

**Alistair MacDonald**

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**From:** Jen Morin [jennifer@cpaws.org]  
**Sent:** December 12, 2008 1:11 PM  
**To:** Alistair MacDonald  
**Cc:** Alison Woodley; Keith Ferguson; Erica Janes  
**Subject:** Re: CPAWS-NWT response to Review Board's Directive on Request for Ruling (EA0809-002)

Dear Alisdair,

In regards to the aforementioned subject and IR 0809-002-03, CPAWS-NWT has undertaken a search for applicable documents not already on the public registry.

As a result of the search, the following two documents were located and are attached:

1) INAC letter to Land Committee January 9, 1995 (Reference #15 in Appendix 2).

and

2) Excerpt from Nahanni National Park Reserve's RDA 1984.

Alison Woodley will be leaving her position with CPAWS shortly. I am requesting to be added as the main CPAWS-NWT contact ([jennifer@cpaws.org](mailto:jennifer@cpaws.org)).

Sincerely,

-Jennifer Morin

11



Indian and Northern Affairs Canada / Affaires indiennes et du Nord Canada

P. O. Box 1500  
YELLOWKNIFE, NT, X1A 2R3  
Phone 920-8165, Fax 920-4669



January 9, 1995

Your file / Votre référence

Our file / Notre référence

Lands Advisory Committee (See Distribution List)

Re: Land Use Application N95F346  
163 km All Weather Road  
Liard Hwy #7 to Prairie Creek Mine, N.W.T.

Enclosed is a new land use application, number N95F346.

This office has only one copy of the Prairie Creek Project Description report dated December 1994. Should you wish to view the report it is available for viewing in the Lands Administration office at the above address.

All future correspondence on this application should be addressed to the Lands Administrator and should refer to the above file number.

Please submit your comments to the above party by February 2, 1995.

Should you find that:

1. You cannot fully assess the impact of the proposed Land Use Operation within the time limit outlined above, and;
2. You have reason to believe this impact to be of a serious consequence; please advise the Lands Administrator of your concern and the reason by the above date.

Our telephone number is 920-8254.

Yours truly,

Charlene Coe  
Land Operations Clerk  
Land Administration

cc: District Manager  
Fort Simpson

COE/cc

11

South Nahanni River, and Seaplane Lake, which permits access to the Flat River. Within the Park, fixed-wing aircraft may land at Rabbitkettle Lake, Virginia Falls, and under special circumstances, at Deadmen Valley. Only Virginia Falls has been designated as a day use area for aircraft access.

Three routes can be taken that eliminate the need for aircraft charters to reach the upper sections of the South Nahanni or Flat rivers. Visitors can drive to Tungsten in the Yukon Territory, and the Flat Lakes, paddle down the Little Nahanni River to the South Nahanni River, or directly down the Flat River. The third alternative involves descending the Macmillan River from the Canol Road crossing, ascending the Witham, Peter and Willow Creek chain, portaging into the Ross River drainage and then crossing a low height of land and entering the Moose Ponds and the South Nahanni River drainage. Visitors are cautioned that these routes are arduous and require a high level of expertise in wild river travel. Ample research and pre-trip correspondence with the park is strongly advised.

#### 5.1.2 Visitor Use and Opportunities

Nahanni National Park Reserve has remained largely undeveloped since its establishment in 1972. Activities are encouraged through which visitors can experience superb wilderness river travel and the Park reserve's spectacular rugged northern wilderness.

Both the South Nahanni and Flat rivers possess high potential for wilderness river travel. Levels of difficulty for river travel vary by section and with different flow volumes. No rapids are present in the section of the South Nahanni River upstream of Virginia Falls. Downstream of the falls, rapids with high standing waves and powerful currents occur at several locations. Due to the large flow volume of this river, hydraulic features such as eddies and boils are powerful, especially during periods of peak flow.

Upstream of the Irvine Creek confluence the smaller Flat River contains numerous rapids. All of these rapids, with the exception of the three kilometre long Cascade-of-the-Thirteen Steps, can be navigated in canoes and kayaks. In flood, the South Nahanni is virtually unnavigable. No matter what the water levels, spray covers are recommended for all open canoes. The Park's Warden Service provides excellent detailed information and advice on dealing with different river conditions.

Overnight visitors are required to register at designated points: Fort Simpson, Nahanni Butte or Rabbitkettle Lake. Upon completion of their trips, visitors terminate their registration at Nahanni Butte or Fort Simpson. The Park Reserve's administration centre has been located in Fort Simpson since 1976 and a field operation centre has been maintained at Nahanni Butte on the South Nahanni River near its confluence with the Liard River. Fort Simpson and Nahanni Butte

are considered as temporary locations for the administration and field headquarters, respectively, pending the completion of a management plan for Nahanni. Park warden cabins are now located at Rabbitkettle Lake, Sunblood Mountain, South Nahanni-Flat River confluence and Deadmen Valley.

Visitors to the park often undertake hiking trips of one day to a week's duration. Almost any tributary valley can be explored. There are many higher elevation trips that can be made. In addition to the high, tundra-like Tlogotsho and Nahanni plateaus, there are opportunities for some of fine ridge walking.

A limited number of river tour outfitters have been licensed by the Government of the Northwest Territories and Parks Canada to operate in Nahanni. These outfitters have provided powered craft, non-motorized raft and canoe services for individuals to visit Nahanni who may otherwise have been unable to do so.

## 5.2 Resource Development and Regional Planning

The Park is located within of the Mackenzie Mountains region. The area is rich in minerals and potential oil and gas reserves. Park boundaries were carefully drawn to exclude prior mineral claims. By virtue of its location in the watershed, Nahanni is particularly vulnerable to upstream sources of pollution as it is the receiving area for virtually all tributary streams in the watershed.

Even prior to park establishment, Parks Canada had expressed concern about the effect of the Canada Tungsten Ltd. mine and mill on the water quality of the Flat River. Some National Parks south of 60° are protected from external sources of pollutants through agreements with the provinces. In the north, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) directly controls all Crown Lands and no equivalent agreements are in place to protect park resources.

Developments are controlled under the Territorial Lands Act and Regulations, and the Northern Inland Waters Act and Regulations both administered by DIAND. Procedures are outlined in Northern Natural Resource Development-Requirements, Procedures and Legislations (Northern Affairs Program 1981).

### 5.2.1 Resource Development Projects

Four major resource developments are now operating or are in an advanced predevelopment phase within the watershed. These are Cadillac Explorations Ltd. lead-zinc mine, Canada Tungsten's mining operation, Union Carbide Lened Project, and Amax Mactung Project.

Cadillac Explorations Ltd.

Cadillac Explorations Ltd. has been developing a lead, zinc, and silver mine located at 61°35'N - 124°51'W in the flood plain of Prairie Creek (a tributary of the South Nahanni) some 19 km upstream from the Park boundary. Mineralization was originally discovered at the site in 1928. Cadillac has controlled the claim, with some brief exceptions, since 1965. Exploratory work including bulldozer trenching, development of an adit, etc., took place sporadically until 1980. At that time full development commenced, with a mine, mill, camp, and a 160 km plus winter road connecting the site to the Liard Highway being constructed near the Blackstone River. Financing problems and low base metal prices have combined to stall the project at the pre-production stage. The company has applied for permission to convert the winter road to all-weather status, develop a new airstrip, and construct an ore tote road south of the mine site. The company applied for a five year Water Use/Disposal License in 1982. A license was approved by the Minister, DIAND in that year. However, financial difficulties prevented the company from posting the required performance bond and hence, no licence was issued. Cadillac Explorations went into receivership 6 May 1983. The mine/mill has not been completed to production stages and all applications for auxiliary services (air strip and all weather road) are suspended (M.E. Johanson, Nahanni Park Superintendent, pers. comm.).

Canada Tungsten

Since 1962, Canada Tungsten has operated Canada's only tungsten mine at Tungsten on the headwaters of the Flat River (61°58' N-128°14'W) some 110 km upstream of the Park boundary. Originally a 300 tons/day operation, the company now operates at 1000 tons/day. The mine predates current environmental legislation. Mine tailings were deposited directly into the Flat River until the late 1960s. Environmental Protection Service has detected contaminated sediments some 80 km downstream from the mine, but to date no degradation of water quality at the Park boundary has been identified, although some potentially severe problems with leaking of the tailings pond has occurred in the past.

The current Water License for the company expired September 29, 1982. It has been extended for six months pending resolution of outstanding issues in Canada Tungsten's proposal for an unconventional exfiltration treatment process. In the meantime, the operation has shut down because of low base metal prices and lack of demand brought on by the recession.

Union Carbide Lened Project

Union Carbide is currently completing exploratory work on its tungsten-bearing property located on Lened Creek, a small tributary of the Little Nahanni River (62°23'N-128°45'W). The project is

some 90 km upstream from the western Park boundary and 16 km upstream from the confluence of the Little Nahanni and South Nahanni rivers. No firm decision to develop the project has been made. A 500 ton/day mine/mill with a 120 person workforce is forecast. DIAND has indicated no Federal Environmental Assessment Review Office (FEARO) referral is required. A project Initial Environmental Evaluation has been requested by the end of 1982. Access to the project will be via the existing Howard's Pass winter road, upgraded to all-weather status. Union Carbide's claim to the property postdates the creation of Nahanni National Park.

#### Amax Mactung Project

Amax is currently evaluating their Mactung project straddling the Yukon/N.W.T. border at 63°18'N close to the place where the Canol Road crosses the Continental Divide at Macmillan Pass. A 1000 ton/day tungsten mine, mill, and associated camp is projected. The property is rated as one of the major known tungsten occurrences in the world and a lifespan of over 20 years is anticipated. While the ore body is located in the Yukon, it is anticipated that the mill, camp and tailing ponds will be located in the N.W.T., and hence, within the South Nahanni drainage basin. Current forecasts are for construction in 1985-86 and start up in the third quarter of 1986. DIAND ruled in 1977 that no FEARO assessment was required.

#### 5.2.2 Exploration Activity

Exploration activity within the watershed is currently concentrated in areas south and west of the park boundary, (except for the Cadillac Explorations Ltd., Prairie Creek claim) as follows:

- a) East of Park: No claims except for placer activity in Liard River east of Blackstone River.
- b) South of Park: Macmillan Lake/Diamond Creek headwaters of the Meilleur and Caribou River, southeast of Tungsten.
- c) North of Park: Cadillac Explorations on Prairie Creek.
- d) West of Park: Little Nahanni  
Honeymoon Lakes (Island Lakes)  
Macmillan Pass  
Howard's Pass  
Tungsten  
Mooseponds

The Karst Area north of First Canyon, the Glacier Lake area of the Ragged Range, and the Tlogotsho Plateau are claim free. All have been identified as possible areas for Park expansion.