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May 14, 2025

File: W2025W0001

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: Wood Cutting Operation KM 185 to 188 – Notice of Preliminary Screening Determination – Renewal Application for Land Use Permit – Highway #3, NT**

The Wek'èezhì Land and Water Board (Board) met on May 14, 2025 and considered the Application Package from JR Enterprises for Land Use Permit (Permit) W2025W0001 for the Wood Cutting Operation KM 185 to 188 (Project) in accordance with the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* (MVRMA).

The Board completed a preliminary screening of the Project on July 19, 2018,<sup>1</sup> and JR Enterprises has not proposed changes to the Project. Accordingly, the Board has determined that the Project is exempt from preliminary screening under Part 1, Schedule 1, section 2 of the Exemption List Regulations to the MVRMA. Consequently, no further preliminary screening was conducted. The Board's Preliminary Screening Determination and Reasons for Decision is attached.

Please contact Janelle Vandenbrink via [email](mailto:) with any questions or concerns regarding this letter.

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<sup>1</sup> See WLWB Online Registry ([www.wlwb.ca/](http://www.wlwb.ca/)) for [W2018W0001 - Sands Enterprise - Land Use Permit - Preliminary Screening - Jul 19 18](#)

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mason Mantla', with a stylized, cursive script.

Mason Mantla  
Chair, Wek'èezhì Land and Water Board

BCC'd to: Wek'èezhì Distribution List  
John Rocher, JR Enterprises



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## Preliminary Screening Determination and Reasons for Decision

Land Use Permit Application	
File Number	W2025W0001
Company	JR Enterprises
Project	Wood Cutting Operation KM 185 to 188
Location	Highway #3, NT
Activity	Wood Operations
Date of Decision	May 14, 2025

### 1.0 Decision

In accordance with subsection 124(1) of the [Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act](#) (MVRMA), the Wek'èezhì Land and Water Board (WLWB or Board) met on May 14, 2025 to make a preliminary screening determination on the renewal Application from JR Enterprises (Applicant) for Land Use Permit W2025W0001 (Permit)<sup>1</sup> for the Wood Cutting Operation KM 185 to 188 (Project).<sup>2</sup>

The Board has determined that the Project is exempt from preliminary screening, because the Project was previously screened and the Applicant has not proposed changes to the Project.

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<sup>1</sup>See WLWB Online Registry ([www.wlwb.ca/](http://www.wlwb.ca/)) for [Wood Cutting Operation KM 185 to 188 - LUP Renewal - Application - updated Apr 16 25](#)

<sup>2</sup> The Project is the Wood Cutting Operation KM 185 to 188, 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.”

The Board's determination, including reasons for its decision, are detailed in sections [2.0](#) and [3.0](#).

## **2.0 Background and Scope of Screening**

On April 14, 2025, JR Enterprises (Applicant) submitted an Application to renew its Type B Land Use Permit. The purpose of this Application is to continue wood cutting operations between kilometre markers 185 to 188 on Highway #3 south of Behchokò. With the assistance from Board Staff, parties were contacted prior to submission of the Application as part of the pre-submission engagement. The Application included an Engagement Record detailing how potentially affected Parties were contacted to provide an opportunity for engagement. The activities associated with this Permit have not changed since the initial Application. The regulatory history of the Project is outlined below.

Prior to JR Enterprises holding the Permit for the Project, the permit was originally issued to Greg Sage of Sands Enterprise (MV2003W0044)<sup>3</sup> for activities at a different location along Highway #3 (near kilometre marker 178). On February 4, 2006, the permit was transferred from the MVLWB to the WLWB.<sup>4</sup> On August 11, 2011, when Permit MV2003W0044 expired, Permit W2011W0003 was issued to the same Permittee carrying out the same activities in a different location near KM 186 on Highway #3, which included a portion of the current Project area. The Board decided not to conduct a preliminary screening because Board staff determined that the scope of the new application was within the scope of activities previously screened.<sup>5</sup>

On May 7, 2018, Sands Enterprise submitted an Application to the WLWB to renew its Type B Land Use Permit.<sup>6</sup> The WLWB determined that a preliminary screening should be conducted because, although the scope of activities had not changed from the previous preliminary screening in 2004, the location of activities had since changed. In 2018 the location expanded from the area bounded North-South between 62°23'06"N and 62°24'43"N and East-West between 116°26'27"W and 116°29'11"W to include an overlapping area bounded North-South between 62°22'36.9"N and 62°23'40"N and East-West between 116°28'16"W and 116°30'08"W; i.e., the current Permit location. The Preliminary Screening was conducted on July 19, 2018, and the WLWB determined that, in its opinion, the development was not likely to have significant impact on the environment or be a cause for public concern.<sup>7</sup> The WLWB approved the Application and issued Type B Land Use Permit W2018W0001 for a period of five years.<sup>8</sup>

On May 29, 2023, the WLWB received an Application for Assignment of Permit from the former permittee, Sands Enterprise, to the current Permittee, JR Enterprises.<sup>9</sup> On the same date, the WLWB received a complete extension request package from JR Enterprises to continue the wood cutting operation for two

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<sup>3</sup> See MVLWB Online Registry ([www.mvlwb.ca/](http://www.mvlwb.ca/)) for [Sands Enterprises - MV2003W0044](#)

<sup>4</sup> On August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2005 the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* (MVRMA) was amended by the *Tłı̨ch̓ Land Claims and Self-Government Act*. S.C. 2005, c.1.

<sup>5</sup> See WLWB Online Registry for [W2011W0003 - Sands Enterprise - Land Use Permit - Board Decision Package - Aug 10 11](#)

<sup>6</sup> See WLWB Online Registry for [W2018W0001 - Sands Enterprise - LUP Application - May 7 18](#)

<sup>7</sup> See WLWB Online Registry for [W2018W0001 - Sands Enterprise - Land Use Permit - Preliminary Screening - Jul 19 18](#)

<sup>8</sup> See WLWB Online Registry for [W2018W0001 - Sands Enterprises - Land Use Permit - Reasons for Decision - Jul 31 18](#)

<sup>9</sup> See WLWB Online Registry for [Wood Cutting Operation KM 185 to 188 - Assignment to JR Enterprises - Application - May 29 23](#)

years.<sup>10</sup> The extension request was not distributed for public review. On July 6, 2023, the WLWB assigned the Permit to JR Enterprises<sup>11</sup> and approved the Permit extension.<sup>12</sup> The expiry of the Permit was updated to July 18, 2025.

The Applicant has not proposed changes to the Project, and under Schedule 1, section 2 of the Exemption List Regulations to the [MVRMA](#), project areas and activities that have already been subject to Part 5 of the MVRMA, and for which no changes are proposed, are exempt from preliminary screening.<sup>13</sup>

The Project areas and activities that have already been subject to Part 5 are listed below. Further information about these Project areas and activities, and associated impacts and mitigations, is detailed in the Board's Preliminary Screening Determinations, dated July 8, 2004<sup>14</sup> and July 19, 2018.<sup>15</sup>

#### Previously Screened or Assessed Areas and Activities:

The July 2018 Preliminary Screening conducted by WLWB defined the scope of the Project as a Wood Cutting Operation along Highway #3 at kilometre 185 to kilometre 188. It further detailed the land-use operation to include wood cutting, the use of equipment to support operations, the storage of fuel to support operations, and the use of an established camp site; these activities are the same as what was included in the current Application.

The Board notes that during the public review of the current Application, Government of the Northwest Territories, Department of Education, Culture and Employment – Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre (PWNHC) indicated that the equipment list in 2018 appeared to be different than the current list; however, PWNHC also commented that “the inspector for this permit allowed the addition of new equipment over the duration of the current permit as they determined the impact to be similar to existing equipment used for the project” (comment 1). PWNHC had no specific recommendations as follow-up to this comment. The Board notes that the equipment list has remained mainly consistent over the years in that there are vehicles that have been added or removed (trucks vs. ATVs) and different types of equipment for the same activity (i.e. loader). Therefore, in general the same type of equipment have been screened in the previous preliminary screenings.

During the public review of the Application, the Government of the Northwest Territories, Department of Environment and Climate Change (GNWT-ECC) commented that the minimum and maximum latitude and longitude coordinates indicated in the Application do not align with the map attached to the Application (comment 2). GNWT–ECC commented that satellite imagery suggests that the established camp falls

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<sup>10</sup> See WLWB Online Registry for [Wood Cutting Operation KM 185 to 188 - Extension Request - May 29 23](#)

<sup>11</sup> See WLWB Online Registry for [Wood Cutting Operation KM 185 to 188 - Land Use Permit - Assignment - Jul 6 23](#)

<sup>12</sup> See WLWB Online Registry for [Wood Cutting Operation KM 185 to 188 - Land Use Permit - Extension- Jul 6 23](#)

<sup>13</sup> As per Schedule 1, section 2 of the [Exemption List Regulations](#), no preliminary screening is required for:

“A development, or a part thereof, for which a renewal of a permit, licence or authorization is required that

(a) has not been modified; and

(b) has fulfilled the requirements of any environmental assessment process established by the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* or any other federal act.”

<sup>14</sup> See MVLB Online Registry for [MV2003W0044 - Sands Enterprises - Preliminary Screening - Wood Cutting Operation - July 8 04](#)

<sup>15</sup> See WLWB Online Registry for [W2018W0001 - Sands Enterprise - Land Use Permit - Preliminary Screening - Jul 19 18](#)

outside the boundaries of the minimum and maximum coordinates provided in the Application and recommended that the coordinates be updated. The Applicant responded with more specific coordinates and indicated that the coordinates provided in the Application correspond with the Project area as authorized under the 2011 Permit;<sup>16</sup> however, the Project area was expanded in 2018 when the authorization was renewed.<sup>17</sup> The Board confirms that the camp is located within the boundaries of the authorized Project area as shown in the map with the Application.<sup>18</sup>

## **2.1 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 April 14, 2025, inviting reviewers to provide comments and recommendations on the Applications and the Preliminary Screening (e.g., on impacts and mitigation measures) using the Online Review System (ORS). Comments were due on April 30, 2025, with responses from the Applicant due on May 2, 2025. The Board received comments and recommendations from Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), the Government of the Northwest Territories, Department of Environment and Climate Change – Environmental Regulatory Analyst (GNWT-ECC), the Government of the Northwest Territories, Department of Environment and Climate Change – Inspector (GNWT-ECC Inspector), and the Government of the Northwest Territories, Department of Education, Culture and Employment – Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre (PWNHC).<sup>19</sup> Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) and the Tłı̨chǫ Government (TG) indicated they had no recommendations. No Parties commented on Preliminary Screening.

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](#).

The Board is also satisfied that notice of the Application was provided to the Tłı̨chǫ Government (TG) and that a reasonable period of time was provided for the TG to make representations to the Board in accordance with section 63 of the [MVRMA](#).

## **3.0 Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations**

Although the Board has determined that the Project is exempt from preliminary screening, the Board will consider the potential impacts and proposed mitigations in establishing the Permit conditions. For Board licences and permits in general, potential impacts can be mitigated through existing, standard, and/or project-specific licence and/or permit 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.

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<sup>16</sup> See WLWB Online Registry for [W2011W0003 - Sands Enterprise - Land Use Permit - Aug 10 11](#)

<sup>17</sup> See WLWB Online Registry for [W2018W0001 - Sands Enterprise - Cover Page and Land Use Permit - Jul 19 18](#)

<sup>18</sup> See WLWB Online Registry for [Wood Cutting Operation KM 185 to 188 - LUP Renewal - Application - updated Apr 16 25](#)

<sup>19</sup> See WLWB Online Review System (<https://new.onlinereviewssystem.ca>) for [JR Enterprises - Wood Cutting Operation - Land Use Permit Renewal Application \(W2025W0001\)](#)

All Parties have had an opportunity to provide recommendations to the Board regarding draft conditions. In finalizing the conditions, the Board will consider these recommendations and all of the evidence provided through the regulatory proceeding.

#### **4.0 Conclusion**

A Preliminary Screening of the Project was completed by the WLWB on July 19, 2018,<sup>20</sup> and the Applicant has not proposed changes to the Project. Accordingly, the Board has determined that the Project is exempt from preliminary screening under Part 1, Schedule 1, section 2 of the Exemption List Regulations to the [MVRMA](#). Consequently, no further preliminary screening was conducted.

SIGNATURE



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**Mason Mantla, Chair**  
**Wek'èezhì Land and Water Board**

May 14, 2025

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**Date**

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<sup>20</sup> See WLWB Online Registry for [W2018W0001 - Sands Enterprise - Land Use Permit - Preliminary Screening - Jul 19 18](#)