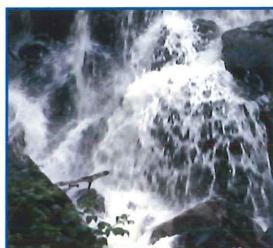
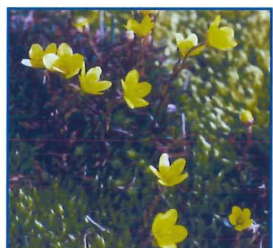
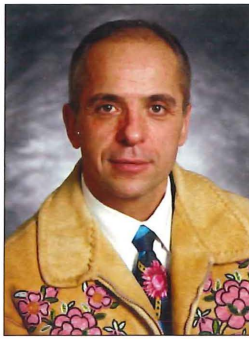


## Framework for Action 2005-2008



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## Minister's Message

A healthy environment is necessary to maintain human health, prosperity and well-being in Northwest Territories' (NWT) communities. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR), established on April 1, 2005, is committed to the protection and conservation of our environment and the sustainable development of natural resources.

We want to ensure our children inherit a secure future built upon a healthy environment that is capable of supporting traditional lifestyles within a modern economy. We will achieve this goal by building on the strengths of our people and through the wise use and protection of our natural resources. This will provide communities and individuals with opportunities to be productive and self-reliant.

The land and its resources are a central part of the cultural, spiritual and economic lives of many NWT residents. Increasing resource development and other changes in the NWT present many challenges and opportunities for NWT residents. ENR will do our part to build knowledge and manage people's actions to protect the environment and use natural resources in a sustainable manner. We will assist individuals, communities, governments and other organizations to make wise and informed decisions about all things that affect the natural environment and its resources, especially the forests and wildlife. We must work together to ensure we manage our natural resources to meet the needs of today and those of future generations.

This "Framework for Action 2005-2008" has been developed to:

- inform residents of the key initiatives of ENR;
- renew and focus the time and money spent on these initiatives;
- invite others to tell us how they would like to be involved in these initiatives; and
- build on our shared commitment to a healthy environment that will support and contribute to the long-term ecological, economic and social stability of the NWT.

Public awareness, involvement and participation are critical factors in ensuring that ENR provides programs and services that will move us toward our common goals.

I encourage all residents of the NWT to read this document and to continue to work with the staff of the Department of ENR to maintain a healthy environment.

J. Michael Miltenberger  
Minister of Environment and Natural Resources







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## Introduction

The NWT is undergoing significant economic growth and political change. Development of our resources is increasing at a rapid rate and is placing growing pressure on the environment. Our efforts must focus on initiatives to:

- maximize the protection of our land, waters and wildlife; and
- maximize benefits for northerners.

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) has made a commitment to ensure the development of natural resources occurs in a manner that provides for economic, social and cultural needs while maintaining ecosystem integrity and biological diversity and not compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. The GNWT has committed to working with emerging Aboriginal governments and Aboriginal organizations on these shared economic and environmental goals.

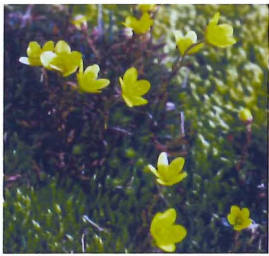
A clear vision and unified approach are required to meet these commitments. Efficient and effective plans and actions are needed to deal with the opportunities and challenges facing the NWT.

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 the NWT environment for the social and economic benefit of all NWT residents”. Within this context, natural resources are the naturally occurring components of the environment that can be used for human purposes, such as the forests and wildlife. The environment includes air, land, water, organic matter and all living things. As ENR carries out its work, it recognizes the important connections between all these components.

This “Framework for Action 2005-2008” identifies the strategic actions required over the next three years to address territorial, national and international expectations.







## Why an ENR “Framework for Action 2005-2008”?

In December 2003, the Members of the 15th Legislative Assembly developed a strategic plan focused on building a strong, vibrant and self-reliant Northwest Territories. In *“Self-reliant People, Communities and Northwest Territories – A Shared Responsibility”*, the GNWT outlined its vision and goals for the next 10 years and set broad direction for its operations through clearly defined priorities and specific actions. “Environmental stewardship” is one of the four priorities set for this Government. Strategic actions will be taken towards three key areas:

- protecting our air, water, forest and land – facilitating responsible development of non-renewable and renewable resources;
- building an efficient and effective energy sector – providing clean and affordable energy to northern consumers and encouraging conservation; and
- remediating contaminated sites throughout the NWT – encouraging the federal government to rehabilitate abandoned contaminated sites on federal land in a timely manner and to acceptable environmental standards.

Among the five goals identified in the plan was the “care and protection of the natural environment”. The expected results associated with this goal fall primarily within the mandate of ENR and include:

- respect for the land, water and traditional knowledge guiding decisions of government, industry and individuals;
- responsible, coordinated management of the environment to protect the land, water and wildlife;
- resource development that balances economic benefits, social impacts and environmental preservation and protection;
- governments acting on their responsibilities to clean up contaminated environmental sites; and
- responsible consumption and conservation of resources and energy by all governments, industries and individuals.

The GNWT’s strategic plan sets priorities for all Departments. Currently, ENR is engaged in a number of initiatives and programs that contribute to its mandate. However, real progress will only be possible if ENR operates in a strategic way with clearly stated priorities and direction. ENR’s mandate sets a strong foundation. This “Framework for Action 2005-2008” outlines the broad range of Departmental initiatives and activities and identifies actions based on the ENR Establishment Policy. The Minister of ENR is accountable for these actions.





## ENR's Principles

ENR's actions are based on the following principles:

1. *A healthy environment should be recognized as necessary to maintain human health, prosperity and well-being.*
2. *Diverse and healthy ecosystems should be protected in a manner that maintains the integrity of ecosystems and biological diversity and contributes to long-term ecological, economic and social stability.*
3. *Natural resources should be managed and developed in a manner that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.*
4. *Effective management of NWT natural resources should support import replacement and export development.*
5. *Decisions relating to the management and development of natural resources and the territorial economy should be directed towards enhancing territorial and community self-sufficiency and should incorporate public input, scientific knowledge and traditional knowledge.*
6. *Programs and services should be delivered in an effective and accountable manner and as close as practical to the people being served.*
7. *The design and delivery of programs and services should be based on a clear demonstration of need, benefit, sustainability and shared risk.*







## ENR's Plans for Action

Ensuring our decisions and activities leave our children with a healthy environment, capable of supporting ongoing prosperity and well-being, is a shared responsibility. ENR staff, at the regional and headquarters level, work closely with Aboriginal governments, communities, boards and other bodies arising from land claim agreements in the course of their day-to-day operations. ENR has also established a broad spectrum of initiatives to ensure its goals are met and its mandate is fulfilled.

This "Framework for Action 2005-2008" is intended to further clarify how ENR will move forward to fulfill our mandate, who our partners are, and when we can expect to see results. The eight Action Sections are built on the Ministerial accountabilities in the ENR Establishment Policy. Only by working closely with NWT residents and involving them in key decision-making roles, can ENR best tackle these strategic initiatives and actions aimed at meeting our shared responsibility for maintaining a healthy and prosperous northern environment.





## 1.0 Protecting Our Environment

*“Developing, recommending and enforcing legislation, policies and agreements to maintain the integrity and biological diversity of natural ecosystems and thereby protect the condition and quality of the environment.”*

– ENR Establishment Policy

Laws and policies help to ensure that people, businesses and industry behave in ways that will maintain our valuable NWT environment. Aboriginal governments, land claims organizations, other regional and community organizations and the public help ENR determine the best way of managing people’s activities to protect our forests and wildlife and to avoid contamination of the land and water. Working together, we decide on sustainable levels of resource use and steps needed to protect the environment. Through consultation with Aboriginal governments, communities, renewable resource management boards, land and water boards, and special interest groups, ENR can ensure well-defined policies and legislation help maintain a healthy ecosystem.

### 1.1 Species at Risk Legislation

In October 1996, federal, provincial and territorial governments committed to a national approach to protect endangered species and their habitat. Canada passed its *Species at Risk Act* in December 2002. A NWT *Species at Risk Act* is being drafted to complement the federal legislation. The new Act will reflect input received during a three-year consultation process and recent efforts to develop more collaborative approaches for completing the process. A Bilateral Cooperation Agreement on Species at Risk defines how the GNWT and Canada will cooperate.

- Action 1.1.1** *Convene a meeting of regional political leaders to develop a collaborative approach to revising the Acts (Wildlife and Species at Risk).*  
Timeline: Summer 2005. Accountability: ENR.
- Action 1.1.2** *Sign Bilateral Cooperation Agreement on Species at Risk.*  
Timeline: Fall 2005. Accountability: ENR and Environment Canada.
- Action 1.1.3** *Release a draft Species at Risk Act for further public consultation.*  
Timeline: Fall 2005. Accountability: ENR.
- Action 1.1.4** *Complete public consultation and a revised draft.*  
Timeline: Summer 2006. Accountability: ENR.
- Action 1.1.5** *Introduce the Species at Risk Act.*  
Timeline: Fall 2006. Accountability: ENR.
- Action 1.1.6** *Implement actions under the Species at Risk Act once passed by the Legislative Assembly.*  
Timeline: Fall 2007. Accountability: ENR.







### **1.2 A New Wildlife Act**

A new NWT *Wildlife Act* will provide for wildlife harvesting and management systems that respect land claim agreements and use modern approaches. The new Act will reflect input received during a three-year consultation process and recent efforts to develop more collaborative approaches for completing the process.

- Action 1.2.1** *Convene a meeting of regional political leaders to develop a collaborative approach to revising the Acts (Wildlife and Species at Risk).*  
Timeline: Summer 2005. Accountability: ENR.
- Action 1.2.2** *Release a draft Wildlife Act for further public consultation.*  
Timeline: Winter 2007. Accountability: ENR.
- Action 1.2.3** *Complete public consultation and a revised draft.*  
Timeline: Fall 2007. Accountability: ENR.
- Action 1.2.4** *Introduce the Wildlife Act.*  
Timeline: Winter 2008. Accountability: ENR.

### **1.3 Waste Recovery Programs**

The *Waste Reduction and Recovery Act* provides the legislative framework for programs that result in the recovery, reuse and recycling of waste materials. The first program to be established under the Act focuses on the recovery of ready-to-serve beverage containers. More than 25 million ready-to-serve beverage containers are sold in the NWT each year. Most of these containers end up in community landfills or as litter. The goal of the beverage container program is to eventually recover 90 percent of these containers for local reuse or recycling into other useful products.

- Action 1.3.1** *Implement a beverage container recovery program with depots in at least six major NWT communities.*  
Timeline: Fall 2005. Accountability: ENR.
- Action 1.3.2** *Increase the number of communities with depots to include at least 75 percent of territorial communities, representing 90 per cent of the population.*  
Timeline: Fall 2006. Accountability: ENR.
- Action 1.3.3** *Undertake public consultations to identify additional waste types for recovery.*  
Timeline: Fall 2007. Accountability: ENR.





### **1.4 Forest Management Legislation**

The NWT requires a framework for forest management to ensure sustainable management of forest resources based on ecological concepts. Legislation recognizing fire as a significant and natural phenomenon in the boreal forest of the NWT is also required. The existing legislation, *Forest Protection Act* and *Forest Management Act*, does not provide the tools necessary to manage forest resources consistent with federal commitments to sustainable forestry, the NWT Sustainable Development Policy, and forest management principles in use today. The *Forest Management Act* is prescriptive in nature and does not provide guidance about how forests should be managed. The existing *Forest Protection Act* is outdated and does not support the NWT Fire Management Policy originally approved in 1990. As well, these Acts do not adequately address consultation with Aboriginal organizations, land claim and self-government agreement provisions, and Aboriginal rights. ENR also has no formal Forest Management Policy defining the GNWT's commitment to, and tools for, achieving sustainable forest management.

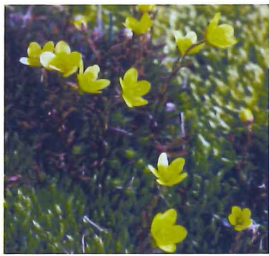
**Action 1.4.1** *Identify framework components and major steps for development of new forest management legislation and policy.*

Timeline: Winter 2007. Accountability: ENR.

**Action 1.4.2** *Develop draft action plan for development of new forest management legislation and policy.*

Timeline: Fall 2007. Accountability: ENR.





## 2.0 Building On Partnerships

*“Representing the Government of the Northwest Territories and coordinating the Government’s involvement in territorial, national and international matters related to conservation and protection of the natural environment, climate change and the sustainable use of wildlife, habitat and forest resources.”*

– ENR Establishment Policy

NWT residents want healthy, self-reliant communities where individuals and families are able to share the rewards and responsibilities of a prosperous NWT. We recognize that a healthy environment is necessary to maintain human health, prosperity and well-being. Cooperation and coordination between all governments and organizations involved with the protection and preservation of our environment and the sustainable development of our natural resources are required to achieve this goal. ENR will continue to voice the concerns and aspirations of NWT residents as a member of joint committees and other intergovernmental bodies dealing with these issues on a local, territorial, national or international level. ENR is also taking an active role in the development of a Northern Strategy for the three territories to ensure we make wise decisions about the management and sustainable development of our natural resources.

### 2.1 Energy and Climate Change

Reliable, affordable and clean energy is key to the sustainable development of our economy, to lowering our cost of living, and enhancing our quality of life. A carefully planned and coordinated approach is required to develop low cost sources of energy, manage our demands for energy, and meet our obligations to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. Working with our federal, community and Aboriginal government partners, we need to build on our knowledge about clean energy, such as low impact hydro and natural gas, look at options for using these energy sources, and develop plans to do so. In collaboration with the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI), ENR will initiate the development of a broad Energy Plan to guide and focus our shared efforts in this work.

The NWT Greenhouse Gas Strategy is linked to this broad Energy Plan. Since its development in 2001, the Strategy has been effective in identifying and coordinating northern actions to control greenhouse gas emissions. It will serve a key function in delivering many critical elements of an Energy Plan. ENR, along with all partners actively involved in climate change actions in the NWT, initiated a review to update and revise the Strategy in 2005. Many GNWT Departments have a role. This review also provides an effective starting point for federal-territorial discussions as Canada moves to implement the proposed federal action plan and honour its Kyoto commitments.







Several NWT communities are preparing community energy plans to reduce dependence on imported fossil fuels, reduce environmental impacts of energy use, and keep money spent on energy in the community. The Arctic Energy Alliance assists energy producers, distributors and consumers in working together to reduce the costs and environmental impacts of energy and utility services in the Northwest Territories.

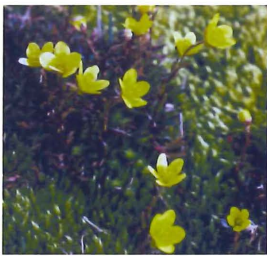
- Action 2.1.1** *Initiate Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation on Addressing Climate Change.*  
Timeline: Summer 2005. Accountability: ENR and Canada.
- Action 2.1.2** *Prepare and release a revised Greenhouse Gas Strategy and implementation plan.*  
Timeline: Fall 2005. Accountability: ENR and ITI.
- Action 2.1.3** *Prepare and release an Energy Policy "White Paper".*  
Timeline: Fall 2005. Accountability: ENR and ITI.
- Action 2.1.4** *Prepare and release a broad NWT Energy Plan.*  
Timeline: Spring 2006. Accountability: ENR and ITI.
- Action 2.1.5** *Prepare and release a climate change impacts and adaptation plan developed in consultation with affected departments.*  
Timeline: Spring 2006. Accountability: ENR, ITI, Public Works and Services, Municipal and Community Affairs, and Department of Transportation.
- Action 2.1.6** *Support the Arctic Energy Alliance to initiate community energy plans.*  
Timeframe: Spring 2006. Accountability: ENR and Arctic Energy Alliance.

## **2.2 Con Mine Reclamation**

Gold mining and milling operations have occurred at the Con Mine since the 1940s. In 2003, Miramar submitted a proposed closure and reclamation plan to the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board (MVLWB) in partial fulfillment of the company's closure obligations under the federal water licence and territorial land lease. In 2004, Miramar announced the closure of mining and milling activities at the Con Mine. ENR sits as a key representative on a working group established by the MVLWB to conduct a technical review and make recommendations on the closure and abandonment plan.

- Action 2.2.1** *Work with Miramar Con Mining Limited and the MVLWB technical working group to complete the review of the proposed Con Mine closure and reclamation plan.*  
Timeline: Winter 2006. Accountability: ENR.





**Action 2.2.2** *Monitor implementation of the approved closure and reclamation plan by Miramar Con Mine Limited.*

Timeline: 2010. Accountability: ENR and MACA.

### **2.3 Giant Mine Reclamation**

Gold mining and milling operations have occurred at the Giant Mine since 1948. It is anticipated the Giant Mine will become an orphaned site in 2005 and governments will proceed with care, maintenance and remediation activities in order to ensure continued protection of human health, safety and the environment. The Governments of Canada and the NWT entered into a Cooperation Agreement respecting the mine site in March 2005. Under this Agreement, governments agreed to finalize care and maintenance and cleanup plans, maximize northern economic opportunities and achieve the timely, effective and cost effective closure and reclamation of the mine site. ENR has a responsibility through its role in environmental protection and works with MACA as the administrator of Commissioner's Land.

**Action 2.3.1** *Implement a mine site care and maintenance plan.*

Timeline: Summer 2005. Accountability: GNWT (ENR lead) and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC).

**Action 2.3.2** *Finalize and submit for regulatory approval a Giant Mine Closure and Reclamation Plan.*

Timeline: Winter 2006. Accountability: GNWT (ENR lead) and INAC.

**Action 2.3.3** *Implement the approved Giant Mine Closure and Reclamation Plan.*

Timeframe: Winter 2008. Accountability: GNWT (ENR lead) and INAC.

### **2.4 Historic Uranium Transportation Route Cleanup**

Beginning in the 1930s, the Northern Transportation Route (the Route) was used to transport uranium ore from Port Radium Mine on Great Bear Lake to the railhead at Waterways, Alberta. The Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management Office of Natural Resources Canada (NRCAN) manages abandoned uranium-contaminated sites on behalf of Canada. In 1992, NRCAN began to survey the Route and identified elevated levels of radioactivity in soil at various locations along the Great Bear, Mackenzie and Slave Rivers systems.

**Action 2.4.1** *Develop and implement a comprehensive plan for managing contaminated soil along the Northern Transportation Route.*

Timeline: Winter 2007. Accountability: ENR and NRCAN.







## 2.5 Keeping Our Water Clean

Clean sources of community drinking water and a healthy aquatic environment are universal resources for residents of the NWT. Ongoing care is needed to preserve the water quality of the NWT. ENR works together with multiple agencies, including other GNWT Departments (Health and Social Services (H&SS), MACA and PWS) and INAC, to safeguard water. Waters flow from Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia and the Yukon into the NWT, which makes cooperative efforts all the more important. The Mackenzie River Basin Board (MRBB) was created in 1997 through the Transboundary Waters Master Agreement to facilitate cooperative water management through a watershed approach. In 2004, the MRBB completed a comprehensive State of the Aquatic Environment Report.

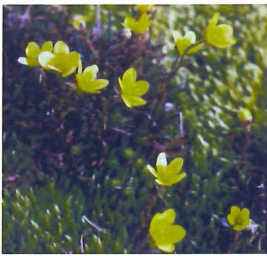
- Action 2.5.1** *Work with NWT and federal partners to identify steps needed to map those areas surrounding communities where land and water activities could impact community drinking water supplies.*  
Timeline: Fall 2005. Accountability: ENR with MACA.
- Action 2.5.2** *Work with NWT and federal partners to develop a GNWT protocol to help protect community drinking water sources through the use of existing legislation.*  
Timeline: Spring 2006. Accountability: ENR with H&SS, MACA and PWS.
- Action 2.5.3** *Identify and proceed with actions towards an NWT-Alberta bilateral agreement under the Mackenzie River Transboundary Master Agreement.*  
Timeline: Fall 2007. Accountability: ENR, Alberta Government and INAC

## 2.6 Protecting Communities From Forest Fire

The problem of forest fires threatening communities within the forest areas of the NWT requires a broader-based solution than provided through forest fire suppression and emergency responses alone. Development of Community Protection Plans will help minimize risk and potential damage caused by wildfire. Plans will incorporate FireSmart principles and practices and will be based on appropriate information including fuel hazard assessments for areas in the wildland/urban interface.

The plans will be integrated with MACA's land use planning processes and will address fire response planning and training needs in communities. This will enable individual property or homeowners to take a significant role and assume greater responsibility for prevention of and response to wildfires. Implementation of plans related to fuel abatement aspects will be integrated with the need





for forest resources within communities and forest development initiatives. FireSmart principles will also be applied to forest landscapes in areas adjacent to communities and the fire response strategies developed. FireSmart can result in improved guidelines for fire response planning, emergency preparedness planning and complement the community FireSmart planning process focused on the wildland/urban interface.

- Action 2.6.1** *Develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for wildfire management between ENR, Parks Canada and Alberta in the cooperative border area adjacent to Fort Smith.*  
Timeline: Fall 2005. Accountability: ENR, Parks Canada, Government of Alberta.
- Action 2.6.2** *Initiate a MOU for wildfire management between ENR and the Yukon in the cooperative border area adjacent to Fort Liard and the Peel River Area.*  
Timeline: Fall 2005. Accountability: ENR and Yukon Government.
- Action 2.6.3** *Update the MOU on FireSmart planning and implementation between Municipal and Community Affairs and Environment and Natural Resources.*  
Timeline: Winter 2006. Accountability: ENR and MACA.
- Action 2.6.4** *Develop landscape fire management plans for four communities: Tsiigehtchic, Fort Smith, Enterprise, Fort Providence.*  
Timeline: Spring 2007. Accountability: ENR.







### 3.0 Managing Development to Sustain the Environment

*“Maintaining and protecting the condition, quality, diversity and abundance of the environment, including wildlife, habitat and forest resources, in the Northwest Territories through comprehensive assessment and evaluation, monitoring and compliance measures.”*

– ENR Establishment Policy

Protecting the environment and conserving our northern resources requires good planning and management of all development projects. ENR provides up-front guidance through its legislation, policy and published documents. ENR is often involved when a developer applies for regulatory authorizations for a proposed project. If forest, wildlife or pesticide authorizations are required, ENR consults with appropriate organizations before issuing the authorization.

If forest, wildlife, wildlife habitat or environmental protection concerns may be at issue through other permitting processes, ENR advises the regulating body of its concerns. This preliminary screening may result in the referral of a project to an environmental impact assessment process. ENR may then choose to be an advisory body or an intervener on that particular project. Larger projects may have an associated environmental agreement if environmental concerns cannot be adequately addressed through the collective means of regulatory bodies. ENR coordinates the environmental impact assessment process on behalf of the GNWT when multiple issues such as social, cultural, economic and biophysical concerns arise. In all cases, it is necessary to have checks in place to ensure developers and regulating bodies, including ENR, meet their commitments. When unacceptable changes occur on the land, cooperative action must be taken by government, communities, agencies and industries to correct the problem.

#### 3.1 Best Management Practices

“Best management practices” are used to guide industry and regulatory actions to prevent and reduce impact to the environment, forests and wildlife. These are particularly important to manage the fast pace of mineral and oil and gas development. Some of the potential environmental impacts from development and resource use are known and appropriate measures can be taken routinely to mitigate those impacts.

**Action 3.1.1** *Develop Protocol Agreements between ENR and ITI to maintain linkages, support joint activities and ensure ongoing cooperation between the two departments.*

Timeline: Fall 2005. Accountability: ENR and ITI.





- Action 3.1.2** *Develop “air quality best management practices” for the upstream oil and gas industry.*  
Timeline: Winter 2006. Accountability: ENR and Environment Canada.
- Action 3.1.3** *Create Standard Operating Procedures for Commercial Timber Harvesting and Oil and Gas Development to minimize impacts to the forest resources.*  
Timeline: Winter 2006. Accountability: ENR.
- Action 3.1.4** *Create Guidelines for Domestic Use of Forest Resources.*  
Timeline: Spring 2006. Accountability: ENR.
- Action 3.1.5** *Develop “best management practices” compendium for minerals, oil and gas development to reduce environmental impacts, especially on forests, wildlife and habitat, including improvements to the regulatory regime.*  
Timeline: Fall 2007. Accountability: ENR.

### **3.2 Managing Human Activities to Reduce Cumulative Effects**

The constant changes that human actions have on the NWT environment need to be routinely assessed, monitored and evaluated. This requires actions taken throughout all regions and in central offices. Regulations, authorizations and agreements may be put in place to minimize and monitor the inevitable change. A well-coordinated approach must be in place to best manage human activities that affect the forests and wildlife and protect the environment.

- Action 3.2.1** *In partnership with industry and Deh Cho First Nations, establish the Deh Cho Boreal Caribou Committee to identify management actions to reduce and mitigate impacts on boreal caribou and their habitat from oil and gas development.*  
Timeline: Fall 2005. Accountability: ENR.
- Action 3.2.2** *Develop a Final Terms of Reference for a Multi-project Monitoring Agency.*  
Timeline: Spring 2006. Accountability: ENR.
- Action 3.2.3** *Establish environmental assessment, protection and monitoring specialists throughout the NWT to track environmental changes and management actions taken.*  
Timeline: Spring 2007. Accountability: ENR.
- Action 3.2.4** *Develop and implement a GNWT strategic framework for assessing and managing cumulative effects.*  
Timeline: Spring 2007. Accountability: ENR.







### **3.3 Forest Renewal Strategy for the NWT**

Adequate and timely regeneration following the removal of forest vegetation is necessary to maintain the long-term sustainability of NWT forest resources. Failure to ensure adequate regeneration will negatively impact on the long-term availability of forest resources. It has the potential to result in the non-sustainable use of forest resources. It could also result in longer-term, human-induced landscape level forest ecosystem changes and could result in an accumulating carbon debt under the Kyoto protocol.

Forest renewal in the NWT has focused primarily on commercial timber harvesting. However, recent concerns about forest renewal are broader in nature and are related to the sustainable management of forest resources and carbon accounting implications associated with Kyoto and climate change initiatives.

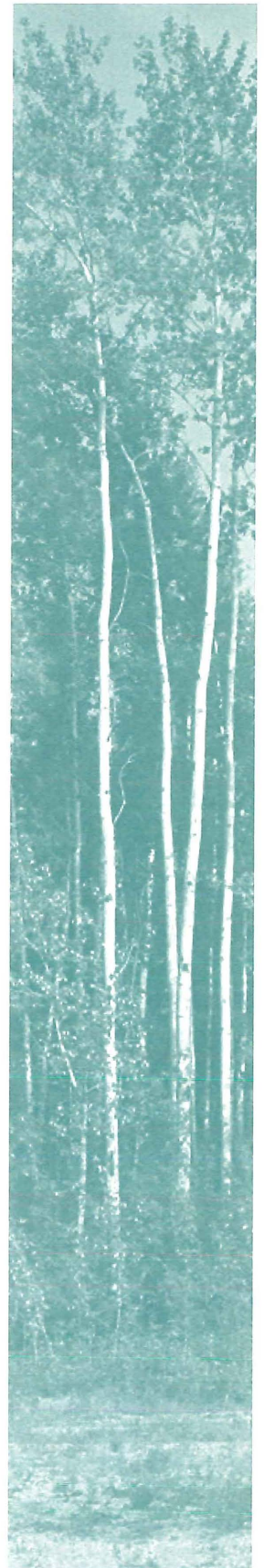
Increased interest in commercial forestry, continued use of forest vegetation for fuel wood, and other domestic uses and significant losses related to oil and gas exploration and development have resulted in considerable lost forest vegetation. This has implications for forest renewal. As well, the cost of reforestation activities in the NWT has increased dramatically in recent years making traditional approaches to renewal costly to implement. There is a need to explore alternatives to ensure forests are renewed and that sustainable management can be achieved. The objective will be to develop and implement more cost-effective approaches for forest renewal programs.

**Action 3.3.1** *Prepare a Strategy for Forest Renewal in the NWT.*

Timeline: Spring 2006. Accountability: ENR.

**Action 3.3.2** *Complete Regenerating Stand Surveys for Deh Cho and South Slave Regions.*

Timeline: Fall 2006. Accountability: ENR.





### **3.4 Species At Risk**

Under the federal *Species at Risk Act*, territorial recovery strategies are required for species listed by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada as “endangered” or “threatened” in the NWT (e.g. Peary caribou, wood bison and boreal caribou). Management plans are required for species listed as “of special concern” (e.g. grizzly bear, polar bear, wolverine). Completing these strategies and management plans will help industry to identify actions needed to eliminate or minimize impacts on these species and their habitats.

- Action 3.4.1** *Work with Renewable Resource Boards and Aboriginal governments to complete the Boreal Caribou Recovery Strategy and implement actions.*  
Timeline: Fall 2006. Accountability: ENR.
- Action 3.4.2** *Work with the Deh Cho and Tlicho communities to develop a Mackenzie Wood Bison Management Plan to address the expanding population and public safety concerns along Highway 3.*  
Timeline: Fall 2007. Accountability: ENR.
- Action 3.4.3** *Develop management plans for grizzly bear and wolverine.*  
Timeline: Fall 2007. Accountability: ENR.





## 4.0 Building On What We Know

*"Promoting and supporting the use of scientific research, traditional knowledge and public education to support decision-making and increase understanding of ecosystem integrity and biological diversity, climate change, integrated resource management and sustainable development in the Northwest Territories."*

– ENR Establishment Policy

Our northern lands and waters are complex. Sensitive northern ecosystems are changing constantly. There is considerable land within the NWT that is being developed. As well, development beyond NWT borders can affect the NWT environment. Better management decisions can be made when we know more about our environment. If we understand how ecosystems function, and the nature of the stresses that human activities place on ecosystems, we can predict possible impacts on the environment more accurately. This helps with planning and environmental impact assessments of resource development to ensure impacts are avoided or dealt with in an appropriate way.

To plan and manage people's actions, we must use all available sources of knowledge and experience to understand how human activities affect our land and our people. Working with local residents, land claims organizations, regulatory agencies, and specialists in various government and non-government agencies helps us to make good forest, wildlife and environmental protection decisions. ENR gathers information about the environment and its resources to form a base to track changes over time. Ideally this "baseline data" can be used to compare the environment before development to that during and once development occurs. When unacceptable changes are detected, management actions can be taken.

### 4.1 Classifying and Mapping Ecosystems

An ecological land classification for the NWT, based on landscape, climate zones and vegetation, is being developed. This will provide a basis for forest, wildlife and land use managers to use in assessing impacts of human activities and forest fires on wildlife habitat, forest productivity and succession.

**Action 4.1.1** *Prepare maps of revised ecoregions for the Mackenzie Valley.*  
Timeline: Fall 2006. Accountability: ENR.

**Action 4.1.2** *Complete ecological land classification for the remainder of the NWT.*  
Timeline: Spring 2007. Accountability: ENR.





#### **4.2 Gathering Baseline Information and Monitoring Cumulative Effects**

Human activities on the land may be regulated through leases, permits, zoning, water licences, or other means. Collectively, all of these activities have a cumulative effect on NWT ecosystems and hence how the land and its resources can be used in the future. To know how the land is reacting, we need to have good sense of its current condition.

Governments have been monitoring air quality in the NWT since 1974. Air quality monitoring stations measure a variety of priority air pollutants. In anticipation of the oil and gas development, the Yellowknife-based system of air quality monitoring stations was expanded in 1998 by installing state-of-the-art stations in the communities of Fort Liard, Norman Wells and Inuvik.

The Western NWT Biophysical Study, to be completed in 2007, collects information on the environment and wildlife in the Mackenzie Valley. Information forms the baseline for the next phase of monitoring and managing impacts from resource development. Emphasis in the North Slave Region, with three diamond mines, will be placed on monitoring Barrenground caribou, a critical food source for Tlicho and Akaitcho people.

- Action 4.2.1** *Implement the Bathurst caribou monitoring program.*  
Timeline: Fall 2005. Accountability: ENR.
- Action 4.2.2** *Establish a more extensive permanent forest monitoring plot network to contribute to the baseline knowledge of forests in the NWT.*  
Timeline: Fall 2005. Accountability: ENR.
- Action 4.2.3** *Expand the existing air quality network into small communities.*  
Timeline: Spring 2007. Accountability: ENR.





## 5.0 Getting Information to Those Who Need It

*“Providing timely, relevant and accessible information to support sustainable development in the Northwest Territories.”*

– ENR Establishment Policy

Many Aboriginal and community governments, boards and agencies need to assess and analyze information about the land, water and wildlife in order to do their jobs. This is a first step to ensure effective management of our natural resources. Up-to-date information is important for planners and to ensure that development proposals are rigorously reviewed. Sound information is also a vital component in the independent monitoring of resource development projects. Environment and natural resource information needs to be current and relevant.

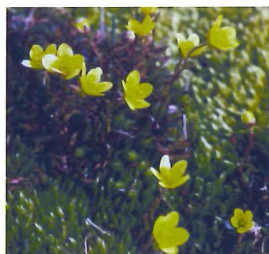
People should be able to access lots of different types information easily, and be able to understand how it is linked. A number of information systems and reporting initiatives will be well-linked and facilitate the use of environmental and natural resource information by others.

### **5.1 Reporting on the Northwest Territories “State of the Environment”**

Sustainability has its beginnings in understanding the world around us. Information presented in a clear, concise and understandable manner is key to making informed decisions. The Northwest Territories’ “State of the Environment Report” is designed to periodically update residents and decision-makers on the state of their environment, biodiversity and natural resources. It will also help ensure a knowledgeable and informed public able to effectively participate in ensuring the sustainability of the northern ecosystem.

- Action 5.1.1** *Produce annual reports and publish scientific reports on the results from the Western NWT Biophysical Study.*  
Timeline: Annually. Accountability: ENR.
- Action 5.1.2** *Complete the second report of the NWT Biodiversity Action Plan.*  
Timeline: Fall 2005. Accountability: ENR.
- Action 5.1.3** *Complete the 2005 report of general ranking of species.*  
Timeline: Spring 2006. Accountability: ENR.
- Action 5.1.4** *Develop a “state of the environment” summary to report annually on the NWT environment, especially its air, wildlife and forests.*  
Timeline: Fall 2007. Accountability: ENR.





### **5.2 Designing a Wildlife Management Information System (WMIS)**

A Wildlife Management Information System (WMIS) is being designed to allow ENR to store, analyze and distribute information and data related to wildlife management. This web and GIS-based system will store, analyze and distribute information and data related to wildlife management. This system will ease the process of making data available (once entered) to the public, communities and industry. The intent is to enter both current and historical data to provide an information base for decision-making. Accelerating the entry of historical data from the past 30 years of research studies will greatly expand the bio-physical database for assessing impacts.

**Action 5.2.1** *Complete the design and testing of the WMIS.*

Timeline: Fall 2006. Accountability: ENR, Informatics.

### **5.3 Developing a Forest Management Information System**

A Forest Management Information System (FMIS) is being developed to facilitate the effective use of data and information collected for forest management in the NWT. The system will provide for better support to decision-making processes, enable the sharing of information with other levels of government and assist in a more integrated approach to natural resource management. It will also support planning, monitoring and reporting responsibilities of ENR. The system requirements are being developed based on clearly established business functions and user needs.

**Action 5.3.1** *Complete the Implementation Report Phase.*

Timeline: Spring 2006. Accountability: ENR.

**Action 5.3.2** *Develop an Information Management Strategic Plan.*

Timeline: Spring 2006. Accountability: ENR, Informatics.

### **5.4 Tracking Environmental Assessment and Management of Development**

ENR encourages developers to plan their projects using best practices gained from local knowledge and experience. ENR issues authorizations, permits and licences related to forest and wildlife management and research, and the application of pesticides. As well ENR, among other GNWT Departments, advises on other land and water regulatory applications. In addition, ENR coordinates environmental impact assessments and environmental agreements. During all of these processes, project proponents and agencies often make additional commitments or may follow-up with environmental agreements. The number and complexity of the development projects under review means that considerable incoming and outgoing information must be managed well.





Over the years, some practices and advice have been built into GNWT policy, programs and operational procedures. There is a need to build on experience gained through all of these processes. ENR will prepare a system to track process, key messages, commitments and issues that arise related to development and the environment.

**Action 5.4.1** *Conduct an Initial Needs Assessment and Preliminary Analysis for the development of an Environmental Assessment Tracking System.*  
Timeline: Spring 2007. Accountability: ENR.

### **5.5 Upgrading the Compliance Database**

A web-based compliance database is needed to allow ENR staff to store and distribute occurrence and investigation information. The system will provide timely historical compliance data. It will assist in integrating compliance activities between regions and support planning, monitoring and reporting responsibilities of ENR.

**Action 5.5.1** *Merge regional information into a central database, and transfer into a web-based application.*  
Timeline: Summer 2005. Accountability: ENR.

### **5.6 Developing Publicly Accessible Air Quality Information**

Air quality monitoring stations measure a variety of priority air pollutants. With the recent incorporation of modern computer-based software in each station, ENR is working to provide industry and the public with real-time access to air quality monitoring information.

**Action 5.6.1** *Provide real-time access to air quality monitoring information through the Internet.*  
Timeframe: Fall 2005. Accountability: ENR.

### **5.7 Public Awareness of Environment and Natural Resources**

The complex ecosystems of the NWT have sustained life for a long time. With the current rate of change in the environment, it is important for all people in the NWT, especially our youth, to be aware of the opportunities and challenges posed in environmental and natural resource management. Individuals must take responsibility for their own actions, recognizing that personal actions affect the quality of our environment, making it better or worse.

**Action 5.7.1** *Develop a communications plan for the Department of ENR.*  
Timeline: Fall 2005. Accountability: ENR.





## 6.0 Managing Shared Resources Cooperatively

*“Negotiating and recommending agreements with the federal, provincial and other governments concerning the environment and the sustainable use of wildlife, habitat and forest resources.”*

– ENR Establishment Policy

Political borders do not confine air, water and wildlife. Forest ecosystems extend beyond borders. We must work with neighbouring territories and provinces to influence management decisions that may affect the abundance and quality of NWT resources. The impacts of development on the entire range of the species affect its population health. So does the total harvest on any given wildlife population. Upstream water use and contaminant sources effect the downstream aquatic environment. Cooperative agreements among relevant jurisdictions help to better manage people’s actions for the benefit of all. Our shared responsibilities help to maintain the quality and abundance of these resources so they will meet the needs of NWT residents today and in the future. ENR works through cooperative agreements and councils, such as the Species at Risk Accord, National Forest Accord, Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment, Canadian Council of Forest Ministers, and the Canadian Council of Wildlife Ministers.

### 6.1 Managing Shared Wildlife Populations

The NWT shares responsibility for managing several wildlife populations, including a number of endangered or threatened species, with neighbouring jurisdictions. Shared populations include Barrenground, Mountain and Woodland caribou as well as polar bear. These species play an important role in the cultural, economic and spiritual lives of many NWT residents. ENR is working with our neighbours to develop common management plans and actions that ensure human activities do not impact on the health or productivity of these wildlife species.

**Action 6.1.1** *Assist the Inuvialuit to complete agreements on the polar bear populations shared with Nunavut.*

Timeline: Spring 2006. Accountability: ENR.

**Action 6.1.2** *Release GNWT Response to the Bathurst Caribou Management Plan and implement actions.*

Timeline: Summer 2006. Accountability: ENR.

**Action 6.1.3** *Develop agreements with the Government of Alberta and British Columbia on the management of shared Boreal caribou populations.*

Timeline: Summer 2007. Accountability: ENR.

**Action 6.1.4** *Work with the Government of Nunavut to conduct a census of the Beverly caribou herd.*

Timeline: Summer 2007. Accountability: ENR.







## **6.2 Managing Diseased Bison**

The disease-free Mackenzie and Liard Bison Herds are at risk from diseased bison in and around Wood Buffalo National Park. The Hook Lake Wood Bison Recovery Project is intended to demonstrate the possibility of creating a disease-free herd from diseased stock. However, the final phases of this project, to remove the diseased bison from the Hook Lake area and release a disease-free captive raised herd, cannot be completed until the diseased bison issue in Wood Buffalo National Park is addressed.

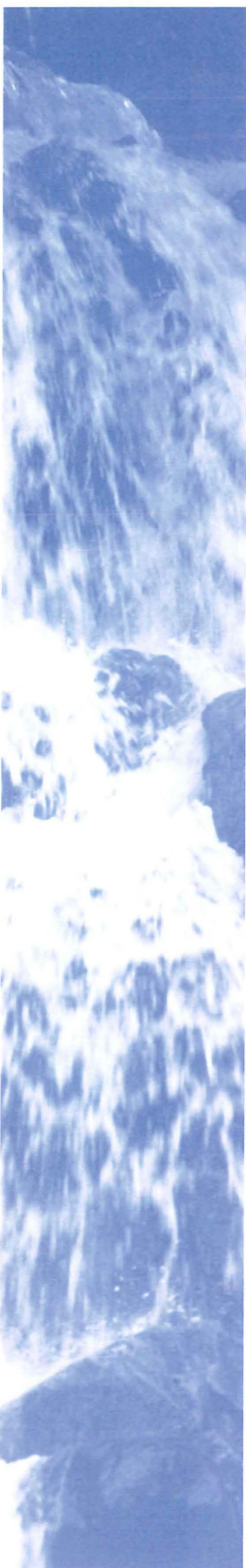
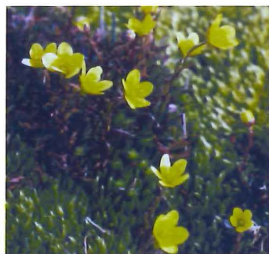
**Action 6.2.1** *Engage First Nations, Parks Canada, the Government of Alberta, Agriculture Canada and industry associations to address the diseased bison in Wood Buffalo National Park.*

Timeline: Fall 2005. Accountability: ENR.

**Action 6.2.2** *Develop an action plan and a complementary program with the Deninu K'ue First Nation and Fort Resolution Metis Council to re-introduce disease free bison to the Hook Lake area.*

Timeline: Fall 2006. Accountability: ENR.





## 7.0 Promoting NWT Management of Its Resources

*“Planning and facilitating the devolution of provincial-type responsibilities within the departmental mandate.”*

– ENR Establishment Policy

A devolution agreement with the Government of Canada is essential in developing a healthy, sustainable and self-reliant society in the NWT. ENR is providing significant support for the negotiations to transfer legislative powers, programs and responsibility for the management of natural resources to the GNWT. ENR is committed to the creation of a resource management regime that manages and regulates resources and developments in the NWT in an effective, efficient and coordinated manner, and is consistent with land claim and self-government agreements. Devolution will help to address resource management issues in a more integrated manner linking various planning, management and regulatory initiatives more effectively. Clear process and timelines will assist developers and managers.

### 7.1 Participation in Devolution Negotiations

Devolution of INAC’s Northern Affairs Program (NAP) to the NWT will enhance the ability of the territorial government to serve the interests of residents; increase their self-sufficiency; and promote the effective, efficient and coordinated development of the natural resources. Conclusion of devolution negotiations with the Government of Canada is a major goal of the 15th Legislative Assembly.

The NAP is responsible for the management, administration and control of land, water, minerals, oil and gas and the environment in the NWT. ENR supports the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs in its negotiations to transfer responsibility for NWT lands and resources from the federal government. In addition, a federal commitment is sought to remediate abandoned contaminated sites on federal land to acceptable environmental standards in a timely manner. The new “Northern Strategy” being developed by Canada and the three territories specifically commits Canada to a spring 2005 AIP.

**Action 7.1.1** *Develop options for organizational design models that include responsibilities and functions associated with the transfer of the Northern Affairs Program.*

Timeline: Fall 2006. Accountability: ENR with Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, Financial Management Board Secretariat, MACA, ITI, PWS, Executive.





## 8.0 Supporting Our Partners

*“Providing financial and administrative support to other government agencies or secretariats when required.”*

– ENR Establishment Policy

ENR supports those who are ready to take on efforts to help themselves better manage their actions and those of others to protect the environment. To that end, ENR can provide a secretariat function to support these collaborative efforts as is done for the Waste Recovery Committee and the Protected Areas Strategy Secretariat. ENR also contributes funding through programs to support active agencies that help to manage wildlife or protect the environment. This pooling of resources from federal, territorial and Aboriginal governments sources helps to ensure that people have what is needed to accomplish our common goals.

### 8.1 Implementing the Protected Areas Strategy

The Protected Areas Strategy (PAS) was developed in partnership with communities, Aboriginal governments, federal agencies, industry and environmental non-government organizations to establish a process to identify and establish a network of protected areas in the NWT. The strategy identifies two goals. The first is to protect special natural and cultural areas. The second is to protect representative core areas within each ecoregion. Since 1999, the partners have worked together to implement the strategy. As of April 2005, nine candidate areas have been identified. With the announcement of a Mackenzie Gas Project, the PAS partners released a Mackenzie Valley Five Year Action Plan in 2004 to accelerate the establishment of protected areas in advance of pipeline construction.

More than \$17 million dollars has been committed over five years by INAC, ENR and the environmental non-government organizations to implement this action plan beginning in April 2005. The Action Plan is ambitious. Given its mandate in wildlife and forest management, ENR has a leadership role in coordinating implementation of the Plan.

- Action 8.1.1** *Review the organizational structure of the PAS and make recommendations to PAS partners ways to improve its effectiveness.*  
Timeline: Summer 2005. Accountability: ENR.
- Action 8.1.2** *Develop a preliminary map of critical wildlife habitat in the Mackenzie Valley.*  
Timeline: Winter 2007. Accountability: ENR.
- Action 8.1.3** *Complete renewable resource assessment for candidate areas.*  
Timeline: Fall 2007. Accountability: ENR.





## **8.2 Supporting Community-based Forest Resource Development**

The forest resource in the NWT has the capacity to support development of a diversified stable economic base in communities across the north. Interest in forest product based industry is seeing resurgence in many forest communities. There is also an interest in non-timber based forest products and this is an area with potential for growth. Small-scale, community-based industry projects can support lifestyle and community development objectives. It is important that forestry industry development at the community level be done in a way that is sustainable environmentally, socially and economically. This includes developing local level knowledge around forest planning, forest operations, sawmilling, and product marketing and sales.

Providing support at the community level in developing an understanding of development requirements from planning through to processing and product marketing will support the achievement of forest resource based development at the community level.

**Action 8.2.1** *Conduct a community workshop on Forestry Development.*  
Timeline: Fall 2005. Accountability: ENR.

**Action 8.2.2** *Develop a Gwich'in Forest Management Plan.*  
Timeline: Spring 2006. Accountability: ENR.





## Next Steps

This "Framework for Action 2005-2008" maps out actions for ENR. Appendix A provides a summary of current and intended actions, timelines and accountabilities identified throughout the framework. Through this "Framework for Action 2005-2008", NWT residents are now aware of what ENR will undertake over the next three years. Regular updates on the status of actions taken be provided every six months. The first report will cover the period between June and December 2005. Reporting on actions contained in the Framework will continue through the life of the 15th Legislative Assembly. A process to renew the Framework will begin in 2007.

Although many of the actions identified within this Framework are already underway, the Department must continue to ensure that adequate financial and human resources are available to complete them. This "Framework for Action 2005-2008" allows ENR to more clearly focus on priorities in its business planning process. However, in some cases and as new circumstances arise, new money may be needed to support initiatives outlined in the Framework. Success in completing these actions requires support from the members of the Legislative Assembly towards our common goals. Input from the NWT public helps to shape each action and lead to success. Only by working together, sharing our knowledge, experience and passion for our lands and waters, can we hope to be true stewards of our environment and pass its riches on to our children and those who will follow.





# Appendix A – Summary of Initiatives and Actions

## 1.0 Protecting Our Environment

Initiative	Issue	Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Accountability
1.1 Species at Risk Legislation	In October 1996, Canadian Wildlife Ministers signed an Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk which commits all governments to a national approach to protect endangered species and their habitat, including implementing complementary legislation and programs.	1.1.1 Convene a meeting of regional political leaders to develop a collaborative approach to revising the Acts (Wildlife, Species at Risk).	Agreement on collaborative approach achieved.	Summer 2005	ENR
		1.1.2 Sign Bilateral Cooperation Agreement on Species at Risk.	Bilateral Cooperation Agreement signed.	Fall 2005	ENR, Environment Canada
		1.1.3 Release a draft <i>Species at Risk Act</i> for further public consultation.	Draft <i>Species at Risk Act</i> completed and released.	Fall 2005	ENR
		1.1.4 Complete public consultation and a revised draft.	Revisions to draft made following consultation.	Summer 2006	ENR
		1.1.5 Introduce the <i>Species at Risk Act</i> .	New <i>Species At Risk Act</i> introduced in the Legislative Assembly.	Fall 2006	ENR
		1.1.6 Implement actions under the <i>Species at Risk Act</i> once passed by the Legislative Assembly.	Actions identified within the <i>Species at Risk Act</i> are implemented.	Fall 2007	ENR
1.2 A New Wildlife Act	A new NWT <i>Wildlife Act</i> will provide for wildlife harvesting and management systems that respect land claim agreements and use modern approaches. The new Act will address input received during a three-year consultation process.	1.2.1 Convene a meeting of regional political leaders to develop a collaborative approach to revising the Acts (Wildlife, Species at Risk).	Agreement on collaborative approach achieved.	Summer 2005	ENR
		1.2.2 Release a draft <i>Wildlife Act</i> for further public consultation.	Draft <i>Wildlife Act</i> completed and released.	Winter 2007	ENR
		1.2.3 Complete public consultation and a revised draft.	Revisions to draft made following consultation.	Fall 2007	ENR
		1.2.4 Introduce the <i>Wildlife Act</i> .	New <i>Wildlife Act</i> introduced in the Legislative Assembly.	Winter 2008	ENR
1.3 Waste Recovery Programs	The <i>Waste Reduction and Recovery Act</i> provides the legislative framework for programs that result in the recovery, reuse and recycling of waste materials. The goal of the beverage container program is to eventually recover 90 percent of these containers for local reuse or recycling into other useful products.	1.3.1 Implement a beverage container recovery program with depots in at least six major territorial communities.	Recovery depots are operating in identified communities.	Fall 2005	ENR
		1.3.2 Increase the number of communities with depots to include at least 75% of territorial communities, representing 90% of the population.	Recovery depot operation expanded to cover majority of communities.	Fall 2006	ENR
		1.3.3 Undertake public consultations to identify additional waste types for recovery.	Public consultation on further waste recovery is completed.	Fall 2007	ENR
1.4 Forest Management Legislation	The NWT requires a framework for forest management that ensures sustainable management of forest resources based on ecological concepts, with fire recognized as a significant and natural phenomenon in forest of the NWT.	1.4.1 Identify framework components and major steps for development of new forest management legislation and policy.	Forest management framework is completed.	Winter 2007	ENR
		1.4.2 Develop draft action plan for new forest management legislation and policy.	Action plan based on the forest management framework is completed.	Fall 2007	ENR



## 2.0 Building On Partnerships

Initiative	Issue	Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Accountability
2.1 Energy and Climate Change	Reliable, affordable and clean energy is key to the sustainable development of our economy, lowering our cost of living and enhancing our quality of life. Developing low cost sources of energy, managing our demands on energy and meeting our obligations for reduced emissions of greenhouse gases requires a carefully planned and coordinated approach.	2.1.1 Initiate MOU for Cooperation on Addressing Climate Change.	MOU with Canada is finalized.	Summer 2005	ENR and Canada
		2.1.2 Prepare and release a revised Greenhouse Gas Strategy and implementation plan.	Revised strategy and implementation plan are completed.	Fall 2005	ENR and ITI
		2.1.3 Prepare and release an Energy Policy "White Paper".	White Paper is released for discussion and feedback.	Fall 2005	ENR and ITI
		2.1.4 Prepare and release a broad NWT Energy Plan.	Energy Plan is completed.	Spring 2006	ENR and ITI
		2.1.5 Prepare and release a climate change impacts and adaptation plan developed in consultation with affected departments.	Plan developed.	Spring 2006	ENR, ITI, PWS, MACA and DOT
		2.1.6 Support the Arctic Energy Alliance to initiate community energy plans.	Support provided.	Spring 2006	ENR and Arctic Energy Alliance
2.2 Con Mine Reclamation	A proposed closure and reclamation plan submitted to the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board in partial fulfillment of the Miramar's closure obligations pursuant to the federal water licence and territorial land lease needs to be reviewed, revised as necessary, and implemented.	2.2.1 Work with Miramar Con Mining Limited and the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board technical working group to complete the review of the proposed Con Mine closure and reclamation plan.	Review of the closure and reclamation plan is completed.	Winter 2006	ENR
		2.2.2 Monitor implementation of the approved closure and reclamation plan by Miramar Con Mine Limited.	Monitoring of the closure and reclamation plan is underway.	2010	ENR and MACA
2.3 Giant Mine Reclamation	In 2005, it is anticipated that Giant Mine will become an orphaned site. Governments must proceed with care, maintenance and remediation activities in order to ensure continued protection of human health, safety and the environment.	2.3.1 Implement a mine site care and maintenance plan.	Care and maintenance plan is implemented.	Summer 2005	GNWT (ENR lead) and INAC
		2.3.2 Finalize and submit for regulatory approval a Giant Mine Closure and Reclamation Plan.	Closure and reclamation plan is submitted to the Land and Water Board.	Winter 2006	GNWT (ENR lead) and INAC
		2.3.3 Implement the approved Giant Mine closure and reclamation plan.	Closure and reclamation plan is implemented.	Winter 2008	GNWT (ENR lead) and INAC
2.4 Historic Uranium Transportation Route Cleanup	A comprehensive plan is needed to dispose of contaminated soils along the portion of the historic Northern Transportation Route from Port Radium to the NWT border. ENR is working with NRCAN on the Plan.	2.4.1 Develop and implement a comprehensive plan for managing contaminated soil along the Northern Transportation Route.	Management plan for final disposal of contaminated soil is implemented.	Winter 2007	ENR and NRCAN



Initiative	Issue	Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Accountability
2.5 Keeping Our Water Clean	Safe drinking water and a healthy aquatic environment need to be preserved in the NWT. Continual care and ongoing coordination and cooperation between various government departments and agencies are required.	2.5.1 Work with NWT and federal partners to identify steps needed to map those areas surrounding communities where land and water activities could impact community drinking water supplies.	Steps to map NWT community drinking water source protection areas are identified and underway.	Fall 2005	ENR with MACA
		2.5.2 Work with NWT and federal partners to develop a GNWT protocol to help protect community drinking water sources through the use of existing legislation.	GNWT drinking water protocol is completed and implemented.	Spring 2006	ENR with H&SS, MACA and PWS
		2.5.3 Identify and proceed with actions towards an NWT-Alberta bilateral agreement under the Mackenzie River Transboundary Master Agreement.	Process for achieving a trans-boundary agreement is identified and implemented.	Fall 2007	ENR, Alberta Government and DIAND
2.6 Protecting Communities from Forest Fire	The problem of forest fires threatening communities within the forest areas of the Northwest Territories requires a broader-based solution than provided through forest fire suppression and emergency responses alone.	2.6.1 Develop a MOU for wildfire management between ENR, Parks Canada and Alberta for the area adjacent to Fort Smith.	Wildfire management MOU for Fort Smith is completed.	Fall 2005	ENR, Parks Canada, Alberta Government
		2.6.2 Initiate a MOU for wildfire management between ENR and the Yukon for the area adjacent to Fort Liard and the Peel River area.	Development of wildfire management MOU for Fort Liard is underway.	Fall 2005	ENR, Yukon Government
		2.6.3 Update the MOU on FireSmart planning and implementation between Municipal and Community Affairs and ENR.	FireSmart MOU is updated.	Winter 2006	ENR, MACA
		2.6.4 Develop landscape fire management plans for four communities: Tsiigehtchic, Fort Smith, Enterprise, Fort Providence.	Landscape fire management plans for identified communities are completed.	Spring 2007	ENR

### 3.0 Managing Development to Sustain The Environment

Initiative	Issue	Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Accountability
3.1 Best Management Practices	Potential impacts from the fast paced development and use of natural resources must be identified and mitigated.	3.1.1 Develop Protocol Agreements between ENR and ITI to maintain linkages, support joint activities and ensure ongoing cooperation between the two new departments.	Protocol Agreements are completed and implemented.	Fall 2005	ENR and ITI
		3.1.2 Develop "air quality best management practices" for the upstream oil and gas industry.	Oil and gas industry "air quality best management practices" are completed.	Winter 2006	ENR and Environment Canada
		3.1.3 Create Standard Operating Procedures for Commercial Timber Harvesting and Oil and Gas Development to minimize impacts to the forest resources.	Standard Operating Procedures are completed.	Winter 2006	ENR
		3.1.4 Create Guidelines for Domestic Use of Forest Resources.	Guidelines for Domestic Use of Forest Resources are completed.	Spring 2006	ENR
		3.1.5 Develop "best management practices" compendium for minerals, oil and gas development to reduce environmental impacts, especially on forest, wildlife and habitat, including improvements to the regulatory regime.	Minerals, oil and gas development "best management practices" compendium is completed.	Fall 2007	ENR
3.2 Managing Human Activities to Reduce Cumulative Effects	A well coordinated approach must be in place to best manage human activities that affect the forests and wildlife, and protect the environment.	3.2.1 In partnership with industry and Deh Cho First Nations, establish the Deh Cho Boreal Caribou Committee to identify management actions to reduce and mitigate impacts on Boreal caribou and their habitat from oil and gas development.	Deh Cho Boreal Caribou Committee is in place and has begun work.	Fall 2005	ENR
		3.2.2 Develop a Final Terms of Reference for a Multi-project Environmental Monitoring Agency.	Terms of reference for multi-project agency developed.	Spring 2006	ENR, DIAND, Aboriginal organizations, Industry
		3.2.3 Establish environmental assessment, protection and monitoring specialists throughout the NWT to track environmental changes and management actions taken.	Positions established in regions and headquarters.	Spring 2007	ENR
		3.2.4 Develop and implement a GNWT strategic framework for assessing and managing cumulative effects.	Framework developed and implementation underway.	Spring 2007	ENR
3.3 A Forest Renewal Strategy for the NWT	Adequate and timely regeneration following the removal of forest vegetation is necessary to maintain the long-term sustainability of NWT forest resources.	3.3.1 Prepare a Strategy for Forest Renewal in the NWT.	"A Strategy for Forest Renewal in the NWT" is completed.	Spring 2006	ENR
		3.3.2 Complete Regenerating Stand Surveys for the Deh Cho and South Slave regions.	Stand surveys are completed.	Fall 2006	ENR



Initiative	Issue	Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Accountability
3.4 Species At Risk	Under the federal <i>Species at Risk Act</i> , territorial recovery strategies are required for species that have been listed under the COSEWIC as "endangered" or "threatened" in the NWT.	3.4.1 Work with Renewable Resource Boards and Aboriginal governments to complete the Boreal Caribou Recovery Strategy and implement actions.	Boreal Caribou Recovery Strategy is completed and implementation is underway.	Fall 2006	ENR
		3.4.2 Work with the Deh Cho and Tlicho communities to develop a Mackenzie Wood Bison Management Plan to address the expanding population and public safety concerns along Highway 3.	Management Plan for Mackenzie Wood Bison is completed.	Fall 2007	ENR
		3.4.3 Develop management plans for grizzly bear and wolverine.	Grizzly bear and wolverine management plans are completed.	Fall 2007	ENR

## 4.0 Building On What We Know

Initiative	Issue	Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Accountability
4.1 Classifying and Mapping Ecosystems	An ecological land classification based on landscape, climate zones and vegetation is required to assess impacts of human activities and forest fires on wildlife habitat, forest productivity and succession.	4.1.1 Prepare maps of revised ecoregions for the Mackenzie Valley.	Mackenzie Valley ecoregion maps are completed.	Fall 2006	ENR
		4.1.2 Complete ecological land classification for the remainder of the NWT.	Land classifications are completed.	Spring 2007	ENR
4.2 Gathering Baseline Information and Monitoring Cumulative Effects	Collectively, all human activities take their toll on the environment. To know how the land is reacting, we need to have a good sense of current conditions. To do this, baseline information is gathered and changes over time are monitored.	4.2.1 Implement the Bathurst caribou monitoring program.	Bathurst caribou monitoring program implemented.	Fall 2005	ENR
		4.2.2 Establish a more extensive permanent forest monitoring plot network to contribute to the baseline knowledge of forests in the NWT.	Network expanded by 30 plots.	Fall 2005	ENR
		4.2.2 Expand the existing air quality network into small communities.	Network expanded beyond current larger centers.	Spring 2007	ENR

## 5.0 Getting Information to Those Who Need It

Initiative	Issue	Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Accountability
5.1 Reporting on the NWT State of the Environment	State of the Environment reporting helps to ensure a knowledgeable and informed public that is able to effectively participate in ensuring the sustainability of the northern ecosystem.	5.1.1 Produce annual reports and publish scientific reports on the results from the Western NWT Biophysical Study.	Annual reports are completed and available for distribution.	Annually	ENR
		5.1.2 Complete the second report of the NWT Biodiversity Action Plan.	Report is completed and available for distribution.	Fall 2005	ENR
		5.1.3 Complete the 2005 report of general ranking of species.	Report is completed and available for distribution.	Spring 2006	ENR
		5.1.4 Develop a "state of the environment" summary to report annually on the NWT environment, especially its air, wildlife and forests.	Report is completed and available for distribution.	Fall 2007	ENR
5.2 Designing a Wildlife Management Information System (WMIS)	A Wildlife Management Information System (WMIS) is needed to allow ENR to store, analyze and distribute information and data related to wildlife management so that decision-makers have current information.	5.2.1 Complete the design and testing of the WMIS.	Wildlife Management Information System is fully operational.	Fall 2006	ENR
5.3 Developing a Forest Management Information System	A Forest Management Information System (FMIS) is needed to provide better support to decision-making processes, enable the sharing of information with other levels of government, and assist in a more integrated approach to natural resource management.	5.3.1 Complete the Implementation Report Phase of FMIS.	Report is completed.	Spring 2006	ENR
		5.3.2 Develop an Information Management Strategic Plan.	Strategic plan for information management is completed.	Spring 2006	ENR
5.4 Tracking Environmental Assessment and Management of Development Projects	A system to track GNWT actions taken with respect to development projects is needed to ensure consistent management recommendations and actions and that commitments are fulfilled in a timely manner.	5.4.1 Conduct an Initial Needs Assessment and Preliminary Analysis for the development of an Environmental Assessment Tracking System.	Needs assessment completed and reported as a basis for further actions.	Spring 2007	ENR
5.5 Upgrading the Compliance Database	A web-based compliance database is needed to allow compliance staff of ENR to store and distribute occurrence and investigation information.	5.5.1 Merge regional information into central database, and transfer into web-based application.	Web-based enforcement database is fully operational.	Summer 2005	ENR
5.6 Develop a Publicly Accessible Air Quality Information System	Industry and the public want real-time access to air quality information. With the addition of new monitoring technology, ENR can do so.	5.6.1 Provide real-time access to air quality monitoring information through the Internet.	Real-time air quality information is available online.	Fall 2005	ENR
5.7 Public Awareness of Environment and Natural Resources	The public must become more aware of environmental and natural resource issues and how personal actions affect the quality of the environment.	5.7.1 Develop a communications plan for the Department of ENR.	Communications plan is developed.	Fall 2005	ENR



## 6.0 Managing Shared Resources Cooperatively

Initiative	Issue	Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Accountability
6.1 Managing Shared Wildlife Populations	Common management plans and actions must be developed with neighbouring jurisdictions to ensure that human activities do not impact the health or productivity of shared wildlife populations.	6.1.1 Assist the Inuvialuit to complete agreements on the polar bear populations shared with Nunavut.	Polar bear population agreements completed.	Spring 2006	ENR
		6.1.2 Release GNWT Response to the Bathurst Caribou Management Plan and implement actions.	GNWT response to management plan released and actions are implemented.	Summer 2006	ENR
		6.1.3 Develop agreements with the Government of Alberta and British Columbia on the management of shared Boreal caribou populations.	Shared Boreal caribou agreements are completed.	Summer 2007	ENR, Alberta Government, Government of British Columbia
		6.1.4 Work with the Government of Nunavut to conduct a census of the Beverly caribou herd.	Beverly caribou census is completed.	Summer 2007	ENR
6.2 Managing Diseased Bison	The diseased bison in and around Wood Buffalo National Park pose a risk to the disease-free Mackenzie and Liard Bison Herds.	6.2.1 Engage First Nations, Parks Canada, the Government of Alberta, Agriculture Canada and industry associations to address the diseased bison in Wood Buffalo National Park.	Consultations with all parties on options are completed.	Fall 2005	ENR
		6.2.2 Develop an action plan and a complementary program with the Deninu K'ue First Nation and Fort Resolution Metis Council to re-introduce disease-free bison to the Hook Lake area.	Action plan and program developed with all parties involved.	Fall 2006	ENR

## 7.0 Promoting NWT Management of Its Resources

Initiative	Issue	Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Accountability
7.1 Participation in Devolution Negotiations	Devolution of INAC's Northern Affairs Program to the NWT will enhance the ability of the territorial government to serve the interests of residents, increase their self-sufficiency and promote the effective, efficient and coordinated development of the natural resources.	7.1.1 Develop options for organizational design models that include responsibilities and functions associated with the transfer of the Northern Affairs Program.	Post-devolution organizational design options for ENR are identified.	Fall 2006	ENR with MAA, FMBS, MACA, ITI, PWS, Executive

## 8.0 Supporting Our Partners

Initiative	Issue	Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Accountability
8.1 Implementing the Protected Areas Strategy	Implementation of the Mackenzie Valley Five Year Action Plan by the partners of the NWT Protected Areas Strategy will accelerate the establishment of protected areas in this region in advance of pipeline construction.	8.1.1 Review the organizational structure of the PAS and make recommendations to PAS partners on ways to improve its effectiveness.	Review completed and recommendations made.	Summer 2005	ENR
		8.1.1 Develop a preliminary map of critical wildlife habitat in the Mackenzie Valley.	Draft critical wildlife habitat map is completed and available for review.	Winter 2007	ENR
		8.1.2 Complete renewable resource assessment for candidate areas.	Candidate area renewable resource assessments are completed.	Fall 2007	ENR
8.2 Supporting Community-based Forestry Development	Communities in forested areas want support to develop an understanding of the forest industry so that they can successfully develop forest resources at the community level.	8.2.1 Conduct a community workshop on Forestry Development.	Workshop is completed.	Fall 2005	ENR
		8.2.2 Develop a Gwich'in Forest Management Plan.	Management plan is completed.	Spring 2006	ENR