

SLUPB Hearing Closing Comments

We'd like to thank everyone for coming to our Hearing. This has been a historic event – the first Public Hearing held for a land use plan under the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act. We believe it has been successful in bringing the participants in this process together to share their views on what the Sahtu Land Use Plan should look like. The Board has developed a better understanding of the various perspectives of the parties, and of your common concerns.

We did things a little differently this week and we found our innovation valuable. We hope that you did too. The break-out groups have given us a tool to bring you into conversation with each other.

A Hearing is about being heard, so let us highlight some of the key feedback that we are taking away from this meeting.

- We have heard that you want the Plan done soon;
- We have heard that you are happy with the proposed changes to zoning;
- That areas not included in a final protected area should be zoned as either Special Management or General Use;
- We have heard that Special Management Zones are critical to the Plan but that the wording of rules for those zones need further clarification;
- We have heard that there is broad support for the intent of the conformity requirements, but that further clarification is required, and some suggestions were made to assist us with that;
- We heard that CRs must be able to be implemented by the primary regulator – the Sahtu Land and Water Board, as well as the other regulators;
- Any revisions to the conformity requirements must continue to protect and promote the well-being of residents and communities throughout the region.

We have had some informative exchanges on topics such as directional drilling, and current practices and conditions for dealing with financial security, incidental harvest, community engagement, traditional knowledge and community benefits. We discussed various approaches to writing the conformity requirements to best achieve the goals they are trying to advance. This will help the Board carry out revisions for the final draft.

When the Board announced the public hearing, we planned to move directly from the hearing to a final draft that the Board can adopt and submit for approval. It is clear today, however, that more discussion is required with the approving parties first. Let me outline the next steps that, in the Board's judgement, need to be taken in order to meet our common goal of completing the Plan as soon as possible.

In light of the important input that the Board received yesterday about the success of the Gwich'in land use plan, the Board directs that the GNWT and INAC provide the Board with copies of any written comments that these parties have made on revisions to the Gwich'in Land Use Plan, by May 15, and that the GNWT and INAC copy the Board

promptly with any of their further comments on the Gwich'in plan going forward, which are on the public record.

The Board will allow a 45 day period for all interested parties to submit follow-up comments from the Hearing in writing. This is to let the parties from whom the Board requested further information or comments on specific issues, respond. In addition, if any party feels the need to respond to a presentation or comment of another party, the results of a break-out group, or new information, they may do so. Under our Procedure, they may also respond to the written comments that are on the Board's website if they have not done so already. If you send a response, do not repeat any comments that your organization has already submitted. **The deadline for these comments is June 20th.**

The Board has undertaken to respond to the legal arguments submitted on the question of the Board's jurisdiction to include Actions in the Plan. We will do this in writing by **June 20th.**

Most importantly, there will be further discussions with the approving parties. The Board would like your input on this next step in the process. Here is our current thinking.

The GNWT has asked the Board to consider completing a draft 4 before it submits a Final Draft for approval. Yesterday, the GNWT indicated that it is open to alternatives to that. The Board is happy to hear that. The people of the Sahtu have been waiting a long time for this Plan to be completed. A further draft has the potential to open up new issues and further delay completion. It is the Board's intent to complete a final draft Plan this year.

We have found the break-out groups extremely helpful, and the Board will consider organizing further technical discussions this year to build greater consensus around technical points for the final draft plan.

Regarding the approving parties, we are considering having a tri-partite meeting this fall. The Board will take the summer to assess the record of input since Draft 3. For a fall meeting, the Board would develop a discussion document of proposed revisions to the CRs, Actions and Recommendations, for discussion with SSI, the GNWT and INAC.

This meeting, and the supporting document, would of course be on the record. The meeting would allow the Board to focus directly on the concerns of the 3 approving parties, to determine if we are on the right track for final revisions. It would enable the Board to work with them to resolve any outstanding issues.

Today, the Board asks all participants to consider supporting this approach so we can complete a Plan that we are confident the 3 parties can approve. In your closing comments today, or in your follow-up comments, please let us know if you support this.

The Board has received many, many comments since the release of Draft 3 and we have consulted broadly. Let us assure you that we will be considering every comment received, both oral and written, since the release of Draft 3, including this Hearing, and

follow-up comments, in determining revisions for the Final Draft Plan. The Board will make final revisions as we deem most appropriate in the interests of the well-being of Sahtu communities and residents.

We now invite closing comments from all participants. Because the purpose of the Hearing is "to hear," we invite you in your closing comments to share one message that someone else said over the last 3 days. What was their message? What did it mean to you? How will you act on it? We of course invite you to speak on any other matter of interest to you in regards to this Hearing or the Plan.