

**IR Number:** *Number assigned by MVEIRB* \_\_\_\_\_

**Source:** *North Slave Métis Alliance*

**To:** *Developer*

**Subject:** *Historic and present land use by traditional land use groups.*

### **Preamble**

*The TOR requires a discussion of historic and present land use, with the identification of traditional land use groups and areas of overlapping land use. This information is supposed to be in Chapter 9, Existing Environment. Section 9 recounts the history of the Dogrib and Yellowknives, including the construction of Fort Reliance, Rocher River, several European explorers, and references Emille Petitot's journals and maps, all of which should contain significant reference to Métis land occupation and use, but strangely makes no mention of the Métis. There is no mention of the indigenous North Slave Métis anywhere in Chapter 9 of the DAR, with the possible exception of a general reference to the Métis occupants of Fort Resolution and Rocher River contained on page 9.6.12.*

*In section 9.6.3 the DAR it states that "Most of the Aboriginal residents of the South Slave region are descendents from the Chipewyan." This statement is not supported, and conflicts with the historical fact that many of the Métis in the Athabasca and Mackenzie Districts, and throughout Rupert's Land are descendants of aboriginal Métis whose bloodlines include a diverse combination of various European and North American cultures. Historical facts indicate that there were numerous disease epidemics that tended to kill off full-blooded Dene, who had no inherited disease resistance. Many decades ago there were thought to be no full-blooded Dene left. So, genetically, if not legally, most of the Aboriginal People in the North today could be considered Métis.*

*Despite the participation of the South Slave Métis in the project, the proponent fails to grasp the essence of Métis culture, heritage, and traditional land use and occupancy in the area likely to be affected by this project, and fails to recognise the independent existence of Métis Peoples. In section 9.6.4.1.1 the DAR states that "traditional lifestyles consist of hunting, trapping, fishing and gathering of plant resources." There is no mention of the distinctive traditional activities of the Métis, such as guiding, expediting, transporting, trade, interpretation, prospecting, mining, and commercial harvesting. There is no recognition of the fact that the Métis spoke their own language, which is not an Athapaskan dialect.*

*Section 35 of the Constitution of Canada recognises three distinct groups of Aboriginal Peoples of Canada – Inuit, Indians, and Métis. Although it can be difficult, today, to culturally distinguish modern Métis from Dene, the differences in culture were readily recognised in the past, including at the time of colonization. Therefore, the aboriginal rights of the Dene and Métis may differ significantly, especially when it comes to heritage and culture related rights. This warrants separate consideration as part of the cultural and heritage resource impact assessment.*

### **Request**

*Please discuss the historic and present land use and occupancy of the North Slave Métis, including the overlapping areas of land use with the various components of this project.*