



OCT 04 2017

MR. DANIEL MCNEELY
MLA, SAHTU

Question 875-18(2): Lands Integrated Risk-Based Strategic Plan

On September 25, 2017, you raised questions in the Legislative Assembly related to the Department of Lands' engagement with stakeholders on land administration and land use planning. In responding, I committed to provide you with further information on government-supported engagement activities in the Sahtu region.

As reflected in the Government's Mandate, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) is committed to ensuring residents have meaningful opportunities to participate in the regulatory process, including the assessment of potential benefits and risks associated with resource development. In February 2017, the GNWT collaborated with the Sahtu Land and Water Board, Sahtu Land Use Planning Board, and Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board to host a resource co-management workshop in Norman Wells. The workshop was designed to help communities and resource managers participate meaningfully in resource co-management processes, with particular consideration of issues in the Sahtu region. Over 50 individuals attended these workshops, including representatives from every Sahtu community, as well as Yellowknife, Ottawa, and Calgary. A summary report of the workshop is available on the website of the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board. We continue to work with our partners in the Sahtu and other regions to support similar initiatives.

As you are aware, the GNWT considers regional land use plans as the primary instrument to define where certain activities can and cannot take place within a specific region. The Department of Lands coordinates GNWT participation in land use planning processes, which depend on strong relationships between communities and governments to be successful. The Sahtu Land Use Planning Board has indicated they will be convening a meeting of approving parties in fall 2017 to discuss the five-year review of the Sahtu Land Use Plan. As an approving party, the GNWT will be participating in this meeting, along with the Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated and the Government of Canada. The Sahtu Land Use Planning Board has initiated work to identify the scope of the five-year plan review and the Department of Lands has been participating closely in this process.

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Between June and August of this year, the Department of Lands sought residents' views on administrative and technical changes to the *Northwest Territories Lands Act* and the *Commissioner's Land Act* in various communities. An open house was held in Norman Wells on July 25, 2017. I understand that you were in attendance and I thank you for your participation. These public engagement sessions have been an important means of identifying administrative and technical changes to the two Acts that will provide better system alignment, consistency, and clarity for users of public land. A summary report of what we heard will be made publically available in the coming weeks on the Department of Lands' website.

Finally, the Department of Lands is collaborating with the Departments of Municipal and Community Affairs and Finance to develop and arrange information sessions on the issues of land access and tenure in select communities. We are still identifying which communities would benefit most from these sessions, but our goal is to offer them in two communities within each region, including the Sahtu. I anticipate these information sessions will be held before the end of March 2018.

If you have further questions about the Department of Lands' activities in the Sahtu region, please contact me at your earliest convenience.



Louis Sebert
Minister of Lands

c. Mr. Tim Mercer, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. David Hastings, Legislative Coordinator

Mr. Willard Hagen, Deputy Minister, Lands