy costs and the various government buildings that are there, but at this point, there has been no, that I'm aware of, no specific monetary ask from the City of Yellowknife. They're aware of our limitations, which we discussed with Mayor Van Tighem. While we are supportive, that has been more in the moral support kind of category as opposed to fiscal support. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks to the Minister. I guess my question then is should there be a formal request to this government for funding? Would the Minister consider it as seriously as possible within the parameters of our current fiscal situation? I guess I'm asking will there be some financial support for this project at some point in time if the City puts forward an ask? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** When there are requests we always make every effort to accommodate within the fiscal realities that are before us. Should there be a specific request from the City of Yellowknife, then we would give it fair and due consideration.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Minister. Next on my list I have Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to ask the Minister, they had a biomass report, sorry, wood pellet district heating study done in the Territories, October 2010, four months ago, by the

Arctic Energy Alliance. In the budget here there's \$1.3 million for the biomass energy, page 13-18. The report states what they found to be deficient, dare I say, in terms of supporting district heating in communities that would be beneficial. I want to ask the Minister are there plans to go forward with this report and look at communities such as Gameti, Whati, Tulita, Fort Good Hope and Tuktoyaktuk to look at plans to go forward on a district heating initiative for those communities that what the report says what they learned for the communities that are off the all-season road highway system.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Abernethy):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The intention at this still preliminary stage of the road of all this alternative energy money and the Biomass Strategy is to work with communities and regions to find ways to put in infrastructure that will allow the use of biomass and in where it makes sense and their technology is there, if there is a district heating, district power kind of opportunity that is there, we are interested in that as well. The Member has to keep in mind what we are talking about here. The 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly has started the process that is going to stretch out before us I would suggest for the next 10 years or so as we make a transition in terms of the type of energy infrastructure we have and what we want to change to. This money is getting us started to work with communities to do that initial planning, identify where we can do pilots, what type of pilots, recognizing that each region and each community will have a unique energy plan in many cases. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Chairman, the Minister is certainly correct. Also in the report it states warrant further investigations to the communities that are listed out. Certainly they also have communities listed for all-weather road, communities that would benefit from a district heating system. These are the communities that are favourable for economic potential for biomass initiatives. My point, Mr. Chairman, is that the communities that are on the winter road resupply that I listed off have not gotten lost in the system. Mr. Minister has indicated that there are already plans in place. Again, I am going to state clearly that some of these other regions and communities that are receiving a lot of attention are communities in our Sahtu have a high cost of living, fuel prices, transportation and other factors. We certainly can use some support to start bringing down the cost of living and provide some opportunities. I take it that the Minister is going to hear some good things once they have their meetings in the Sahtu communities and you can look at the number of initiatives that could happen there and have the new government or Assembly look at making it a priority to put some of the initiatives in place. You know the cost of doing

business in the Sahtu is very high. I am hoping that we would see some of these initiatives sooner than later. That is my point. I just want to make that resonate with the department while he has the senior officials here with us. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the Member's comments and his request and his intent to make us aware of this. As the deputy indicated, there are going to be meetings in the Sahtu communities before the end of this fiscal year. Within the next five weeks, there is going to be work done and the intent is, like we are doing across the North, to come up with the regional plans and community plans and then we can start the planning process and identify the resources that we are going to need to try to move forward on as many of these initiatives as possible. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Minister. Committee, we are on page 13-17. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Mr. Chairman, I wanted to ask some questions here related to waste sites and the management of them and cleaning up of them and responsibility for them. With the AIP having been signed, I believe there is a section in there which deals with environmental liability and cleanup of waste sites, mine sites and so on. I would like to know from the Minister if he could explain the department's responsibility in terms of waste sites and the impact the AIP will have on that responsibility. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Chairman, there are some like Giant Mine where there is a separate agreement that will be separate from the agreement-in-principle where we have a signed arrangement with the federal government and ourselves, and then I will ask the deputy to speak about our responsibility on Commissioner's land and some of the other waste site issues. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Mr. Bohnet.

**MR. BOHNET:** Mr. Chairman, on Crown land, the federal government has responsibility for waste sites, contaminated sites and such. On Commissioner's land, the Government of the Northwest Territories for the major extent has the responsibility on Commissioner's land. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Bohnet. Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Mr. Chairman, if there is a development on Commissioner's land, is the deputy minister saying that it is now a GNWT responsibility to clean it up either pre or post devolution? Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Chairman, as we negotiate the devolution agreement, there is going to be an identification of sites and there is going to be milestone times. There are going to be ones that we will be responsible for. There are going to be older ones existing, ones on Crown land that the federal government will continue to have responsibility for. There will be a going forward date from which time that once the agreement is signed that we will be responsible for new ones. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** I have two further questions. Should a site be missed in the analysis and the identification of all the sites within our Territory, should a particular site be missed and it be discovered some time after devolution, whose responsibility would it then be? I am assuming that a site that was the responsibility of the federal government when it was initially developed, it is missed in the census of sites, whose responsibility is it after devolution to clean that up? I will start with that. Thanks.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Chairman, given the fact that we have just signed the agreement-in-principle and we are just sort of organizing ourselves in our jurisdictions to start the negotiations, that is an issue that will have to be resolved. I would anticipate there would be possibly some type of period of time to allow for those types of loose ends or oversights. At this point, I am not in a position to speak specifically what the final detail will be on that very specific issue that the Member has raised. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** Mr. Chairman, thanks to the Minister for that. It is good to hear that it is going to be considered. I hope that doesn't fall off the table, because it is entirely possible we will discover sites long after we have signed a devolution agreement.

My last question has to do with security. We have recently amended the Commissioner's Land Act to require security for developments. Can the Minister comment on the likelihood in the future that we will have a development without asking for that kind of security and without asking a company to put up security for cleanup costs at the end of the life of the project? Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Chairman, that strikes me as what I would call a hypothetical question of the highest category. Can I anticipate when we would not ask for security or some type of bond I believe the Member has asked? I am here to say it would be very expected of me to say whether I could or not. I would anticipate that we are going to be making sure for every development that we protect the interests of the people of the Northwest Territories. We have all the protections that the system allows us to do that. Thank you.

**MS. BISARO:** Mr. Chairman, thanks to the Minister. That is the answer that I wanted. I wasn't expecting details, but I am really glad to know it is the position of the Minister and presumably this government that, yes, we are going to do all we can to protect our residents and our Territory from harmful effects and financial costs, too, in terms of cleaning up the environment. That is just a comment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Committee, once again, we're on page 13-17, Environment and Natural Resources, activity summary, environment, operations expenditures summary, \$8.662 million. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Moving on, page 13-18, Environment and Natural Resources, activity summary, environment, grants and contributions, contributions, \$4.184 million. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Committee, page 13-19, Environment and Natural Resources, information item, environment, active positions. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Page 13-21, Environment and Natural Resources, activity summary, forest management, operations expenditures summary, \$28.439 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, committee. Moving on, page 13-22, Environment and Natural Resources, activity summary, forest management, grants and contributions, grants, total grants, \$100,000. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Sorry; Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to ask, have we been fairly active with our forest fire damage compensation? Have we been giving it to people applying for that compensation?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Mr. Bohnet.

**MR. BOHNET:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we are. Anytime we get the request for the disaster compensation, fire compensation, it's actioned and there's a process for most of them naturally, if it's from a forest fire or approved in that there. We usually receive them late in the year. By the time the work's done, for example, for this fiscal year we received two last week and they're being processed, they have been approved. So, yes, Mr. Chairman, our level of accuracy is quite good.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you. I certainly know that the people probably appreciate this in our budget

here. Have there also been indications where fire damage into harvesters area, a trapline area or harvesters where moose, caribou, berry picking, in plants that there are other ways to compensate people if their area has been burnt out in terms of trappers in that area? Is that something that ENR works closely with ITI in handling situations that may be quite complex?

**MR. BOHNET:** The issue raised by the Member is one of the areas that's been addressed in the program review of the Fire Management Program. There's a number of different items in there, but that was one of the things we've recognized, that certain other values that have to be considered on the land that affect trappers, harvesters, any number of people and that program review, as the Minister indicated, will be coming before standing committee and through the system over the next few months. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** So in a few months I certainly hope we have a lively debate on this program review in terms of this issue. Hopefully we'll formulate a new policy in terms of the harvesters and the land and area that we're talking about that we'd see it before the end of the life of this government. If this has been an issue in the past, I can only imagine the departments have been working quite creatively to put this compensation to test in terms of working with the harvesters on areas that have been damaged by forest fires. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the deputy indicated, as we conclude the reviews the intent is to take it through the process to committee and when there is agreed to recommendations, then we'll look at the policies being adjusted to reflect whatever changes are finally agreed to. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Minister. Once again, committee, page 13-22, Environment and Natural Resources, activity summary, forest management, grants and contributions, grants, total grants, \$100,000. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Contributions, total contributions, \$30,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Total grants and contributions, \$130,000. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, committee. Page 13-23, Environment and Natural Resources, information item, forest management, active positions. Agreed? Mr. Yakeleya.



**MR. YAKELEYA:** I want to state again the wishes of the elders from Colville Lake on the caribou. I heard the Minister talk about the collars on the caribou. It disturbs them quite considerably. How do we monitor our wildlife?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. That's coming up very shortly on the next page, I believe. So let's just conclude this page 13-23, Environment and Natural Resources, information item, forest management, active positions. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, committee. We're on page 13-25, and I'll start with Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The concerns again brought to me by the elders of the community of Colville Lake, they've stated to me many times they're concerned about wildlife technicians, biologists using the collars to monitor the movements of caribou, especially the ones that we use in the Sahtu, Bluenose-East and Bluenose-West, and that the feeling that their method of traditional knowledge is not taken very seriously as the aircraft and collars are used on caribou to give credence and evidence to the scientific papers on caribou. There is some value to it. Again, it rubs against the respect for the animals and by having collars on these animals they feel that it's going against the laws of animals in the culture of the Colville Lake people. So I want to state for the record that as much as the department is telling us the value of caribou and the value of putting collars on animals, there are some elders there that are very saddened that we're using this technique and that they should be using traditional knowledge and best practice in terms of monitoring. I'm not too sure if that will ever be discontinued as there are a lot of biologists and technicians that swear to God that collars are probably the best thing for monitoring or managing animals. I'm just stating very clearly that people in Colville Lake are not too happy and they don't agree with it. They've asked me, again, to bring it to the government's attention and they can have some more discussions if they want. However, I want to state that for the record.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Member for making this clear on the record. We are very sensitive to the concern about how we work with the animals, how we do it. I point out that traditional knowledge and western science in this case I believe have to be compatible and we want the best all-around knowledge that we can get. We'll make note of the fact that the Member has raised concerns on behalf of his constituents. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you Mr. Minister. Anything further, Mr. Yakeleya? I will go next on my list to Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regards to the Wildlife Act, I know that the caribou issue has been very controversial, in some cases it has had an impact on harvesters, especially Aboriginal harvesters in regards to how they have either been dealt with through, I wouldn't say the courts, but also in regards to being written up and taking their guns away and whatnot, especially with the Porcupine caribou and everybody was pretty clear that the Aboriginal community was saying that there was more caribou out there than what they counted and yet people were prosecuted and people were tarred. But yet now with the numbers that the last count clearly illustrates what the people were telling you in regards to the caribou count wasn't exactly accurate and we were underestimating those numbers because you haven't done a count. I think the last time we did a count was 2001, which is almost 10 years ago. I think because of that, people now have criminal records, because of how this issue was managed. I would just like to ask the Minister, exactly what are we going to do to remedy the situation. Do we have those individuals that basically have been written up, have their charges waived, or in some cases totally wiped off the record? Individuals now have a criminal record and in some cases, that basically because of that, they have been written up and it is on the record. I would just like to know, are we looking at the possibility of having a clean slate when it comes to people that were charged improperly knowing that the numbers they were estimating weren't accurate. If anything, the numbers... Again, this was a volunteer activity that was being carried out as far as to shooting bulls and whatnot, but yet people have been prosecuted, people have records in relation to the regulations, so I am just wondering what are we going to do to remedy that situation.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not aware of any specific charges that were laid on the Northwest Territories side. I know that if there were issues they tended to be on the Yukon side of the border. For us, basically, it is a good news story that there was in fact, that the numbers weren't as bad as predicted, the numbers that the Northwest Territories subscribed to, in terms of estimates, were considerably higher than those that were contemplated and put forward by the Yukon government. Our numbers were much more consistent with the Porcupine Caribou Management Board, but there are no plans at this point to go back. Decisions were made on the best information

of the day and the rules were enforced on that basis. Thank you.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Again, if you are charging somebody on the basis of conservation and you find out that the issue wasn't really conservation and you have charged somebody and you find out that the issue of conservation wasn't the factor, the factor was that it was an undercount by way of the lack of or amount of time it took to count the species that is in question, in regards to using conservation as the reason to charge people. Now you find out that the herd is way over or a lot healthier than you basically used the situation of going out there and saying we are down to two caribou. You can't shoot one because if you do that there is only one left over and we have a healthy herd in regards to the Porcupine caribou herd, but yet people have been charged for a simple thing as going hunting and shooting a cow caribou, because it was a voluntary order in order to shoot bulls. Any Aboriginal person in their right mind will tell you, you do not shoot bulls in the fall time when they are rutting and yet that is when you expect people to be shooting bulls. Traditionally you don't shoot bulls when they are rutting, traditionally you shoot the cows, you leave the bulls so that they basically can rut and you can't eat the meat when they are rutting anyhow. Things like that that traditional knowledge would have brought you, which people were telling you that in the first place, but again it just does not meet reason or mind. So, I will ask again, I know that the Minister said sorry because the charges were laid, the charges were laid with bad information and people are now carrying criminal records or have been charged and basically have a record on file that is going to affect them for the rest of their lives.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** While I appreciate the Member's concern, with the benefit of hindsight we know now that the numbers were not as low as were contemplated at the time that these actions were taken, so I don't see a way to look back and rewrite history. I take the Member's concern. I guess the only other offer I could make to the Member is if he has specific instances that he wants to share, not in this forum, but if he wants to, we can have a discussion further about any individuals where there may be extenuating circumstances. But as a general rule and practice, I mean, that was then, this is now, now that we have the right information, up-to-date information, things will be adjusted accordingly. But we were operating under precautionary principles at the time and took the steps that were deemed appropriate and necessary by all the parties. Thank you.

**MR. KRUTKO:** I would like to thank the Minister for that and I will be discussing with him further on that issue. Again, I think that, like anything else in the criminal justice system, there is an appeal process and I think that in this case there should be some

sort of an appeal process to remedy the situation, because it is no fault of either party. I think that if there is a way we can avoid people having records and avoid them from losing a livelihood simply because they were doing something that they did normally, and basically traditionally, and now they find themselves that they are being written up because of an instance that happened under the assumption that it is conservation that was the issue.

Just in regards to the issue of the Wildlife Act, I know that there has been a lot of hap and holler out there and I think that we have to be realistic, you know. You can pull out the old Wildlife Act, we had group trapping registered areas, we had game preserves in the Northwest Territories, and basically we are off bounds for hunting for a lot of people. People had registered trapping areas in the Mackenzie Delta right up until the late 1960s and people still recognize those registered group trapping areas. Same as the Yukon, they have registered trapping areas. I think that people assume that there have never been regulations or enforcement tools in place and those things were in place prior to the coming into force of treaties. I mean, a lot of these things were established under modern day treaties. Back in the late 1800s/early 1900s, which basically, Fort McPherson Game Preserve was established under a treaty obligation that there was land going to be designated between the Peel River and the Arctic Red River which only treaty Indians were able to trap and hunt it. So I think that nowadays the notion that people out there are making the comparison that Aboriginal people don't have hunting rights, or basically they have too much hunting rights, back then people had to acquire a licence to trap, just like anything else today, people require a licence to hunt, people require a fishing licence to go fishing, these are processes that have been around for over a hundred years but everybody and their dog that seems to be out there. I was reading the newspaper, there was a full-page ad there, and it makes it sound like we are living in the cave age for the last hundred years and only now we are starting to talk about this issue. This issue has been around just as long as the Northwest Territories, the Yukon or the Dominion of Canada was brought into Confederation, so I think that we have to do a better job of responding to these people out there that make it sound that we basically sound like we have no regimes in place to deal with managing wildlife in the Northwest Territories. Again, I'd like to ask the Minister exactly what are we doing. Maybe we should post the old Wildlife Act going back when it first came into force, which showed that we had areas that were specially designated management areas, such as the Peel River Game Reserve or the reserve that's established between Fort Providence and Great Slave Lake. These areas were there for

a purpose: to protect the Aboriginal trappers and hunters from the non-Aboriginal trappers and hunters who moved up here during the early 1900s in regard to when the depression was on. I think that we've got to be realistic.

I would just like to ask the Minister exactly what are we doing to respond to some of these outrageous accusations that are flying around in the newspapers, and more importantly, when are we going to get the facts out there so people can realistically read for themselves on some history of the Northwest Territories when it comes to wildlife management.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** As I've indicated in the House, we've undergone an extensive period of consultation across the North and all the communities with many groups and individuals. As I indicated to the Member, the intention is that if all goes according to plan, that we will give notice of motion on March 7<sup>th</sup> for a first reading of the Wildlife Act. We'll take the process time and then we'll go for first and second reading on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, I believe. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Committee, we're on page 13-25, Environment and Natural Resources, activity summary, wildlife. Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I just have a few questions before we move on. I just want to ask the Minister has his department been keeping a close working relationship with our health department on the fish monitoring situation in the lakes in the north. I know there was an issue that was brought up some time ago with the mercury in our lakes, and the health board and the Sahtu Renewable Resource were looking at closely monitoring those lakes. When I was in Tulita just after Christmas, the Sahtu Renewable Resource Council president had some people coming in from down south to look at these lakes and monitor them. I want to thank the department for keeping close monitoring. That caused a lot of concern for my constituents and probably other constituents in the north that eat fish. Is this something that a report will come forward and we would look at some of the recommendations in the reports as to what's causing the mercury to go up in our fish up in the Sahtu?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That issue will remain within the purview of the Department of Fisheries. We will be there, as ENR, because it's related to what we do, but the authority and mandate would be with the Department of Fisheries. As well, our own public health people will be monitoring the outcome, as well, to determine if they have a role to play depending on what the findings are. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I also look forward to the Minister working with the federal minister or the federal government with the fish up in Fort Good Hope. I know there was some concern in Fort Good Hope as to the quality of their fish. I heard also in Tulita from a gentleman who lives in Fort Resolution, that he talked about the fish in the Great Slave Lake and some of the fish that they were catching weren't quite healthy. The first time that this gentleman, and he's an older gentleman and he could be considered an elder, but the quality of the fish that they caught, they didn't look quite right.

I want to know if that indication as to the quality of the fish in the future that we're going to have in the North here, and if the Minister is looking at some fish monitoring stations along the Mackenzie River. I know in the mouth of the Mackenzie there were also considerations about the questions about the quality of fish in the mouth. I guess that might just be down the Mackenzie River there. Fish monitoring is very important. As I indicated yesterday to the Minister in our oral questions, the importance of the fish and the role of this government, the role of this department working with the federal government to look and be responsible for some of the things that might be happening to our fish on the Mackenzie or within the lakes, to take care of them, that's a concern. I'm not too sure there's a question in there. It's also a statement that I'd like to make.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** As we proceed with the implementation of our Water Strategy, as we proceed with the work with the federal government about monitoring, and as we proceed with the discussions about taking over more authorities for land and water and resource development, those are the types of efforts we're going to have to make. That we're going to have to, as well, rely, and the Member talked about traditional knowledge, the people that are the users of the land and the water and the fish, and ENR will have a clear role to play, because have people on the ground in almost every community that can work with communities and the users, the fishers, the hunters and the trappers, and we can be that connection point to make sure that we work closely with the federal government and the Fisheries folks and Environment Canada as we both do the monitoring and try to backtrack, to make sure we want to know that the water is in as pure a state as possible and if it isn't, how do we fix it. Those are going to be our challenges going forward. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Mr. Chair, I bring this up because in the activity description on 13-24 it talks about wildlife health studies. I just wanted to make the importance of fish studies in my regions, in my communities.

Mr. Chair, at one time in my life I did fish studies on the Mackenzie River and we were catching Arctic ciscoes. When we caught the Arctic ciscoes, there's a little tag on the fish. When we were doing the studies we would take these little tags and then send them out to Vancouver for analysis and when they get the reports back these little tags on these little Arctic ciscoes, they were tagged in Prudhoe Bay, Alaska, and we were catching them right across from Tulita. When we found out that they were tagged in Prudhoe Bay, Alaska, but the fish were also spawning a month earlier. So it tells us change was coming down and people, I guess the elders knew. They knew that change would be coming. They were giving us warning. That's why I want to ask the Minister, in terms of the wildlife health studies, that these are warnings and we're being told and I'm hoping that he will put together a comprehensive plan to look at the monitoring of fish. As the elders said, the waters are getting warmer, the fish are getting softer, and there are indications that some of our fish are not healthy. A lot of these elders and my people, they love fish. A lot of them say they live on fish and love, because that's what their main diet is. That's why I raise this concern. I think the department has heard me and I just wanted to make sure that we look at the fish right down the valley to right through our whole region right up to the Beaufort Sea. Thank you.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Chairman, we have heard the Member's concern. I have noted it and we will be considering that as we do the work in the coming months. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Minister. Committee, once again we are on page 13-25, Environment and Natural Resources, activity summary, wildlife, operations expenditure summary, \$15.274 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you. We are on page 13-26, Environment and Natural Resources, activity summary, wildlife, grants and contributions, contributions, \$1.069 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you. We are on page 13-27, Environment and Natural Resources, information item, wildlife, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you. We are on page 13-29. Mr. Abernethy.

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This has already been summed up earlier today about the NWT Water Stewardship Strategy. I think the department has a lot done, a really fantastic job, and so far a lot of really good work. I have attended some presentations on it. I am quite happy with what I have seen so far in the department moving

forward, but I am concerned about the water flowing into the Northwest Territories.

I recently have read a report by an independent scientist who studied the Slave River downriver from the oil sands project. It pretty much indicated that there were significant amounts of pollution in the water. It is all part of the Mackenzie Basin. We are all part of the Mackenzie Basin. It is great that we are doing such a wonderful job on our Water Stewardship Strategy, but how are we going to make the upriver provinces respect the water? What hammer or what mechanisms are going to exist as strategy that will be enforceable so that we don't have to have the concerns about the water that we do now? You have heard Mr. Yakeleya talk about the water and some of the changes they are seeing already. I don't know if those are a result of what is going on upstream, but they could be. Clearly the water coming down the river has some pollution in it. What mechanisms are we going to see and hear, if any, that are going to help us have some confidence that our water is safe and protected?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Chairman, we as a jurisdiction have been getting our thinking clear and our pieces and strategy in place to deal with water issues. There are a number of things that are happening. As I indicated earlier, we are now fully engaged in our transboundary processes with Alberta, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, laying out the negotiation process, the fact that we would like to have and we intend... we all want legally binding agreements that are going to speak to the broad areas of quality and quantity which, when you look at them in their individual detail, they are very complex issues tying in with groundwater and air, pollution issues.

The other big thing that I know is working in our favour is that the federal government recently, after a number of reports, the most recent one by Dr. Schindler and Dr. Erin Kelly that prove beyond a shadow of any kind of reasonable doubt that there were significant issues related to the oil sands, such to the degree that the federal government, Mr. Barrett -- I believe. I think it started initially with Minister Prentice -- Minister Barrett picked it up and they committed to a 90-day process, which is currently underway, to set up a monitoring what they have characterized as a world-class monitoring system for this part of the country for the downstream jurisdictions and areas of northern Alberta and, of course, the Northwest Territories. We met with Minister Kent. We made the case that it has to have as broad a scope as possible. They can't narrow it down so narrow that it doesn't do the job. We have the benefit of having Dr. Kelly on this board. We also have the benefit the jurisdictions

ready to go. We have these pieces in place and we are moving as fast as we can, and the money we have in the budget is going to allow us to move forward to hopefully conclude these transboundary agreements, but we will always have to continue to be vigilant.

The downstream agreements are only going to be as strong as the quality of the monitoring and information that we get that assures us that we are being protected and that the conditions of the agreement are being met. Thank you.

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Mr. Chairman, thank you for that. Once again, I appreciate all the work that you and your department are doing on this, as many are fond to say, water is life. With respect to the monitoring, what are the feds doing and will we have easy and accessible sort of access to the information that is coming out of that? In particular, where is most of the monitoring taking place? Is it immediately downstream of where the oil sands are located? Is it further downstream? Is there any monitoring going on this side of the NWT/Alberta border that will give us some warning about what is on its way just in case there is anything we can do to stop it from getting into the main part of the basin in the Great Slave Lake and the Mackenzie River? Where is the monitoring taking place? Do we have access to the information from it?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Chairman, currently if you looked at a map from northern Alberta all the way down to the Arctic, in the NWT I think in the neighbourhood of about 148 different types of monitoring is going on. One of the challenges and problems is that it is often very disconnected, that companies are doing it. Some government agencies are doing it. Other government agencies are doing it. Different levels of government are doing it.

The other question and the big concern around the oil sands is: was it the right kind of monitoring? Were we testing for the right things in all of these exotic substances like naphthenic acids and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and those types of chemicals and substances that are very specific to that particular industrial activity? The design that the federal government is working on is going to have to capture that. We are going to be involved. We have somebody at the table. We are involved in that. We indicated to Minister Kent that, while we appreciated that, we want to be fully involved. We need to have the bilaterals done. We also made the case that if they want this to be really effective, they should have some Aboriginal representation on that board, as well, which has been one of the downsides to the process to date.

Those pieces are being put in place. Our challenge is going to be to make sure that what is being put in place is going to meet those needs. At the same time, we have to, and we are at work at this, trying

to better coordinate the significant amount of monitoring that is already done. That information often goes to different places and there is no one collection area clearinghouse of information. We have our own work to do with the systems we do have as well. Thank you.

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Mr. Chairman, clearly there is a significant number of challenges in that area. I am intrigued. You talked about basically hundreds of places they are doing assessments of the water. It is difficult to pull them together. Is that actually part of the fed's plan, is to pull together the data from all of those different individuals or groups or organizations or companies, pulling together the data? Are they only going to be compiling the data they collect themselves? The reason I ask is, if they are not, why would we wait for somebody else to compile it? Is there not an opportunity for us, if the feds aren't doing it, to compile some kind of information and create our own sort of data base or one-stop shop for where all this information lies so that we can be comfortable that we have an idea of the status and quality of our water? Obviously, I would rather the feds do it, quite frankly. If they are not, the data is out there. Can it be pulled together from all of those sources so that we have a real clear vision of our water quality in the North?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Mr. Chairman, that is one of our goals coming out of our water strategies, to have the best information possible. Our challenge is to continue to work with this since this is still an area of shared jurisdiction and we will continue to be even after we take over authority, is to work with Environment Canada and DFO to make sure that we do coordinate that the system as efficiently and tightly as possible. The federal government, Environment Canada, is looking at, most immediately, in terms of putting in the proper monitoring that does not now exist for the oil sands development. At the same time, they know as well as we do that there are all these other sites out there that have a beneficial function to play.

So there's going to be an action plan coming out of this. How do we do this? In 90 days they aren't going to be able to create a whole system in its entirety. I don't think they are going to be able to get the key elements in place. We are going to have to be working with them to make sure that it doesn't stop after 90 days. Thank you.

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Just in closing, I appreciate all the work that's been done in this area. This is one area that I think the department could push harder. If you look at our map, if our water is ruined, that affects, out of 33 communities, that immediately affects I think it's 25 of them, which are on the downriver side of the water coming down that river. So 25, I think. I can recheck but 25 communities will be immediately affected if the quality of the water changes. So this is obviously something that's

important to us in our future, to all the people, and please push. Please push hard on this one. Please make some progress. Please make sure it's as binding as possible and get the feds to do whatever they can to protect our water.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Just a comment there. All this talk of caribou and pristine water has heightened my appetite for supper. So I think what we'll do is we'll have Mr. Yakeleya up right after the break, but let's take a break and have supper.

---SHORT RECESS

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, I'd like to call committee back to order and once again we're on page 13-29, Environment and Natural Resources, activity summary, land and water, and we had Mr. Yakeleya up next. Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** That was a good meal, Mr. Chair. I want to just ask three questions of the Minister. I'm very pleased the Minister said the Aboriginal communities are going to be involved with some of the design and the monitoring with the federal government and our government. I wanted to ask the Minister if an emphasis on traditional knowledge would be included with the design of some of the monitoring. There's some information that people have on the Mackenzie that's very valuable, especially with some of the elders that we have along the Mackenzie River to look at this aspect of the monitoring. That will be my first question.

My second question would be I think one of the Members talked about a clearing house where all the different agencies and boards would put their information together. We notice that in Norman Wells with the oil fields in the middle of the Mackenzie situated on the islands that there's different agencies monitoring the Mackenzie River and that there's Imperial Oil, there's the federal government and territorial government and other agencies that are monitoring the quality of water, hence you have the issue with Fort Good Hope fish and people living down that river that could be in harm's way. This has to stop and that they have one central clearing house for all the information that could be accessed by the communities and ourselves to keep an eye on the quality of water and the monitoring.

My last question to the Minister is to strengthen the Mackenzie River, as Mr. Abernethy has said, the majority of communities that would be greatly affected should something drastic happen on the Mackenzie, would we give more strength to the Mackenzie River if we had some type of designation to the river? For example, a heritage river designation, a certain framework of the heritage that there would be certain monitoring, certain responsibility by the federal government to keep a closer eye on the Mackenzie River. Right now we don't have that. We're relying on our river

to be in good shape and we're relying on the industry to tell us that harmful chemicals are not going to be polluting our rivers, and we're relying on a lot of good faith of governments to tell us that our rivers are okay. We don't have anything concrete enough to say that our Mackenzie River has to follow certain guidelines. I'm hoping that with the information we gather in the monitoring that maybe we would step it up. I'm not too sure how soon that would be implemented. The Minister talked about the quality of water that we could get in terms of monitoring. That would give us our stronger points to negotiate a stronger transboundary agreement. We've been at that for a bit of time and we are still, as we speak right now, there is still stuff going into our rivers. Every day that we sit here there are still chemicals and other pollutants going into our rivers that we're not sure of. So I wanted to raise these points with the Minister.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The first question, just so it's clear, Minister Bob McLeod and I had supper with Minister Kent and we raised the issue with the monitoring program, encouraging him to have Aboriginal representation on the board for it to be truly representative and successful, and we made the case. The Premier initially was there, but we made that case and that's where we left that one.

The clearing house of information, we've talked about that. That's one of our goals going out of the Water Strategy over time, is to be able to connect and make sure that we're coordinated in terms of the gathering of the information and having it accessible. The heritage river has been looked at in the past and there has not been unanimity in proceeding with that initiative. There was some support on parts of the river, no support in others and we have to be very careful and look very closely at what that would mean if the whole river was in fact designated a heritage river. So there has been work done on that in the past, but there's nothing current on our to-do list with that issue. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Minister. Thank you for those comments. Next on my list I have Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just have a question in regard to contract services at \$848,000. Could you give us an idea of what that's for, contract services? Is that consultants?

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. I'll turn to Ms. Magrum for that.

**MS. MAGRUM:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The funding for land and water is mostly strategic initiative funding. So it would be around the strategic initiatives under land and water for 2011-12.

There's new funding for that and there was actually more new funding in '10-11 under land and water related to the Water Strategy, watershed decision-making tool support. So these would be for contracts related to those initiatives. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**MR. KRUTKO:** This issue has come up in other departments and also on the previous page. I was going to ask a question earlier, but again, in order to depend so heavily on contract services, is that because you don't have the internal capacity to carry out this responsibility or because the groups that you require that information from bring a special type of knowledge to the table, which we don't have? I know that has come up with other departments. It seems like we're either using a lot of contract services and contracting a lot of stuff that could be done internally. So I'd just like to ask what's the purpose of that line item.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As we initiated and charted off with the Water Strategy, we had extensive contract assistance. It was a very highly specialized area. We had all very, very limited water expertise in the department. Over the last year there's been a diminishment in the contract levels, especially as it pertains to water. We've now had the benefit of getting some resources to set up our own land and water unit. We've been able to hire people of the calibre of Dr. Kelly. We still rely on specialized services periodically.

On the forestry side, of course, we make extensive use of contracts with fire crews. We make extensive use of contracts with planes. Some of the caribou work we do there's only two planes in North America that do that, that kind of take pictures and be able to count all the caribou. There are a number of areas where there's highly specialized areas. We've been working hard to cut back on our level of contracting now that we actually have the strategy in place.

**MR. KRUTKO:** In regard to the area of land and water, more importantly water, because of the Mackenzie watershed and the tributaries of one end of the Northwest Territories either through the Yukon, Alberta, B.C., Saskatchewan. I think we do have to realize, did we notify the federal government or the Alberta government when the federal government made the announcement that they were going to formulate a review committee to look at the whole area of water resources that flow through the Fort McMurray area? Did we recommend or consider the option of having someone there or consider appointing someone of our liking to that tribunal whether it's a federal tribunal or whatnot?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** That was a federal announcement based on the result of the findings of a panel that looked at the work and there were some current studies like the one done by Dr. Schindler and Dr. Kelly. A panel came out and said that there were significant gaps in the role the federal government was supposed to be fulfilling. They announced that they were going to set up this monitoring. They announced they were going to set up a panel to oversee that. We do have, as I indicated, the benefit of having one of our staff on there, Dr. Kelly, who is sitting on that panel.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Thank you, committee. Page 13-29, Environment and Natural Resources. Mr. Krutko. Sorry, I cut you off there.

**MR. KRUTKO:** That's okay. I'm used to that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, because I think we do have some legal standing when it comes to the agreements we have with the Mackenzie basin watershed agreements and the other jurisdictions. I think we also have to, I know Mr. Yakeleya raised this question about water rights and whatnot. I think under the land claims agreement and treaty and rights in Canada, Aboriginal First Nations people do have rights to water, regardless of quality, quantity, rate of flow. It's in the modern day treaties and is recognized internationally that they do have rights to water. I think, if anything, that's something that we should be working on to maybe use that as an argument going forward.

I think people up and down the valley and even the Mackenzie Delta, we are concerned about what's happened with McMurray. If you ever have a breach in one of the major dykes there, you're talking about polluting the whole Mackenzie basin. If you ever have a breach of one of the large tar ponds in McMurray. I think we have to be realistic that chances of that happening might be one chance in a thousand or one chance in a million, but the chance is there. I think we have to be cognizant of that and we have to be prepared for that.

I'd just like to ask the Minister if we have ever looked at the possibility of not only working with the federal government but also looking at the international court or the United Nations and using the UN declaration or looking at the possibility of the rights of the indigenous peoples that was just signed off. If we use those tools as arguments that we can use. I know we can't force people to come to the table and sign these bilateral agreements with us, but we have to realize that we are... Anything that happens upstream we're the ones that are going to be affected the greatest because we're at the headwaters. We're downstream of all these resource developments in the southern jurisdictions. Have we considered those as alternatives?

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** We deliberately called the Water Strategy Northern Voices for Northern Waters because we know it's of interest and of great concern to all Northerners. We know that there's a strong natural alliance with the territorial government and the Aboriginal governments as we work collectively together to protect our interests and ensure that we have these agreements, these legally binding transboundary agreements.

The Mackenzie River Basin Act has given us a vehicle to move forward on that. All the other jurisdictions have indicated willingness. We intend to continue on a going forward basis the strong relationship with the Aboriginal governments in the North as we go to the table to negotiate the bilateral agreements. We believe that we will be successful using that process. These are all steps we would first take before we would even contemplate something like the Member is talking about. We also know that there are, across the country, untested areas of what treaties and land claims mean legally when they talk about the water issues and protection of waters and what does that mean.

For ourselves going forward, we're working on a good-faith basis with the other jurisdictions and we've been successful to this point, and we anticipate, though there may be frank and forthright discussions, that at the end of the day we will get the agreements that everybody knows we need.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Again, last year I asked the question that I'm going to ask again. We requested having a water conference. I know there was a conference in Fort Simpson and Fort Good Hope and I know I requested a conference for the Peel River watershed. Could you give me an update of where we're at with that? I think time might be running out here so I think we have to get that off the ground. There is in conjunction with what's happening in the Peel River watershed with the Yukon coming to some arrangement that they're going to try to have the arrangement agreed to the land use planning for the Peel River watershed agreed to by October. I think it falls right in line with the establishment. The Yukon is the only area we have a bilateral agreement with. I think this is a perfect opportunity to formulate that agreement and really use it as a tool to deal with the other watersheds we have, whether it's the Liard watershed or the Slade watershed or other watersheds in the Northwest Territories. I'd just like to know what the status of that conference is and where we are with the Yukon bilateral, and also maybe consider the Peel River watershed as the area we can really focus on in trying to conclude a bilateral agreement on the Peel River watershed.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** The Gwich'in Tribal Council and ENR jointly put on a conference last week. The focus was the Mackenzie and the

Peel. The work is proceeding on the bilateral that we have with the Yukon. We've been in contact with the Yukon Minister to indicate we think it's time to review that. It was the first one done. It was done under the aegis of the initial signing of the transboundary agreement where they're not legally binding, they're just instruments of good will. We now know that we've come to the point where we all need legally binding agreements. So we're going to have to be revisiting that over the coming months with the Yukon.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Miltenberger. Page 13-29, Environment and Natural Resources, activity summary, land and water, operations expenditure summary, \$4.123 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Page 13-30, Environment and Natural Resources, activity summary, land and water, grants and contributions, contributions, \$265,000.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Page 13-31, Environment and Natural Resources, activity summary, information item, land and water, active positions.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Page 13-32, Environment and Natural Resources, information item, lease commitments – infrastructure.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Page 13-33, Environment and Natural Resources, information item, Environment Fund. Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I have an issue on this one here with the recycling program. I have a concern from a constituent in the Sahtu that talks about the recycling program and the consumer is specifically in Tulita. For the past several months, there was nowhere in Tulita to return the recyclables and they are paying for the environmental fee, environmental fee upon purchases and that they are paying recycling fees and there is nowhere to get their portion of it refunded. They want to ask the department to see if they can help open up a recycling depot to help the people out. This constituent feels so strongly about that that they are asking the department to instruct the Northern Store to stop charging the fees upon purchase of these recyclable items or let the people know that this is disrespecting the people in the process. Something has got to give, so I look forward to the Minister's leadership to deal with this issue and see how we could satisfy the consumers where there is no recyclable depots that can open and to location within the community within a short time frame. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.



**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Minister Miltenberger.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The intent is to have an inspection and folks go in, in the next few weeks to sit down with the community to see what options are available. The current arrangement is having its trials and tribulations and we want to make sure that we have a suitable location. We also have a full sea can that is almost full that is going to be hauled out over the winter road. So we appreciate the Member raising this issue with us and we hopefully will have it resolved in the next few weeks. Thank you.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Sometime in the first week in March, I would hope that I would follow up with the community of Tulita to see if this issue has been resolved and that people in Tulita can go to a depot and get a refund. I certainly hope that there are some alternatives in place. The Northern Store is charging fees that we, in the community of Tulita, are paying extra fees and there doesn't seem to be any support mechanisms to help them out with these extra fees. So I would leave it in the good hands of the Minister that he has stated that in a couple of weeks, hopefully, these options can be sorted out and the community can go to a depot that will have these refunds looked after, so I will take the Minister's word on this day here and I will check in two weeks from now.

**HON. MICHAEL MILTENBERGER:** We will make every effort to have it done as soon as possible within March, but in March it will be done.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** I again take the word of the Minister. In March I dare to ask him which day in March, so, I hope the Minister is going to follow through strong with his department. Hopefully before the closing of the winter road so I will leave it in his good hands. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Next on my list I have Ms. Bisaro.

**MS. BISARO:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think my colleague should have asked the Minister if he was going to get his answer in the fullness of time, hopefully sooner than that. I do have a question with regards to recycling and the deposit that is paid on milk containers. This has been brought up before and I would like to ask again, whether or not, I guess maybe not whether or not but when the Minister will agree with a full refund of the deposit on milk containers to try and keep the price of milk as low as possible. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Ms. Bisaro. Mr. Bohnet.

**MR. BOHNET:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department is looking at that as part of its overall review of its program.

**MS. BISARO:** Thanks to Mr. Bohnet. I guess my next question then, would be, and maybe I missed the answer already, but when is this review going to be done and when might we see the results of it? Thank you.

**MR. BOHNET:** Probably by July. We are making every effort to have it completed by July, Mr. Chairman.

**MS. BISARO:** I hope that is July of this year. Maybe I could get that clarified.

**MR. BOHNET:** Yes, July of this year.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Committee, we are on page 13-33, Environment and Natural Resources, Environment Fund. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, committee. Page 13-34, Environment and Natural Resources, information item, work performed on behalf of others. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, committee. Page 13-35, Environment and Natural Resources, information item, work performed on behalf of others, continued. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, committee. Page 13-37, Environment and Natural Resources, information item, work performed on behalf of others, continued. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, committee. Page 13-38, Environment and Natural Resources, information item, work performed on behalf of others, continued. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, committee. I will ask you to turn back to page 13-7, the summary, Environment and Natural Resources, department summary, operations and expenditures summary, \$67.493 million. Agreed?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, committee. Does committee agree that this concludes the Department of Environment and Natural Resources?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you. I would like to thank the Minister and his witnesses and ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort the witnesses from the House. Next up we have the Department of Transportation. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you. I will ask the Minister if he wishes to make opening comments.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman and Committee of the Whole, I would like to present for your review the Department of Transportation's main estimates for 2011-12.

The main estimates before you detail the funding requirements to carry out the plans outlined within the department's 2011-12 business plan. This plan will ensure the protection and enhancement of the Territory's transportation infrastructure and supports our primary mission of proving for the safe, secure, accessible and reliable movement of people and goods, while looking towards the future at the needs of individuals and businesses.

For 2011-12, we are proposing an operating budget of \$110.7 million, including amortization. This is a 6 percent increase over the 2010-11 main estimates. In addition, as approved in the fall session, we plan to deliver an additional \$62.7 million in capital investments in 2011-12.

The most significant change to the O and M budget is forced growth. Funding increases of approximately \$5 million are included in the budget to cover Collective Agreement changes, increases to highway maintenance contracts, winter road contracts, information technology system maintenance and the repatriation of vehicle registration and driver licensing services in Fort Smith and Inuvik.

The department also plans to continue to address the strategic initiatives of the 16<sup>th</sup> Assembly. Under the Reducing the Cost of Living initiative, we have proposed a number of new projects focused on strengthening our connections with smaller communities. These new activities are in addition to many activities already underway, including ice crossing acceleration on the Dempster Highway and the expanded Community Access Program. The proposed new initiatives in 2011-12 include:

- \$170,000 to extend ferry operations on the Dempster Highway at both the Peel River and the Arctic Red River crossings. This will improve access to Fort McPherson, Tsiigehtchic and Inuvik in the early winter period, while the ice crossings are being constructed; and
- \$250,000 to accelerate ice crossing construction at Tulita, and on Great Bear Lake near Deline, which will enable the ice crossings to reach full strength sooner. Additional funding is also available for watering at select locations of the winter road to provide a more durable road surface.

The department has made significant progress on the planning for the Mackenzie Valley Highway from Wrigley to Tuktoyaktuk. The highway has

been a priority in departmental plans for decades and is a priority of this Assembly. In the past year the department completed the project description report for the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk portion of the highway. This project is currently within the regulatory process and the environmental impact statement will be submitted very shortly.

For the portion of the highway between Wrigley and the Dempster Highway, we are working with Aboriginal groups in the Mackenzie Valley to complete the project description report. We have signed memorandums of understanding with Aboriginal groups representing the entire Mackenzie Valley and work is underway to complete the project description reports for all segments. This work will provide the necessary environmental and engineering information required to submit applications to regulators for preliminary screening of the Mackenzie Valley Highway Project.

Mr. Chairman, the 2011-12 planning cycle marks the final construction push and opening of the Deh Cho Bridge.

---Applause

Mr. Chairman, the opening of the bridge is an event we are all looking forward to. The 2011-12 main estimates begin to include the bridge's finances once it comes into operation. The main estimates before you today include \$2.772 million for interest expense and \$96,000 for community contributions related to the Deh Cho Bridge. However, they do not yet reflect the revenue or cost savings that will accrue once the bridge is in operation. The department will return in 2011-12, once the exact timing of the bridge opening is known, with a negative supplementary appropriation request to account for the savings from the ferry operation and ice crossing construction, and to report on the estimated toll revenue. The 2012-13 planning cycle, representing the first full year of bridge operation, will include the full annual expenses and revenues for the bridge.

Our team is working closely with the contractor, who is continually improving his operation and finding ways to regain time lost due to the steel fabrication delays. This contractor is making good progress with launching of the truss from the north end of the bridge. It is expected that construction materials, including the steel truss, towers and concrete deck panels, will all be on-site prior to the spring breakup. This critical milestone will facilitate the next stages of work once the river is clear of ice. We continue to plan and work towards a November 2011 completion date.

Mr. Chairman, very briefly, these are the highlights of the Department of Transportation's proposed main estimates for the 2011-2012 fiscal year. There are many other positive and exciting projects and initiatives that the department expects to accomplish. I am confident that the proposed

budget will provide for the continued safe and reliable operation of the NWT transportation system. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mahsi.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Minister. I would like to ask you if you would like to have witnesses join you in the House.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Yes, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Minister. I would like to ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to escort the witnesses into the House, if committee agrees. Does committee agree?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you. I would like to ask the Minister to please introduce your witnesses.

**HON. MICHAEL MCLEOD:** Mr. Chairman, with me today on my right I have Mr. Russell Neudorf, deputy minister of Transportation. On my left I have Mr. Daniel Auger, the assistant deputy minister of Transportation.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Minister. Welcome to the witnesses. Does committee agree that we start with general comments?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Agreed.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you. We will start with Mr. Ramsay.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have just a few comments on the Minister's opening comments. I continue to be shocked at some of the words that are coming out of the Department of Transportation pertaining to the Deh Cho Bridge. In the Minister's opening comments, he says, "However they do not yet reflect the revenue or cost savings that will accrue once the bridge is in operation." Maybe if I can at some point... I know the Minister won't respond until after all the Members have commented, but I would like the Minister to explain to me how putting over \$5 million on an annual basis in a contribution to this bridge is going to in any way save us any money. We are taking the \$2.2 million a year currently used to fund the ice crossing and the ferry operations there in Fort Providence and dumping it into the bridge. I fail to understand how we are going to be seeing any cost savings there. Also, on the revenue side, I haven't been shown any evidence that the bridge will, in fact, earn any revenue. In the last piece of information that I received from the department, it would look like that operation of the Deh Cho Bridge is going to be running a deficit of somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$1.5 million and that is in the first year and going forward. I can't see how that bridge would turn a profit, but according to the Minister's opening comments, it looks like that might in fact be the case.

I have to say this. I appreciate the department's time, attention and energy and effort that it is

putting into trying to get the project done. I know it has been a challenge at times. It will remain to be a challenge until that bridge is open, but with all the effort that is being put into the bridge project, I hate to think that other things in the department are being left aside and needing some attention. That is always the inkling that I am left with when I look at that bridge project and all the effort that is going into it from the department's perspective.

Again, we really need to stay on top of it. It is far from over. I know the Minister is going to be meeting with committee tomorrow night. We look forward to the presentation that the department is going to be making to the committee. As well, the Auditor General's report should be coming in a couple weeks' time. I certainly look forward to reading that and seeing what that has to say.

Again, I guess I will disagree with the Minister on his assertion that the bridge is going to be open in November. I really hope it is open in November 2011, but judging by the delays that we have seen recently and the steel, I just don't understand how it is possible that we can be concluded by November and that bridge open to traffic by that date. I can't see how that can happen. I know that Ruskin is supposed to come forward with a new timeline. Perhaps that might be part of the discussion tomorrow night or at some later date. I just had to take issue with that statement that was in the Minister's opening remarks because I just don't think it is accurate. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. With the committee's tolerance, we will stick with the general comments and then ask for the Minister to give a wrap-up response. Next on my list is Mr. Abernethy.

**MR. ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the Minister for his comments. Just following up on Mr. Ramsay's comments, please get the bridge built on time and within budget. That would be fantastic.

There are some other things that I think are quite positive in here. I'm happy to see progress on the Mackenzie Valley Highway in any capacity. I think that's great news. Moving forward, obviously, it would be great if as much as possible we can involve Northerners in any construction and planning that takes place. I know that there are different groups from different communities that are very eager to be involved and I would encourage the government to, as much as possible, get them involved.

One thing that I would like to see more of, obviously, is many of our roads aren't sealed, they don't have a topcoat on them throughout the Northwest Territories and I think we need to be putting some more planning and effort and time into figuring out how we can get our highways coated with some sort of substance, a chip coat or Easy

Street or something along those lines over the coming years. In particular, I think something like finishing the Deh Cho loop in a higher quality than it is, the road from Simpson to Liard is a little on the rough side. It would open up the North to significant tourism opportunities, which would be good for all regions in the Northwest Territories, in particular the Deh Cho by way of campers and other motor traffic coming up that way. Right now I believe the Liard Highway does scare some people off, which is really unfortunate because it is an incredibly beautiful highway, it's an incredibly beautiful part of our Territory and it would be great if we had better roads in that area.

Just a couple comments. I see some good things happening here. I'd definitely like to see the bridge built on time, can't wait to drive over it in November. That will be fantastic. I'm happy about the Mackenzie Highway and wish there was a little bit more planning and progress as far as developing the Deh Cho trail. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Abernethy. Next on my list I have Mr. Jacobson.

**MR. JACOBSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's good to hear in the Minister's opening remarks in regard to the all-weather road project into Tuktoyaktuk. It's good to hear they're making progress. Also, the Mackenzie Valley Highway is a whole working towards that to finish Wrigley to Tuk. It's really needed. It will drop the cost of living in the communities for all people in the Beaufort-Delta even more.

Moving on from there, the dust suppression in communities in my riding for people with asthma, we don't have chipseal so we have to go off of gravel roads. So we tend to worry about our youth and babies in regard to dust. So I think if we could make it possible if we could help out the communities with dust suppression, it would be good.

Also, with a portable unit for the GNWT drivers licensing and I.D. I know we do have one and it doesn't make its trips into the communities as much as it should, because I'm still getting the people calling in regard to that.

I just look forward to going page-by-page with the Minister and thank you for giving me the opportunity for opening remarks. Thank you, sir.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. Next on my list I have Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I too would like to thank the Minister for his opening comments in regard to the road from Wrigley to Tuk. I think that the groups have done a lot of work and I'd like to thank the Minister. He made reference to the progress on the road from Inuvik to Tuk. I believe there has been a lot of progress from Inuvik south also, and I had an opportunity to be privy in Inuvik

to a presentation on the road from Inuvik southward and I think that they also have done a lot of work and I was pretty impressed with the report that they put together. Again, it does encompass a lot. Again, I think we have to look at it in light of the possibility of developing that infrastructure. I know people don't like to combine this project with the pipeline, but I think, if anything, if we can get this road used as the service road during the construction of the pipeline, get a bunch of that work done, put the bridges in place, it will not only speed up this process, but it will help the construction of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline and in some cases bring down the cost of building the pipeline on a service road that's useable, accessible, and more importantly, not having to stage equipment on the river systems and bring it overland in the winter months, if it's possible that we can move on that.

Again, I think that timing is everything and we realize that we do have some lag time in regard to the decision to construct a pipeline. More importantly, that this is a perfect opportunity to come forward with two major projects in the Northwest Territories and the Mackenzie Valley by the construction of the Mackenzie Valley Highway and the pipeline coming together and sharing resources on both aspects. I believe there is going to be a cost associated with the construction and providing the pipe to site and staging and everything else. If there's ways that we can show that we can save the proponents of the Mackenzie Valley pipeline money in the long run and get their support to start moving on some of this, it would very much help us speed up that process.

The other issue in regard to the Deh Cho Bridge. I too look forward to the fall official opening with bells on and hopefully we'll have something to celebrate in light of the long-term process it's taken to get us to this point.

The issue I wanted to raise, and I know I've raised it in the House before in regard to the \$170,000 in extending the ferry operation, I did raise the issue of the timing of the ferry. Right now it runs from the Peel River side or the Fort McPherson side, it leaves at nine thirty and it runs till one o'clock in the morning. I was hoping we could move that time schedule around where they operate earlier and maybe end sooner, but to get moving the people and goods to Inuvik for catching their flights south or attending meetings and functions in Inuvik so people can make their required appointments and their commitments and try to operate our ferries in the Northwest Territories under the same timelines. I know that may not be practical in all cases, but let's try to serve the public in the Northwest Territories so that they can coordinate their travel times with the operational times of our ferries so it meets their requirements, regardless of the travelling public.

So, again, Mr. Chair, those are some of the issues I wanted to throw out there and I'd like to thank the Minister for that and I look forward to his comments. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Krutko. Committee, that's all I have on my list for general comments. Mr. Hawkins.

**MR. HAWKINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As a Yellowknife MLA, in my experience I don't tend to have a ton of transportation issues in particular. But first I'll say that what dealings I have had with the department have been very good and I find them generally quite easy to deal with. So that being certainly the primary experience I've gone through over the years, I too would like to highlight the Deh Cho Bridge as a significant issue that still continues to be a matter of concern in the riding and I look forward to any further update we have, both on the quality of the project and, of course, how the financing stress plays out on our books over the long haul.

The only criticism I hear, when I say criticism I would refer to the strongest voice about the bridge and the bridge project, more has to do with the fact of getting the project done as opposed to what we've been saddled with. I think there has been a coming of a realization that by the time this government came into force that train had already left the station and it's a matter of now how do we giddy up and do this. Whether the bridge opens up on time or not in November, by and large I'll say the constituents who've come to me have said that they're more happy to hear that if the bridge takes an extra month or so just do it as opposed to any other worry. Their feelings are being carried across quite simply that if the bridge has a month delay, what do they care? It's a 100-year bridge. One month isn't going to matter on the life of the extent of the overall project. They would rather hear that quality assurance was taken over a one-month delay. Again, we're looking at the front end of the project and not realizing the length and quality of the infrastructure.

I don't tend to talk about the bridge that much. I think my colleague Mr. Ramsay speaks more than enough for most of the Assembly on his perspective. Although it's different than mine. I just think it's a legacy project that we'll look at in a few years and see it in that regard. It's a critical piece of infrastructure and if we don't build these types of things, probably no one will. I say that with some hesitation, of course, although I was a bridge supporter going into the election of 2007 I certainly didn't buy into it in sort of the manner it was done late in the hour in the method it was signed off in. I'm also a realist and I accept the reality that we've been sort of weighed in with.

That said, I also look forward, as mentioned by my colleague, to the details that come forward by our

Auditor General and I'm sure we'll all deal with them in the good stead that they'll be presented in. Our Auditor General, this being one of her last stops, I don't know if it's officially the last stop, but what I'll say is I learned a lot from her in a number of years meeting her and her staff and have found that they're able to sort of boil every project down to its nuts and bolts. Whether we agree or disagree, committee tends to agree with her and departments tend to disagree with her, but whether we agree or disagree she has a way of putting things down to what they really mean and takes the drama out of the situation. As that comes forward I certainly look forward to the discussion.

Some of the issues that I've come up, and like I say, I don't usually talk about the bridge so this is one of the few times I will. I'm not the least bit concerned with the money that was held back that we have in trust in cash. I mean, I think that's a pretty good deal. I don't care who paid us, whether it was a guarantee or a cheque from the Government of New Brunswick. By and large we have a substantial sum to pick up any discrepancy on the project. To me that's what I've told the citizens in my riding and they seem quite happy that a holdback is there for exactly what happens is sometimes projects have problems. I've seen it many times in my experience, although I've never run, obviously, a project this large, but there aren't too many people who have. That said, I have run some projects and I understand that the reality is that there are always discrepancies on particular initiatives. I think the department has done the right thing. Has it been an easy project to juggle? I would run the risk of saying yes and no. I think probably if the department had it from day one it probably would have been a lot better off, but history is one of those things that's always clear when we look back. It's anyone's guess looking forward.

As far as the budget goes, I'll follow along with my other colleagues page by page as they report particular issues and perhaps I'll be inspired to question something further than what I've seen thus far. As I sort of started off with the start of my statements, particularly I don't tend to get a lot of feedback regarding transportation issues in the riding. If I do they tend to be dealt with expeditiously in a good way through the department. I'd be remiss to say people aren't necessarily echoing about Highway No. 3 in the sense of greatest of accolades with the way the road is, but again I'm a realist and I think most Yellowknifers tend to be realists in that they recognize the environment that we live in and there is a certain amount of acceptance. I've often told them if you reduce your speed limit by about five K to 10 K some of those bumps do smooth out. When you get a little heavy on that pedal, they seem to show up in places where you don't expect them.

That said, I'm happy to hear other thoughts and comments from other colleagues.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Hawkins. Next on my list I have Mr. Yakeleya.

**MR. YAKELEYA:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Department of Transportation has done a lot of work in the Territories. I want to speak on the initiatives that were done in my region and I want to say that the airport infrastructure that happened in my region were very beneficial to my constituents, to the airline companies. We were happy that the department and the Fort Good Hope community came to a satisfactory solution that helped them extend the runway a little longer. People in Fort Good Hope were very pleased that this has taken place, because of their joint ventures with NorthWright in terms of the airline safety and airline passenger travel.

As you know, the Sahtu has about two months of winter road season where it's very helpful for big families to take their children out on holidays, even though it's to Hay River or Yellowknife or just to get out and do shopping and go back home. Even though it means taking some time off school. It's very costly for them. Instead of flying out there, they look forward to the opening of the winter roads, which I want to make a few comments on.

Firstly, the quality of our winter roads is getting better and better. It's hard for me to say this because it gets a little smoother now. I think we're moving past the goat road stages of winter roads and the department has taken some pride and certainly it's the contractors that are out there day in and day out that have put some pride into their work. They've actually done a really good job on our roads. Certainly there's work that they still need to continue to straighten out the winter roads or cut down the hills or corners. That's to be expected. We're getting there. There are dollars going into these initiatives.

You're working with the contractors. That's what I wanted to say to the department. You're working with the beneficiaries. You're working with the local contractors in that area, in that community. It makes a whole lot of difference when you do a couple months of work there. After the two months of the winter road season you have eight months when it's very quiet. The machines are sitting in the yard. Still the contractors have to pay for the equipment, they have to make their monthly payments. Sometimes it gets a little encouraging to see that this department is doing its darnedest to keep the road in our communities with the cost, because costs are quite expensive doing business in the Sahtu. Sometimes it's just as easy to get outside contractors coming in with the lower price. There's a price to pay for that. There's me talking about these issues in the House here. I think that's a give and take on both sides.

I'm really hoping the Minister can wrap up all the project description reports that he signed with the Aboriginal groups down the Mackenzie Valley and that we can have a good report. I'm pleased to see that Wrigley to Tuk highway is still a priority for the department and that the highway from Tuk to Inuvik is actually in another stage just ahead of us in the Sahtu. Hoping that there is something going on between the federal government in March to look at the Mackenzie Valley Highway and that they put some dollars towards this project.

I do want to say that hopefully very shortly that bridge gets done, finished, and the focus is off that bridge and put that focus on another bridge in the North.

I look forward to having some discussions on the details of it. I do want to say that the community of Deline has raised several concerns through e-mail with me on the ice crossing at Great Bear Lake and that the Minister's opening statement had a couple hundred thousand dollars in the acceleration of the ice crossing in Tulita and on Great Bear Lake. I believe last week the weight restrictions were up in Deline and people are now looking forward to getting some of their resupplies into the community, however, that still causes some concerns for the community having their winter ice road crossing open a little sooner and they are looking at alternative routing and hopefully the Minister would be open to some discussions on that. Probably the new Assembly will have to look at that type of discussion, because that will require more dollars. I want to raise that, I want to raise that right in my opening comments.

I want to ask the Minister, in terms of updating in the National Highway Transportation Route, we have done that already with the federal government. Like I said, our winter roads are becoming a lot better, but it is still a little rough around some corners, but then that will only get better as we continue to work on some of the areas that need concentration, such as some of the hills that need to be cut down. That requires dollars and that requires emphasis and focus on governments to put on the Mackenzie Valley Road.

There were some safety issues and I think the Minister responded by having a few more signs on the road that I saw this year. They are pretty damn good in there, might I say, because they are in proper instalments now, not on trees with snare wire hanging from the trees and the signs. The Minister has put some attention to our winter roads by properly installing some good posts and the signs are there. I am glad to say that, Mr. Chairman, the Sahtu, in closing, really depend on these winter roads. There are families, there are old people that travel on them from community to community. Safety is number one, because our winter roads are pretty good, I don't know,

somehow we started an ice paving program, it makes it even better. The vehicles are going a little bit faster now, so we have to ensure that the safety of our people are more informed and that educational programs are needed in our region. Sometimes we have these truckers that come from the South that really don't understand truck driving and sometimes they need to be told that this is a winter road and that it is used a lot by people between the communities, and they need to know that they are in the Sahtu where the roads are not quite up to their standards as in the South. So I want to say thank you to the Minister.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Yakeleya. Next on my list I have Mr. Ramsay.

**MR. RAMSAY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a couple of other things, if I could. On the bridge, I know some other Members were talking about delays. You know, it's one thing if the project does get delayed for a month or two or six; it's another thing if it costs us \$20 or \$30 million dollars more than what we have got budgeted for the project and that's the thing we really need to keep our eye on, is the overall cost of the project.

To date, as I mentioned earlier, the management seems to be there. The diligence and the day-to-day management of the project seems to be there. Again, having not seen the contract that's between the Deh Cho Bridge Corporation and Ruskin; it's hard for me to understand where our risks lie in any eligible cost overruns of delays in the project. I'm sure the Minister and the department are much more aware of what those risks are and where liabilities lie in that regard.

The other thing, too, I'll just mention, in a contract of this size, when you tally it all up, \$190 million by the time it's done, maybe even more, it would be interesting to see how much of that money actually stayed in the Northwest Territories and how much of a training and employment opportunity there has been for the community of Fort Providence and the South Slave region. How many people have been trained and employed on the project from the community? You know, who can take those skills and job experience away with them once the crews are gone and that bridge is open. At the end of the day, we are going to have to step back and have a good look at this project and see who here were successful and who weren't successful, so that when other big projects come along we can ensure that we get the maximum opportunities for people who are in close proximity to the project.

Again, I do appreciate and I don't want anybody to think I don't appreciate the work that the department is doing. We just have to keep our eye on the budget. Given the current financial state of the Territory, if this project was to slip in any meaningful way, I'm talking 10 or 15 percent, it would cause a lot of concern here, that's for sure.

So, again, I just wanted to mention that for the record. Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** Thank you, Mr. Ramsay. Mr. Krutko.

**MR. KRUTKO:** Mr. Chair, I'd like to move a motion to report progress.

---Carried

**CHAIRMAN (Mr. Bromley):** I will now rise and report progress. I'd like to thank the Minister and his witnesses and ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to please escort the witnesses from the House.

### Report of Committee of the Whole

**MR. SPEAKER:** Can I have the report of Committee of the Whole, please, Mr. Bromley.

**MR. BROMLEY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 133-16(5), Northwest Territories Main Estimates, 2011-2012, and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Mahsi.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Bromley. Motion is on the floor. Do we have a seconder? The honourable Member for Kam Lake, Mr. Ramsay.

---Carried

Item 22, third reading of bills. Madam Clerk, orders of the day.

### Orders of the Day

**PRINCIPAL CLERK OF COMMITTEES (Ms. Knowlan):** Orders of the day for Wednesday, February 23, 2011, at 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Opening Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills

17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
  - Tabled Document 4-16(5), Executive Summary of the Report of the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project
  - Tabled Document 30-16(5), 2010 Review of Members' Compensation and Benefits
  - Tabled Document 38-16(5), Supplementary Health Benefits - What We Heard
  - Tabled Document 62-16(5), Northern Voices, Northern Waters: NWT Water Stewardship Strategy
  - Tabled Document 75-16(5), Response to the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project on the Federal and Territorial Governments' Interim Response to "Foundation for a Sustainable Northern Future"
  - Tabled Document 103-16(5), GNWT Contracts over \$5,000 Report, Year Ending March 31, 2010
  - Tabled Document 133-16(5), Northwest Territories Main Estimates, 2011-2012
  - Tabled Document 135-16(5), GNWT Response to CR 3-16(5): Report on the Review of the Child and Family Services Act
  - Bill 4, An Act to Amend the Social Assistance Act
  - Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Conflict of Interest Act
  - Bill 15, An Act to Amend the Fire Prevention Act
  - Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act
  - Bill 18, An Act to Repeal the Settlements Act
  - Bill 19, Municipal Statutes Amendment Act
  - Bill 20, An Act to Amend the Evidence Act
  - Minister's Statement 65-16(5), Devolution Agreement-in-Principle, Impact on Land Claims and Protection of Aboriginal Rights
  - Minister's Statement 88-16(5), Sessional Statement
21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day

**MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Madam Clerk. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until Wednesday, February 23, 2011, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 7:46 p.m.