



JoAnne Deneron
Chairperson
Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board
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DELIVERED VIA EMAIL
August 14, 2026

Dear Ms. Deneron:

EA1213-02: Proposed Expansion of the Mackenzie Valley Highway Project

Further to the July 28, 2026, letter, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) is writing to advise the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (Review Board) of its revised approach for the Mackenzie Valley Highway Project (EA1213-02). The GNWT requesting amendment to the geographic scope of the project currently under environmental assessment, expanding it from the existing Wrigley-to-Norman Wells corridor to a corridor extending from Wrigley to a connection with the Dempster Highway (Highway No. 8), south of Inuvik.

As outlined in the July 28 letter, the Department of Strategic Infrastructure, Energy and Supply Chains has engaged with the Review Board, the federal government Major Projects Office, and Indigenous governments and organizations in the Gwich'in, Sahtu, and Dehcho regions to identify a pathway for integrating the Norman Wells-to-Inuvik section into the current project. Feedback received through these discussions supported assessing the Mackenzie Valley Highway as a single corridor under a "one project, one review" approach. Accordingly, the GNWT proposes to expand the project and environmental assessment scope to include a continuous highway corridor extending from Wrigley to the Dempster Highway, south of Inuvik. This approach would enable the approximately 800-kilometre all-season transportation connection to Inuvik to be considered through a single, coordinated environmental assessment.

This proposed amendment will include the following project works and activities:

- Widening of the existing cleared Mackenzie Valley Winter Road (MVWR) right-of-way (ROW) and Mackenzie Valley Fibre Link ROW, and clearing of new ROW
- Construction of approximately 784 km of new all-season gravel highway embankment, and intermittent pullouts
- Construction of bridge and bridge-culvert structures (major crossings) and installation of culverts over minor crossings, and for drainage
- Construction and operation of temporary and permanent borrow sources and quarries and associated all-season access roads

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- Water withdrawal and water use for winter access, highway construction, and highway maintenance
- Construction and operation of temporary support infrastructure and workspaces, including camps, maintenance yards, laydown and staging areas, fuel storage areas, airstrips, and barge landing
- Staging, supply and resupply of equipment, materials, fuel, and personnel
- Construction and operation of permanent maintenance yards
- Closure and reclamation of temporary borrow sources, quarries, and workspaces
- Decommissioning, removal and rehabilitation of existing bridge and bridge-culvert crossings pending discussions with Indigenous governments and other affected parties
- Demobilization of equipment and materials
- Closure and reclamation of portions of the MVWR ROW not used for the Project
- Operations and maintenance activities including snow clearing, grading, dust control, and bridge and culvert maintenance

The GNWT is reviewing the Review Board's 2015 Revised Terms of Reference (TOR) for the MVH Project to determine whether updates are needed to reflect the revised project scope and assessment approach. The GNWT will work with the Review Board to establish an appropriate process for revising the TOR and the environmental assessment work plan.

The GNWT recognizes that including the Norman Wells-to-Inuvik section within EA1213-02 will require additional engagement, technical studies, baseline data collection, and assessment. Given this expansion of the project scope, the GNWT has determined that a revised Developer's Assessment Report (DAR) is the most appropriate means of addressing the full project and associated changes. Accordingly, the GNWT intends to replace the previously proposed DAR Addendum with a Revised DAR, providing reviewers with a single, consolidated assessment document. To allow sufficient time to incorporate the additional studies and analyses, the GNWT requests that the Review Board extend the submission deadline to March 31, 2027.

The GNWT will engage with Review Board staff in the coming days to discuss the proposed approach and next steps. Should you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (867) 767-9082 ext. 31035 or via email at Michael.Auge@gov.nt.ca. Alternatively, you can also contact Patricia Coyne, Manager of Mackenzie Valley Highway Environmental Affairs at (867)767-9082 ext. 31033 or via email at Patricia.Coyne@gov.nt.ca.

Sincerely,



Michael Auge
Director, Strategic Infrastructure
Infrastructure

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