



Ms. Shelagh Montgomery
Executive Director
Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board
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DELIVERED VIA EMAIL

Dear Ms. Montgomery:

Mount Gaudet Access Road – Land Use Permit and Water Licence Applications Confirmation of Application Withdrawal

On August 31, 2022, the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board (MVLWB) notified the Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Infrastructure (GNWT-INF) that the applications for the Mount Gaudet Access Road (MGAR) (Land Use Permit MV2020E0011 and Water Licence MV2020L8-0009) have been withdrawn.

In its letter, the MVLWB noted that approximately two years had passed since GNWT-INF was granted an indefinite extension to the MGAR public review comment response period. During this period MVLWB noted that no responses to the public review comments were submitted by the GNWT-INF.

The Department's request for an indefinite extension was associated with our desire to undertake additional dialogue with the Pehdzéh Kí First Nation, to address community concerns that were raised regarding the project. Within our initial request, the GNWT-INF communicated that it intended to complete this work prior to providing responses to the comments posted to the MVLWB Online Review System.

Neither the extension request, nor the subsequent MVLWB approval, indicated a timeframe or deadline by which this activity was required to be completed, nor were any formal reporting requirements identified in the correspondence from the Board. While I understand we have provided informal updates to the Board on this work, no formal updates have been provided to the Board for placement on the public registry.

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There has been much work undertaken to advance this important community capacity project. The GNWT-INF has been actively engaged with project stakeholders, in particular the Pehdzéh Kí First Nation, to address the concerns that were raised through the public review process. This work has been undertaken in anticipation of resuming the regulatory review process and working collaboratively to deliver the MGAR project to the benefit of the Pehdzéh Kí First Nation, and residents of Wrigley and the Dehcho Region, in advance of the larger Mackenzie Valley Highway project.

Since the extension was granted, GNWT-INF is not aware of any indications from the MVLWB that there were concerns related to the duration of time taken to complete this work, nor has there been any indication that the MVLWB was considering the withdrawal of the applications. I trust you can therefore appreciate our surprise, and concern, to be notified by the Board of its unilateral decision regarding the withdrawal of our applications, in particular, without any engagement or opportunity to provide input.

We respectfully request that the MVLWB reconsider the decision to withdraw these applications and allow the GNWT-INF to continue to work towards resuming the existing regulatory review process. I would be happy to arrange a follow-up discussion with the MVLWB to further elaborate on ongoing MGAR activities at your earliest convenience, and we would be pleased to provide a fulsome update on our activities for the public registry within sixty (60) days, should this decision be reversed.

Sincerely,



on behalf of

Seth Bohnet

Director, Strategic Infrastructure

Infrastructure

c. Mr. Robert Jenkins
Assistant Deputy Minister, Energy and Strategic Initiatives
Infrastructure

Ms. Patricia Coyne
Manager, Mackenzie Valley Highway Environmental Affairs
Strategic Infrastructure, Infrastructure

Mr. Sean Joseph
Regulatory Specialist
Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board