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MLA, DEH CHO

OCT 03 2017

**Oral Question 852-18(2): Management of Northern Water Resources**

This letter is in follow up to the Oral Question you raised on September 21, 2017 regarding the management of our northern water resources.

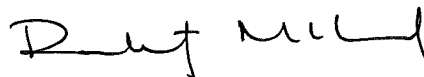
The number of Fisheries Officers currently on staff with the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) in the Northwest Territories (NWT) is eight; six of these positions are based in Yellowknife and two of these positions are based in Hay River. These officers cover the entire NWT.

Preliminary discussions have occurred between the Government of the Northwest Territories department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) and DFO with regard to the possibility of the GNWT taking on more responsibility for fisheries in the NWT. ENR has an existing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with DFO, dated 1976, with respect to the administration of the sport fishery in the NWT. The MOU is in need of updating and ENR is currently considering options for modernizing and possibly expanding the scope of the MOU, as well as engaging the federal government on the potential devolution of authorities.

Regarding responsibilities related to water, more generally, ENR has played a strong role in protecting northern waters since the development of *Northern Voices, Northern Waters: NWT Water Stewardship Strategy* (Water Strategy) in 2010. ENR continues to work with partners to fulfill the vision and goals of the Water Strategy through a variety of activities, including: negotiating and implementing transboundary water management agreements with neighboring jurisdictions; reviewing water licence applications and evaluating proposals and licences issued by the regulatory boards; Ministerial approvals of Type A water licences and Type B water licences, where a hearing has been held; inspections and enforcement of those licences; conducting analyses to enable regulatory boards to set securities for water licences; and monitoring our aquatic ecosystems and measuring changes to water quality, quantity, rates of flow and biological parameters over time and space. ENR also works with water partners to support communities in the development and implementation of aquatic community-based monitoring and research programs.

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I trust this response has addressed your question on the management of our northern water resources.



Robert C. McLeod  
Minister  
Environment and Natural Resources

- c. Clerk of the Legislative Assembly  
Legislative Coordinator, Executive and Indigenous Affairs