



May 4, 2016

Honourable Wally Schumann
Minister of Environment and Natural Resources

Honourable Robert C. McLeod
Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs

Honourable Glen Abernethy
Minister of Health and Social Services

Dear Ministers,

On behalf of the Land and Water Boards of the Mackenzie Valley (Gwich'in, Sahtu, Wek'èezhìi, and Mackenzie Valley) and the Inuvialuit Water Board (the Boards), we are writing to you regarding an important issue concerning community governments' water licence compliance.

The Boards are responsible for issuing water licences to community governments as required by the *Waters Act*. However, the responsibility of ensuring and monitoring compliance is shared with the various departments of the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT).

In the interest of simplifying and increasing the consistency of water licensing processes and terms and conditions, various boards have successfully partnered with GNWT's Departments of Municipal and Community Affairs and Environment and Natural Resources on several recent initiatives including:

- joint development of Operation and Maintenance Plan templates that community governments can use to fulfill the requirement of submitting this information to the regulator;
- joint development of the *NWT Landfill Guidelines*;
- continue to develop standardized terms and conditions for water licences;
- coordinating community-based sampling training to train community government staff so that they may fulfill water licence conditions related to Surveillance Network Programs; and
- facilitated workshops (in Inuvik) to clarify roles and responsibilities of the various organizations involved in water-related matters.

The Boards and GNWT Inspectors continue to support community governments' efforts to fulfill the requirements of their water licences; unfortunately community governments continue to experience a number of challenges with maintaining compliance. Common issues that have come to the attention of the Boards include the failure to submit applications for licence renewals on a timely basis, delayed or incomplete reporting, and failure to meet specified conditions related to operational matters and testing.

To address these matters and improve the effectiveness of the water licensing process, improvements to the current situation would be beneficial to all. The Boards recognize an integrated system exists in which different government departments are responsible for the various aspects of community operations: drinking water, waste management, and wastewater management. We believe that it is important for the involved organizations to collectively seek solutions to the existing issues and concerns. In this regard, we would request that the GNWT and the Boards begin to work together to confirm the existing issues and concerns and identify potential ways in which community government water licence compliance can be improved so as to ensure the safety of our residents and the appropriate level of environmental protection.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,



Floyd Adlem,
Acting Chair, Mackenzie Valley Land
and Water Board



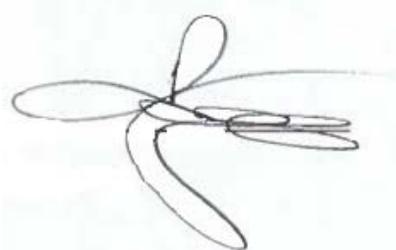
Paul Sullivan,
Chairperson, Gwich'in Land and Water Board



Larry Wallace
Chairperson, Sahtu Land and Water Board



Violet Camsell-Blondin
Chairperson, Wek'èezhìi Land and Water Board



Roger Connelly
Chairperson, Inuvialuit Water Board

Cc': Ernie Campbell, Deputy Minister, Environment and Natural Resources
Tom Williams, Deputy Minister, Municipal and Community Affairs
Debbie DeLancey, Deputy Minister, Health and Social Services