



October 8, 2024

Notice of Proceeding

Mackenzie Valley Highway, Government of the Northwest Territories

Technical Sessions

The Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (the Review Board) plans to hold technical sessions in Yellowknife on November 19-21, 2024.

The purpose of a technical session is for parties to discuss technical issues with the developer in a face-to-face setting to understand and, where possible, resolve issues. It aims to:

- encourage open discussion between parties and the developer on scientific information in an informal setting;
- have focused discussions on project effects that could lead to significant adverse impacts on the environment or people;
- seek clarification on responses to information requests or other evidence on the public record for the project; and,
- identify the outstanding issues to focus on during the remainder of the environmental assessment.

The technical session is informal and will be facilitated by Review Board staff. Review Board members might be present as observers. The meeting will be hybrid, with the option to participate in-person and online. Parties and their technical advisors are strongly encouraged to attend the technical sessions in person. At a minimum, each party should please try to have at least one individual there in person to coordinate with any of their consultants or other staff online. The meeting will be recorded and transcribed. Interpreters will not be present.

The Review Board is holding a series of community sessions in Ft. Simpson, Wrigley, Tulita, Norman Wells and Deline in October. The Review Board proposes to have technical sessions in Yellowknife. In past EAs, it has proven to be good location because of the size of venues and number of hotel rooms, and because it enables broad participation by the federal and territorial government representatives.



The Review Board has attached a draft agenda indicating which topics will be discussed on which days. **Please provide any comments on the location or initial draft agenda by October 16, 2024.**

Pre-technical session conference

A **pre-technical session conference will be held at 10 am on November 1, 2024**, in Yellowknife at the Review Board office. The purpose of this conference is to ensure that parties and the developer have a common understanding of the purpose of the technical session and expectations on how to participate effectively.

A detailed draft agenda for the technical sessions (based on the draft attached to this Notice, considering any comments) will be sent before the pre-technical session conference and finalized during the conference. Parties are encouraged to attend in person, but teleconference will be available. Further details to follow.

Tips on preparing for a technical session

The following tips are to assist parties to prepare to participate effectively in the limited time available. They are based on material in the *Environmental Impact Assessment Guidelines 2004* and through lessons learned in conducting environmental assessment.

During the technical session, the Review Board encourages parties to:

- **focus discussion on significant issues** – those that matter most to you
- **concentrate questioning on project effects** on the biophysical, social, or cultural environment that **could lead to significant adverse impacts** on the environment or people
- ask questions that will provide you with information on **how** these impacts could occur (that is, the causal mechanism) and how they can be mitigated
- be prepared to discuss **what kind, and how much, change you think would be acceptable, what kind and how much would be unacceptable, and why** (that is, your views on impact significance)
- examine any **relationships between different impacts on valued components** that are **connected** (for example, between increased access, predation, harvesting and wildlife populations; between increased drugs and alcohol, family violence and other crime; or between climate change, road failures and downstream impacts)
- **prepare your questions ahead of time**, and keep them concise so that maximum time can be spent answering and asking follow-up questions
- **reference** relevant public registry **documents and page numbers** to provide context to your questions. If you reference other material, be prepared to submit it to the public registry.



Contact information

The primary contact on behalf of the Review Board for the Mackenzie Valley Highway project is Senior Environmental Assessment Advisor Catherine Fairbairn (867-766-7054, cfairbairn@reviewboard.ca).





Draft Agenda by Day

Tuesday, November 19	
Morning	Opening remarks Overview of the Project Caribou and Moose
Afternoon	Caribou and Moose Species at Risk, Other wildlife
Wednesday, November 20	
Morning	Socio-economics Effects on Communities
Afternoon	Culture and Cultural Resources Traditional Harvesting
Thursday, November 21	
Morning	Water Quality and Quantity Fish and Fish Habitat Terrain and Permafrost
Afternoon	Air Quality Noise Vegetation

