



NEWS RELEASE

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Land and Water Boards of the Mackenzie Valley Comment on the *2010 Northwest Territories Environmental Audit*

October 13, 2011 – The Chairs of the Land and Water Boards of the Mackenzie Valley are applauding the key observations and recommendations made in the *2010 Northwest Territories Environmental Audit* (the 2010 Audit). The purpose of the 2010 Audit, carried out every five years under Part 6 of the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* (the Act or MVRMA), is to report on the effectiveness of environmental management in the Northwest Territories and to evaluate the state of the environment.

Larry Wallace, Chair of the Sahtu Land and Water Board states:

The Auditor provided a comprehensive overview of the progress that we have continued to make since 2005 towards standard procedures and regulatory excellence. What I personally found of most value in the 2010 Audit is the observation that the vast majority of our applications continue to be processed in a timely manner. There are a lot of “myths” floating out there about our system, but as SENES and others have pointed out, it is time to get behind the system and fully implement what is contemplated in the Act.

In May, the Chair and CEO of the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board (the Board), Mr. Willard Hagen, alongside the Chairs of the Gwich'in, Sahtu, and Wek'èezhìi Land and Water Boards, released a paper titled *Perspectives on Regulatory Improvement in the Mackenzie Valley*.

The paper is the Board's platform for involvement in *Canada's Federal Action Plan* which will aim to improve Canada's northern regulatory regime over the next couple of years. Chair Willard Hagen states:

As we have previously stated, the regulatory system in the North is not broken, it is incomplete. The findings in the Audit are similar to the recommendations we provided to Minister Duncan this spring in our *Perspectives on Regulatory Improvement* report. We are, in fact, making some very good progress towards implementing consistent and integrated policies and guidelines. However, unsettled land claim agreements and the lack of land use planning and cumulative impact monitoring frameworks continue to impact how we do our work. Until these are addressed, these issues will continue to challenge us.

The second environmental audit was released by Minister Duncan on October 5, 2011.

The Land and Water Boards of the Mackenzie Valley review development applications and issue land use permits and water licences throughout the Mackenzie Valley under the authority of the MVRMA of 1998.

The Boards' paper, *Perspectives on Regulatory Improvement in the Mackenzie Valley* and the newly released *2010 NWT Environmental Audit* can be viewed at www.mvlwb.com.

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