



August 25, 2016

Honourable Carolyn Bennett  
Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada  
Terrasses de la Chaudière  
10 Wellington, North Tower  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0H4

Dear Minister Bennett,

On January 14-15, 2016, the first-ever Pan-Territorial Assessment and Regulatory Board Forum (Forum) was held in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, with the support of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor). The purpose of the Forum was to enable representatives from regulatory and environmental assessment boards based in Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, and Yukon ("the Boards") to share best practices, explore common challenges, and discuss potential solutions. The Forum provided an opportunity to build relationships between organizations that will allow for ongoing support, information sharing, and development of consistent environmental assessment and regulatory approaches across the North, as appropriate.

The specific objectives of the Forum were to:

- Discuss and understand the key challenges facing northern regulatory and environmental assessment boards;
- To learn from individual successes and exchange best practices with respect to common challenges;
- Provide an opportunity for building relationships between the Boards that will allow for ongoing support and information sharing; and
- Identify possible opportunities for developing more consistent approaches to common processes as appropriate.

This Forum built on the varied and substantive work undertaken by the Boards in recent years, individually and through collaborative initiatives in each territory, to make regulatory

and environmental assessment processes more effective, transparent, and consistent, where possible under the various pertinent Land Claim Agreements and legislation. **We encourage the new government to work with the Boards to continue to make meaningful and useful enhancements to resource management systems, by building on and supporting the work the Boards have already been doing.**

Following productive discussions at the Forum, representatives from regulatory and environmental assessment boards across the north identified several key areas to prioritize for follow-up work and discussion at future meetings. The Boards agree that one of the top priorities is to ensure that northern communities and organizations have the capacity to participate effectively in board proceedings, as their active engagement leads to informed decision-making by the Boards. **Toward that end, we resolved to voice our support for government's efforts in seeking and facilitating participation by stakeholders and aboriginal organizations in resource management decision-making processes.**

A report of the inaugural meeting of the Pan-Territorial Regulatory Board Forum is enclosed and will be made publicly available online. A second Forum is planned for Fall 2016 in Whitehorse, Yukon. This next Forum will provide an opportunity for the Boards to delve deeper into the common issues or challenges identified and advance potential solutions while furthering open communication and cooperation across the territories. **We welcome the continued support of CanNor and the federal government for these collaborative initiatives that support and encourage effectiveness, transparency and consistency, and we look forward to continuing to work together.**

Sincerely, the Chairs of participating Regulatory and Environmental Assessment Boards of the Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut.



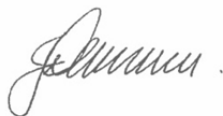
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Elizabeth Copland, Chair  
Nunavut Impact Review Board



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John Ondrack, Chair  
Environmental Impact Screening Committee



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JoAnne Deneron, Chair  
Mackenzie Valley Review Board



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Paul Sullivan, Chair  
Gwich'in Land and Water Board



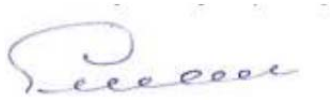
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Loralee Johnstone, Chair  
Yukon Water Board



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Floy Adlem, Acting Chair  
Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board



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Larry Wallace, Chair  
Sahtu Land and Water Board



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Violet Camsell-Blondin, Chair  
Wek'eezhii Land and Water Board



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Jon Pierce, Chair  
Environmental Impact Review Board



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Wendy Randall, Chair  
Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic  
Assessment Board

(note: not all northern Boards who attended the Forum elected to sign this letter)

- C.C: Minister of the Government of the NWT - Lands  
Minister of the Government of the NWT - Environment and Natural Resources  
Minister of the Government of the NWT - Industry, Tourism and Investment
- Minister of the Government of Nunavut - Economic Development & Transportation  
Minister of the Government of Nunavut - Environment
- Minister of the Government of Yukon - Energy, Mines and Resources  
Minister of the Government of Yukon - Economic Development  
Minister of the Government of Yukon - Environment
- President - Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency