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November 21, 2025

File: MV2025X0020

Mark Cliffe-Phillips  
Mackenzie Valley Review Board  
200 Scotia Centre  
Box 938, 5102-50th Avenue  
Yellowknife NT X1A 2N7

Sent by email

Dear Mark Cliffe-Phillips,

**Re: NWT Housing Corporation - Notice of Preliminary Screening Determination – Application for Land Use Permit – Hay River Geotech – Hay River, NT**

The Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board (Board) met on November 18, 2025, and considered the Application Package from Northwest Territories Housing Corporation for Land Use Permit (Permit) MV2025X0020 for the Hay River geotechnical investigation project (Project) in accordance with the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* (MVRMA).

The Board conducted a preliminary screening based on the public record for the proceeding. Based on the evidence provided, the Board is satisfied the screening has been completed according to section 125 of the MVRMA and has decided **not to refer** the Project to environmental assessment. The Board's Preliminary Screening Determination and Reasons for Decision, as required by section 121 of the MVRMA, is attached.

If the Board does not receive notice of referral to environmental assessment, it can proceed with issuance of Permit MV2025X0020 on **Tuesday, December 2, 2025**.

The Board and staff look forward to continued communications throughout the pause period. Please contact Chris Hotson via [email](#) or at (867) 766-7459 with any questions or concerns regarding this letter.

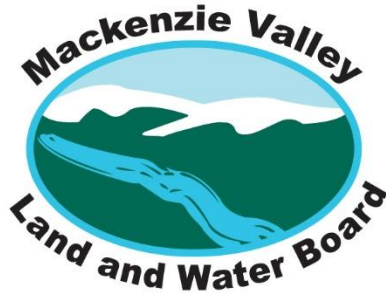
Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tanya MacIntosh". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the beginning.

Tanya MacIntosh  
Chair, Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board

BCC'd to: Dehcho Distribution List  
Khaled Zaarour – Senior Project Officer, Infrastructure Services,  
Rob Girvan – Tetra Tech Canada Inc.  
Dani Rogers – Manager, Resource Management, GNWT-ECC

Attached: Preliminary Screening Determination and Reasons for Decision



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## Preliminary Screening Determination and Reasons for Decision

Land Use Permit Application	
<b>File Number</b>	MV2025X0020
<b>Company</b>	Northwest Territories Housing Corporation
<b>Project</b>	Hay River Geotechnical Investigation
<b>Location</b>	Hay River, NT
<b>Activity</b>	Miscellaneous
<b>Date of Decision</b>	November 18, 2025

### 1.0 Decision

In accordance with subsection 124(1) of the [Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act](#) (MVRMA), the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board (MVLWB/Board) met on November 18, 2025, to make a preliminary screening determination on the Application from Northwest Territories (NWT) Housing Corporation (Applicant) for Land Use Permit (Permit) MV2025X0020<sup>1</sup> for the Hay River geotechnical investigation project (Project).<sup>2</sup>

The Board has decided not to refer the proposed Project to the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (the Review Board) for Environmental Assessment because, based on evidence, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed Project will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.

<sup>1</sup>See MVLWB Online Registry [www.mvlwb.com](http://www.mvlwb.com) for [NWT Housing Corp – Hay River Geotech – Land Use Permit Application – Oct3 25](#).

<sup>2</sup> The Project is the Hay River Geotech project, which is the proposed development, where “development” is defined in Part 5 of the [MVRMA](#) as:

“any undertaking, or any part or extension of an undertaking, that is carried out on land or water and includes an acquisition of lands pursuant to the *Historic Sites and Monuments Act* and measures carried out by a department or agency of government leading to the establishment of a park subject to the *Canada National Parks Act* or the establishment of a park under a territorial law.”

## 2.0 List of Defined Terms and Acronyms

Applicant	Northwest Territories Housing Corporation
Application	The complete application package submitted by the Applicant for Land Use Permit MV2025X0020.
MVLWB or Board	Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board
MVRMA	<a href="#">Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act</a>
Minister	Minister of the Government of the Northwest Territories – Environment and Climate Change
Party	As per the LWB <a href="#">Rules of Procedure</a> , an applicant, a person, or an organization participating in the regulatory proceeding for the Application.
Project	Hay River geotechnical investigation drilling project, which is the proposed development (as defined in Part 5 of the MVRMA).
Review Board	Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board
Standard Permit Conditions	LWB <a href="#">Standard Land Use Permit Conditions Template</a>

## 3.0 Background and Scope of Screening

On October 3, 2025, the Applicant submitted an application for a new Permit MV2025X0020 (the Application). The Application is to conduct a geotechnical investigation to determine a suitable foundation for a new 3-storey multi-unit residential building. These activities are located on Lots 629 and 630, Plan 51989 CLSR, LTO 365, in Hay River, NT, within the Dehcho Region.

Prior to submission, NWT Housing Corporation engaged with potentially affected parties to ensure there were no objections to the proposed scale and nature of project activities. The identified parties in the Engagement Plan are the following:

- Town of Hay River
- K’altl’odeeche First Nation
- Ts’ueh Nda (West Point First Nation)
- Hay River (Xatlo Dehe) Metis Government Council
- Hay River Regional Health for Woodland Manor
- Hay River Pentecostal Chapel
- Rows Realty for Rows Trailer Court
- Housing NWT for 46 Woodland Dr.
- Building at 44 Woodland Dr. – North of Site – Owner 1
- Building at 44 Woodland Dr. – North of Site – Owner 2
- Building at 44 Woodland Dr. – North of Site – Owner 3

According to the Applicant’s engagement records, written notification was sent out via email in August and September 2025, along with follow-up phone calls and additional emails. West Point First Nation requested being directly notified if artifacts were found on site, and Housing NWT for 46 Woodland Dr. requested one week’s notice before drilling so tenants can be notified of potential noise and dust. No other comments or concerns were recorded.

In accordance with paragraph 125(1)(a) of the [MVRMA](#), the Board must conduct a preliminary screening of the proposed Project to determine and report to the Review Board whether, in its opinion, the proposed Project might have a significant adverse impact on the environment, or might be a cause of public concern. The details of the Board's analysis are set out in section [4.0](#) below.

### **3.1 Scope of Screening**

The project scope includes use of equipment, geotechnical drilling, and progressive reclamation and closure and reclamation activities. Tetra Tech has been retained to administer the work; they propose to use Enviro-Tech Drilling Solutions out of Yellowknife to complete the drilling.

Four boreholes are proposed to be drilled to a depth of 20 m, or to refusal if encountered. Samples will be collected at 1.5 m intervals, or at changes in stratigraphy, where warranted. Two monitoring wells will be installed to measure groundwater levels.

Borehole locations and elevations will be recorded with a handheld GPS device. The geotechnical drilling is expected to take place over three days. However, details of the site investigation may be modified to suit site conditions.

As the geotechnical investigation will take place within the Town of Hay River, no camp will be required, and no fuel will be transferred during the Project. Additionally, the site already has road access. No trees, vegetation, overburden, or organic soil will need to be removed for this geotechnical investigation. The boreholes will be backfilled with drill cuttings; upon completion, no further restoration is anticipated to be required.

### **3.2 Public Record and Regulatory Proceeding**

To assist the Board in its preliminary screening determination for the Project, the Board distributed the Application and a draft permit for public review on October 10, 2025, inviting reviewers to provide comments and recommendations on the Application and the preliminary screening (e.g., on impacts and mitigation measures) using the Online Review System. Comments were due October 28, 2025, with responses from the Applicant due November 5, 2025. The Board received comments and recommendations from Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Government of Northwest Territories – Department of Environment and Climate Change – Environmental Regulatory Analyst, and Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre.

Since there were no requests to extend the reviewer comment deadline, the Board is satisfied that a reasonable period of notice was given to affected communities and First Nations, as required by subsection 63(2) of the [MVRMA](#).

Pursuant to section 27, paragraphs (a) and (b) of the [Dehcho First Nations \(DCFN\) Interim Measures Agreement](#),<sup>3</sup> the Board has determined that written notice was given to the DCFN, and that a reasonable period of time was allowed for DCFN to make representations with respect to the Application.

#### **4.0 Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations**

Table 1 below summarizes:

- the potential impacts of the proposed Project;
- the concerns that were identified during the regulatory proceeding and how the Applicant addressed those concerns;
- the proposed and potential mitigations for the potential impacts; and
- the Board’s analysis of the potential impacts and proposed mitigations.

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<sup>3</sup> See MVLWB Land Claims, IMAs, and Land Use Plans webpage to access the [Dehcho First Nations Interim Measures Agreement](#).

**Table 1: Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations for the Proposed Project**

<b>Potential Impact</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Proposed Mitigations</b> <i>Description of measures to reduce potential impacts, including consideration of cumulative impacts and climate change.</i>	<b>Board Analysis and Determination</b>
Soil Contamination	Use of machinery has potential for hydrocarbon spills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Applicant indicated that soil contamination from hydrocarbon spills is a potential impact, given the use of machinery onsite. To mitigate, the Applicant has noted spill containment and clean up measures will be in place.</li> <li>• The Board has standard permit conditions that are typically used to mitigate the identified potential impacts. These standards conditions include:<sup>4</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>FUEL CONTAINMENT</b></li> <li>○ <b>SPILL RESPONSE</b></li> <li>○ <b>DRIP TRAYS</b></li> <li>○ <b>CLEAN UP SPILLS</b></li> <li>○ <b>REPORT SPILLS</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities are not likely to have significant adverse impact on the environment and/or will not be a cause of public concern.</p> <p>The proposed Project involves a small footprint at a pre-disturbed location for a short period of time. The Project does not require any long-term infrastructure, no new technology, and no hazardous chemicals or effluents.</p>
Soil Compaction	Use of heavy machinery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Applicant has noted this potential impact, but has further indicated, that tracked equipment will minimize soil compaction.</li> </ul>	<p>Based on the described Project, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities are not likely to have significant adverse impact on the environment and/or will not be a cause of public concern.</p> <p>Tracks on machinery generally increase the surface contact area of a load, effectively leaving less strain on topsoil.</p>
Loss or change in permafrost extent	Drilling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permafrost degradation is not anticipated but will be avoided according to the Applicant, by following best management practices, such as backfilling drill holes with the drill cuttings.</li> </ul>	<p>It is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities are not likely to have significant adverse impact on the environment and/or will not be a cause of public concern.</p>

<sup>4</sup> See the MVLWB Policies and Resources webpage to access MVLWB [Standard Land Use Permit Conditions Template](#).

#### 4.1 Consideration of Potential Impacts

Based on the potential impacts and proposed mitigations identified above in Table 1, the Board considered whether the Project might have a significant adverse impact on the environment. In general, impacts of the Project on the environment can be mitigated through the use of standard permit conditions and/or project-specific conditions established by the Board as per the LWB [Standard Process for Creating New Conditions](#). These conditions may include requirements for management and monitoring plans that provide detailed information regarding the implementation of mitigation measures and the evaluation of their effectiveness.

A draft Permit was circulated for review during the regulatory proceeding, and all Parties were given the opportunity to provide comments and recommendations on the draft conditions. In finalizing the conditions, the Board will consider all of the evidence provided through the regulatory proceeding.

#### 4.2 Consideration of Public Concern

In addition to considering the potential impacts of the Project, the Board considered whether the Project might be a cause of public concern.

Based on the evidence provided during the regulatory proceeding thus far, the Board did not identify any comments or issues that indicate that the Project is a cause of public concern.

#### 5.0 Conclusion

The Board has reviewed all the evidence received during the regulatory process with respect to the Preliminary Screening of the proposed Project. Based on the evidence, it is the Board's opinion that the proposed Project will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern, as set out in paragraph 125(1)(a) of the [MVRMA](#). The Board has therefore decided not to refer the proposed Project to Environmental Assessment. If the Board does not receive a notice of referral to environmental assessment by Monday December 1, 2025, the Board can issue the Permit on Tuesday, December 2, 2025.

SIGNATURE



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**Tanya MacIntosh, Chair**  
**Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board**

November 21, 2025

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**Date**