



News Release

September 22, 2026

The Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board (YESAB) and the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (Review Board) have signed a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to support cooperation, coordination and collaboration in impact assessment across the Yukon and the Mackenzie Valley of the NWT. The MOU provides a framework for the Boards to work together to assess projects that cross the territorial boundary or have potential transboundary or transregional environmental or socio-economic effects.

The new MOU replaces the Cooperation Agreement signed by the Boards in 2006 and builds on nearly two decades of experience working together. It recognizes each Board's unique statutory mandate and supports practical steps to improve consistency, efficiency and certainty for proponents, governments, Indigenous organizations and the public by:

- coordinating project reviews to improve **consistency and efficiency** across jurisdictions.
- conducting assessment processes that are **rigorous, fair, timely and reflective of northern environmental, social, cultural and economic realities**.
- **aligning information requirements** and process steps where appropriate.
- sharing resources, best practices and capacity-building opportunities, and **enabling project-specific coordination** agreements when needed.

The MOU does not create new legal powers, duties or funding obligations, and it does not alter the responsibilities of either Board under the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act or the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act. Instead, it offers a practical framework for early notice, open information sharing and coordinated approaches where warranted.

Looking ahead, YESAB and the Review Board remain committed to working together in effective ways—grounded in respect for each other's mandates, northern governance systems and the people and communities we serve. Through this MOU, the Boards will continue to support assessment processes that are clear, effective and responsive to the realities of the Yukon and the Mackenzie Valley.

Background:

YESAB is an independent assessment board established under the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act*. YESAB conducts environmental and socio-economic assessments of projects in the Yukon through designated offices, the Executive Committee, panels of the Board or joint review panels, depending on the assessment process.

The Review Board is an independent co-management board responsible for environmental assessment and impact review in Mackenzie Valley. The Review Board was established under

the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act*, which resulted from land claims in the Northwest Territories and gives Indigenous people of the Mackenzie Valley a greater role in resource management.

Quotes:

“YESAB has a long-standing relationship with our Northern impact assessment partners, and this updated MOU with the MacKenzie Valley Review Board reflects our joint responsibilities on transboundary assessments in the Yukon and Northwest Territories. The assessment of major projects is rapidly changing across the country, and this MOU sets out joint processes to help ensure consistent and efficient assessments. We look forward to continuing to work together with MacKenzie Valley Review Board in the future.

Stephen Rose
Chairperson, YESAB

“The Mackenzie Valley and the Yukon are connected by communities, lands, families and interests across territorial boundaries. This MOU reflects the Review Board and the YESAB’s shared commitment to working together to conduct coordinated, timely and respectful environmental assessments for projects in our regions. By cooperating early and sharing information openly, we can help advance responsible development in a way that benefits residents of both the Northwest Territories and Yukon.”

JoAnne Deneron
Chairperson, Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board

Contacts:

Kent Bretzlaff
Executive Director
Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board
Kent.Bretzlaff@yesab.ca
1-867-332-1777

Mark Cliffe-Phillips
Executive Director
Mackenzie Valley Review Board
mcliffephillips@reviewboard.ca
867-766-7055
