

Meeting Minutes

Tłı̨chq̄ ALL-SEASON ROAD CORRIDOR WORKING GROUP CULTURE CENTRE, WHATÌ December 12, 2019



PARTICIPANTS:

Cameron Wilson (Chair) – Infrastructure (INF)
David Moore – Assistant Deputy Minister, INF
Stu Niven – INF
Benjamin Bey - INF
Ziaur Rahman –INF
Salah Uddin - INF
Yasir Jamal – INF
Terry Brooks – INF
Krista March – INF
Felix Cirelli– North Star Infrastructure (NSI)
Caroline Walmsley – NSI
Devon Stephenson – NSI
James Williams – NSI
Keenan Rudichuk – Associated Environmental
Olivia Sroka – Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)
Ryan Fequet – Wek’èezhì Land and Water Board (WLWB)
Laura Watkinson – Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)
Alexandra Sorckoff – DFO
Jessica Hurtubise – North Slave Metis Alliance

James Hodson – Environment and Natural Resources (ENR)
Marie Nietfeld – ENR
Bruce Croft - ENR
Katie Bakker – Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CANNOR)
Arusa Shafi – CANNOR
Randi Jennings – Wek’èezhì Renewable Resources Board (WRRB)
Aimee Guile - WRRB
Loretta Ransom – ENR
Jonas Sangris – Yellowknives Dene First Nation
Tammy Steinwand – Tłı̨chq̄ Government (TG)
Stephanie Behrens - TG
Michael Birlea – TG
Violet Camsell-Blondin – TG
Lisa Nitsiza – Whatì Senior Administrative Officer
Naomi Smethurst – Education, Culture and Employment

1. Opening Prayer

Prayer provided by Michel Louie Rabesca

2. Welcome and Opening Remarks

3. Introduction of Participants

4. Review of Agenda

5. Matters arising from previous Meetings Minutes

6. Overview of the TASR Project

Presentation provided by Felix Cirelli and Devon Stephenson of NSI and Caroline provided the NSI environmental presentation. Comments and discussions raised by corridor working group (CWG) members throughout or after the presentation are outlined below.

Stephanie: Will local monitors be hired again?

Caroline: Yes they will.

Tammy: With any sighting of animals especially coyotes, are they advising the community about these animals? Members are out trapping and for their safety they should know.

Caroline: Yes we are letting ENR know about the sightings and ENR is advising the community.

Naomi: What is next to be developed in regards to pits you mentioned km 53 pit 48?

Felix: Will provide a list.

Tammy: Is waste on site being monitored and inspected daily?

Felix: Most of the garbage is at the main camp and it is removed daily.

David: What was being done with the blasting wastes?

Felix: The waste from blasting is being burned on site, any explosives provided are dealt with on site also and ashes go into a container to be disposed of.

James: What is the Christmas Schedule?

Felix: We will be closed during Dec 20 – mid January with very little crew on site. Maybe 5 or 6 crew to keep things monitored.

Keenan: Blasting with animals around, how do you deal with that?

Caroline: The last blast scared them out to approximately 500 meters. Moose ran off and there were bison sighted at km, 45, approximately 40. At km 10 there were a few caribou sightings a few weeks back. But otherwise we don't see animals at our blasting sites.

7. Break

8. Regulatory Compliance: Update, Expectations, Concerns, and Recommendations

Updates provided by each organization are outlined below as well as discussions raised by CWG members.

Update from the Tłıcho Government

Tammy: Welcomed everyone and introduced Stephanie and Michael from Tłıcho. They are pleased to see the road being developed. We are working with many groups, they meet on a regular basis and will play in an important role in the managing impacts on construction and operation of the project now and after the road is complete. We work closely with NSI with hiring of Tłıcho members. It takes everyone working together to continue that level of partnership and looks forward to working collaborating with everyone on this important infrastructure project for our community.

Update from the Community Government of Whatì

Lisa: Welcome, I have been a part of many working groups. It is great to see the progress from the beginning of time, 6 years of being involved in seeing this project finally breaking the ground. We are looking at improving our community by infrastructure, getting tourism on board and increase our population to approximately 600-800 and want to make sure that the community is ready for these changes.

Stu: With the Tuk highway, he was there months ago and spoke to many people regarding the changes from the highway and everyone is very positive about it. Might be a great idea to reach out to them and find out what they learned from the highway opening and the changes it has on the community.

Lisa: They had Annie come from Tuk to speak with council about the road, what happened when the road opened, they weren't ready, and she gave advice as to what to do to be prepared. You need a plan in place for tourists when they show up and a plan for infrastructure system in place for when the trucks need tire repair or truck repair in case of truck breakdown. She gave a great deal of help to council, and made council realize that they aren't ready for all the changes that will come with this road opening, so they now realized they need to step up and get things ready. This weekend they have a strategic plan meeting with council and will look at the previous plan and see what they need to add. This road will change how we operate compared to the winter road. How they shop for the office and it will change how they stock up on items as well.

David: Has the community thought about the opposite, capital and commercial opportunities so they can sell south?

Lisa: We do have a land plan in place, we have an area for industrial, recreation and residential. We have had people come forward and ask about our residential lots. We are also looking at a third route to the

airport.

Update from the Wek'èezhì Land and Water Board

Ryan: Presentation was given on an overview of how the WLWB is involved in the TASR Project. Review of all 13 plans in total and 4 plans that are still pending. Discussion on pits and testing that is being done. Submittals before the pits can open.

Stephanie: Testing that is being done on the soil/rock, washed material.

Felix: The testing that is done needs to be sent to the lab to get the results that everything is deemed clean and appropriate to use the soil/rock to build the highway.

Felix: Right now it looks like pit 48 will be submitted at the end of the week along with 2B, 3, 21B in version 2.0 of the Quarry Operations Plan (QOP). Regarding pits 1001, 68A & 109 results will be provided in the New Year in version 3.0.

Tammy: How often do the board meet regarding WLWB?

Felix: Once a month

Ryan: We require that the QOPs are submitted 90 days in advance.

Tammy: More discussion is needed regarding testing and working with WLWB.

David: Are the quarry sites known and why not just go in and get the samples and get it done ahead of time? Is that possible? What does it mean if they aren't ready in time?

Ryan: Its means they can't start construction.

Felix: Samples are not always easy to get, the weather, the snow covering the ground; NSI is doing what they need to do.

Tammy: This is something we need to discuss more and speed things up.

Terry: Gave some history on the testing. They do some testing and investigations on the pits. We had information to pass along. NSI came in and we gave them some information, NSI wanted to do more and get more info. Some things that were done by GNWT are now 2 year olds. Doing something in 90 days, the snow is covering and so it can't be done. New information has come forward, is this perfect, no it isn't, there are some lessons learned. We are all doing the best effort we can. We wanted to move forward, we wanted employment for the communities, we could of delayed the construction but we didn't we wanted to move ahead.

Stu: At tomorrow's meeting at 1:20pm we will discuss details and get into the weeds on this. Let's park it and work together tomorrow in the meeting on this item.

Felix: Type A Water license is ongoing and we plan on submitting the application for this.

Update from the Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board

Randi: The Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board manages wildlife, plants, forests and protected areas within Wek'èezhì through the use of available traditional and scientific knowledge on behalf of Tłı̨ç hq Citizens and other members of the public. The Fish and Fish Habitat Plan, the Draft Caribou Offset Plan and the Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan are all of interest to the WRRB. One question I do have is whether there has been any talk on the Integrated Fisheries Management Plan? It is in development. We have no new information to provide and I look forward to receiving the weekly environmental reports for review

Update Environmental and Natural Resources

James from ENR, gave a brief speech on their role in relation to the TASR project.

Update Department of Lands

No members present to provide an update.

Update Environment and Climate Change Canada

No members present to provide an update.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada

A brief update, first big involvement was providing advice for Fish and Fish Habitat process and our next involvement is with regulatory review process regarding the water crossing. They (NSI) keep us updated on what is happening.

9. BREAK

10. MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING PLANS

Updates provided implementation, outcomes, constraints, concerns and recommendations.

Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan (WMMP)

James provided a presentation. Overall the plan is to show the impact can be managed on site, monitor those impacts and get results. During the construction we monitor where the animals are, providing GPS and maps on where they are. Our commitment right now is to monitor it for 5 years, first 5 years of operations. Trying to see if they are avoiding the road during the construction, where they cross the road and how they use it. Monitor the traffic on the road and on the ground as well as the day-to-day monitoring of wildlife. For Boreal Caribou, we put out 20 collars in 2017, 5 in 2018 7 in 2019. 30 collars are out there right now. We don't plan to put anymore out. We try to put collars on some that are close to the road and some that are not. Survival is high at 95% which is really good. Every spring we do the classification survey to see how many calves are out there. Population trend is increasing. Also we did a survey to see how many moose and bison are in the area, how many are in the study area so we can compare, we found 27 groups of bison and 34 groups of moose, minimum estimate. For 2019 we did a bear den survey along the road and will come back. We covered the whole road alignment, 80 meter buffer around it. We found 2 potential bear den sites, unoccupied. We will go back and check it out later to follow up to see if it is actually occupied. Caribou alignment survey we are doing a very big study area; we will use an aircraft to track them and try to count and classified them. This will start late February and will last 10 days. Wolf survey there is 4 areas this winter, Dehcho, South Slave, North Slave Region. That is a different type of survey; we found wolf tracks to find the packs. This is the plan for this winter.

Tammy: The road coming into Whati, will we see Bison at our backdoor?

James: Ya that is one of the things we will monitor. They do.

Tammy: Is there a way they cannot cross the bridge?

James: Good question we will see what we can do if this happens.

Ziaur: The bear den around km 65 and 70, what is the plan we need to be aware of? Caroline from NSI is working with ENR and checking to see if it is active or not and will decide what to do.

Water Monitoring Plan

Caroline: In terms of the plan we aren't doing any of the necessary requirements yet until we have the approved plan but with the weather conditions right now we aren't able to do water samples right now. We are getting some samples from some of our larger crossings.

Waste Management Plan

In terms of the Waste Management Plans it's approved, we have an amendment in for the water license to use a lagoon at the main camp and are under review. Once we get approval on the lagoon the Waste Management Plan will be revised to include the amendment.

Fish and Fish Habitat Protection Plan

We are currently putting in our temporary bridges and working very closely with DFO.

Adaptive Management Plan

Again we are still working with the plan and implementing it as requires.

Erosion and Sediment Control Plan

We are implementing that, the culverts we have in place that may have to get raised in the year before spring due to the sediment.

Quarry Operation Plan

Terry: Not much more to update as James gave a detailed presentation we have decided on some action plans and worked on non-compliance action and we are going through them.

Permafrost Management Plan,

Terry: We wanted to do the geotechnical investigation, we have 80 holes, to see what the ground type is like, in 24 we put thermistors. Only about 4 recorded and we have seen permafrost but very low. They are close to the water bodies, vegetation around there. This permafrost is very warm, and once everything is removed, trees etc. this permafrost will go. We don't have these same large ice lands as other projects like Tuk. The initial plan was to save the permafrost, but there is no need because it will melt. We have a very strong base line where the temperature is. Over the next 10 years the permafrost will be gone.

Caribou Habitat Offset Plan

Keenan provided an overview of how the scope was designed. Three workshops were held with Elders, Harvesters and some public. The Plan was driven by these workshops. The draft was submitted on July 31, 2019 to the Board. Two main options were proposed and 8 different measure to support those 2 offset options.

There is a ton of work that needs to be done, we met the measure but the work is not yet completed. An operational implementation plan is intended to determine how, when, where, and who.

Primary option was for linear feature restoration. Challenges and risks to caribou, restoring the existing corridor. Most of all the trails out there are being used by residents. So figuring out which linear corridors to restore and leave is a big question. It's a big discussion that needs to happen with other Indigenous groups already engaged.

Second option that was proposed was reforestation; the forest around the all season road has burned in a vast area in the last 40 year and what that does is open the forests' to other predators. So with reforestation you can grow back that forest faster than it would natural and provide security cover so they can't seek caribou. Understand that reforestation in this part of Canada is very difficult, short growing season and weather has an impact on the success of reforestation. Careful planning is required to ensure successful reforestation, if that Option is selected.

Felix: The alignment has been set along the highway. We have 21 pits identified and until we know more we can't count on those pits as part of the plan.

There is still a lot of work to be done, and the plan cannot be finalized until we have a clear indication of the total project footprint in relation to the existing linear corridor. The Final Caribou Habitat Offset Plan is due 90 days prior to the public opening of the road.

11. Engagement Plan

Multiple engagement triggers that the Board has directed the GNWT-INF to consult the TASR Corridor Working Group on. Ben will review each point.

- The only air horns we are using are for blasting notification. We haven't had to use for wildlife on site.
- What have been used to get the animals off site when they have come into the area? Caroline can't answer that question

- Use of helicopters use and caribou data, they have to follow GNWT guidelines when it comes to site. More discussion
- NSI is doing a very good job with reports of wildlife incidents and have not had any fatalities on site.
- Installation of traffic counters will be put aside until construction is completed.
- Aimee Guile: Extent of wetlands, how is the construction affecting the area? There are no wetlands at the moment, it is very dry. Please advise if anything comes up.
- Harvest Study Design to be completed in collaboration with the TG as part of harvest monitoring component of the WMMP.
- Tammy wanted to add the Harvest Study Design incorporated into Traditional Knowledge (TK), I went back and looked at the measure and some of that is related to monitoring and gathering information from harvesters along TAsR and also making reference from the other communities as well. So right now we have a program and within the program each community works with harvesters to gather information. And a report is done on what's been harvested and where. That is one thing they started 2 years ago and will continue with that and can help with this. Also look at trapping and other types of harvesting. A lot of it is related to TK and we have a lot of TK info in our office. We want to ensure that Tłıcho way of doing things are used respected and always looked at as trying to keep with Tłıcho way of life, new comers and workers in the area. The TK info is what it is referring too. Right now Stephanie is new to our team as Wildlife Biologist we are also looking at getting more staff in that division and hope they will help in gathering info in this area also.
- NSI took into account the TK knowledge and ways; signage at crossings will be considered, traditional trails and routs, all will be identified.
- Alternative technical approaches to be integrated into TK
- Tammy going through the list some of these items we need to go back and see where they are coming from exactly to help figure out what is needed
- Strategies for bison management, Caroline explained that they have not caused a problem so far. They seem to avoid the area where we are working.
- The Blasting protocols are going well and if anything changes we will consult and make a plan.
- Nest pre clearing, NSI is working on a plan for this.
- Weekly updates from Project Co on location and types of construction activities are being reported on a weekly basis at our NSI and GNWT Weekly meetings.
- WMMP does not exclude any wildlife monitoring, again addressed on our weekly reporting and we also advise ENR if there are any wildlife spotted.
- Extend of Wetlands, was specific to Moose Habitat survey to be done.

12. SUMMARY OF MEETING EXPECTATIONS GOING FORWARD

- Any presentations to be shared with the CWG minutes.

13. DISCUSS POSSIBLE DATES FOR NEXT MEETING

Much discussion June 3rd and 17th was proposed. We will go with June 3, 2020 in Whatı.

14. CLOSING REMARKS

Cameron: Overall there was a lot of discussion on the environmental and the success of building the road. The task is now to get things on track and meet our obligations and carry forward with construction. All the updates were very informative. We are very pleased with the work that is done and the work they continue to do. David Moore, Assistant Deputy Minister, will be taking over as chair of the Corridor Working Group and moving forward I will still attend as a participant.

Closing prayer provided by local elder. Meeting adjourned at 2:15PM

Meeting Minutes

TŁJCHQ ALL-SEASON ROAD CORRIDOR WORKING GROUP

July 7, 2020



Date: 07 July 2020

Time: 9:00am – 2:45pm Mountain Time

Location: Microsoft Teams and +1 867-675-1042 Conference ID: 515 456 994#

Attendees:

Anneli Jokela - WLWB
Benjamin Bey - INF
Cameron Wilson, Chair - INF
Catherine Fauvelle –NSMA
Damian Panayi - Golder
Dave Green –NSI
Devon Stephenson - NSI
Felix Cirelli - NSI
Ginger Gibson –TG
Grace Mackenzie - TG
Heather Beck –ENR
Lisa Nitsiza - CGB
James Hodson - ENR
Jean-Francois Dufour – ECCC
Jessica Pacunayen - WLWB
Jodi Pelligsey - WRRB
Joyce Gourlay - INF
Keenan Rudichuk – AE
Laura Meinert – WRRB
Laurie McGregor - ENR

Marie Nietfeld - ENR
Michael Birlea - TG
Nancy Shaw - INF
Naomi Smethurst - ECE
Olivia Sroka – DFO
Paul Vecsei - TG
Salah Uddin - INF
Sarah Gillis –YKDFN
Sean Craig - FIN
Stephanie Behrens - TG
Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault - TG
Terry Brookes - INF
Treeva Richardson –CGB
Tyanna Steinwand - TG
Violet Camsell-Blondin - TG
Yasir Jamal - INF
Zabey Nevitt - TG
Ziaur Rahman - INF
Jessica Hurtubise - NSMA

Regrets:

Adrian Paradis - CANNOR
Alexandra Sorckoff - DFO
Brandon Bradbury - GNWT
Department of Lands Bruno
Croft - ENR
Clint Ambrose – Lands
Daniel Coombs - DFO
Glen MacKay - ECE
Johanne Black - YKDFN
Longinus Ekwe - TG
Louisa Wedzin - CGB
Machel Thomas - YKDFN
Mark Cronk - INF
Mark D'Aguiar - DFO
Nancy En – AE
Robert Cornell - NSI
Sean Sharp – AE

1. Opening Prayer

Led by Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault

2. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault: Challenging months due to COVID-19 but ongoing commitment to the project, the environment, the safety of workers. Thanks to the GNWT for protective steps to keep COVID-19 out of small communities. People from Whati looking forward to TASR easing access to the rest of the territorial highway system, outside community looking forward to visiting Whati.

3. Introduction of Participants

- Round table of introductions from participants
- Welcome and greetings from chair Cameron Wilson (INF) serving in lieu of Infrastructure Assistant Deputy Minister David R. Moore.

4. Review of Agenda

- This meeting is for information sharing and to satisfy EA Measure 14-3.
- Wek'ezhì Land and Water Board members joining call later on to provide their update due to a morning schedule conflict.

5. Matters arising from previous Meeting Minutes, review of action items

- NSI to provide a list of next pits to be developed (to Naomi)
- NSI to update WRRB if construction occurs in any wetland areas
- Presentations to be shared with CWG prior to today

6. General Overview of TASR/Update on Construction activities and schedule

Felix Cirelli (NSI): Summary of COVID-19 strategies/mitigation measures implemented on site, arising from

WSCC, GNWT guidelines etc; updates on progress by segment with culvert, bridge and crushing status.

7. **BREAK**

8. **Regulatory Compliance: Updates, Expectations, Concerns, and Recommendations**

Tłıchǫ Government

- Michael Birlea: Working on Measure 6-1 recovery for boreal caribou with ENR; the Habitat Offset Plan, TG conducted traditional knowledge workshops which were used to develop the plan; Measure 8-1 Fisheries Management Plan getting started separately for La Martre and the corridor as a whole; Measure 10-2 Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan, comments being compiled for ENR.
- Paul Vecsei: Working regularly with Michael Birlea on Measure 8-1, designing a document that resembles Inuvik Tuktoyaktuk Highway’s version for the corridor. Corridor plan would have a different approach than Lac La Martre plan, which will determine the max sustainable harvest for economic benefits for the community. Increased angling pressure will require data gathering and research on annual fish take.
- Violet Camsell-Blondin: Monitoring applications with the help of new regulatory specialist hired in April. No major concerns on this application however the current 20 loads of water per day appears to be insufficient for dust suppression. A recent chopper landing problem cited dust issue.
 - Felix Cirelli (NSI): There is a limit of 299 cubic metres of water per day according to the Type B water license. That volume is split between compaction needs, dust suppression, etc. An application for the Type A water license is in process which would increase water limit but increased limits if approved would not come into effect until Fall. NSI taking note of the concern for now as there is a safety aspect.
 - Dave Green (NSI): Camp has been able to use some ditch water to supplement daily limits as well but need continues to exceed supply for now.
- Tyanna Steinwand: Working on TASR Caribou Monitoring Plan Measures 6-2, 7-1, 7-2, 9-1. Finalized scope and budget have been submitted. Establishing a group of 4 harvesters to help with baselines, planning volunteer harvester reporting program, and working toward a Tłıchǫ Staff checkpoint on road alignment during winter hunting season.
- Grace MacKenzie: Client Services department works on careers, scholarships, economic development, TG citizen enrolment; working regularly with NSI on flowing benefits to TG citizens through TASR. Great response to local ads, ongoing monitoring of TASR life in social media and attracting women workers to the project.
- Zabey Nevitt: Notes that the TG presentations just now demonstrate the effectiveness of the co-development relationship framework, which was provided by the treaty; feels that while the project has not been problem-free, it’s important to note how effective and beneficial the co-development model has been.

Community Government of Whatì

- Lisa Nitsiza: Picking up after COVID-19, resuming imports; Whatì residents feeling some cabin fever. Requested information about the end point of the road and some aging crossings near the community.
 - Felix Cirelli: There is a tie-in point at km 97 where NSI’s work ends. Not familiar with the crossing mentioned.
 - Ziaur Rahman: NSI is responsible for the road up to the winter road junction. After that, there is an existing road with a culvert concern. An inspection will take place this summer on that culvert. Cameron’s maintenance team and Lisa will both be involved.

Wek’èezhì Renewable Resources Board

- Laura Meinert: Last week she and the conversation biologist toured the road and will be updating the board with photos and videos. Board will review the Fish and Fish Habitat Protection Plan. Reminded the group about lead time. Question about when the next WMMP will be provided to the board.
 - Dave Green: Bird nesting updates underway, expecting to submit next version of WMMP in a few weeks.
 - Jodi Pelligsey: Reminder that a new WMMP will require public review so please keep timelines in mind.

Environment and Natural Resources

- Laurie McGregor: Will be providing updates later in the agenda in the WMMP presentation

Department of Lands

- Clint and Brandon unavailable to provide update due to being on site.

Environment and Climate Change Canada

- Jean-Francois Dufour joined the meeting later in the agenda. No update from ECCC.
- Fisheries and Ocean Canada
- Olivia Sroka: Currently keeping Kiewit compliant with regulatory fisheries act and work around watercourses. DFO looking to be on site in the coming weeks. Major work to take place on Fisheries Management Plan. Fraser Neave joining the team shortly and will lead that work on DFO's side.
- Wek'èezhì Land and Water Board
- Anneli Jokela: Type B water license app received, preliminary screening; not recommended for further environmental assessment. Type A water license distributed for public review June 17th with work plan—no comments received. Pre-hearing conference on July 21, public hearing Thursday August 20th.

9. BREAK

10. Management and Monitoring Plans: Updates, Implementation, Outcomes, Constraints, Concerns, and Recommendations

Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan

- James Hodson: In answer to an earlier question, there is an annual public review of the WMMP required under measure 10-2 Part 3, expected to be in August. Depending on the outcome, possible changes to WMMP will be made. Winter 2020 surveys focused on fulfilling Measure 6-1 Part 2, including aerial caribou abundance survey and an aerial wolf survey. Total 577 Boreal Caribou found within study area in 99 groups. Report is being prepared for official submission, and James thanks collaborating communities and staff.
 - Michael Birlea: When will the next survey be?
 - James Hodson: Likely during the first five years of TASR operations, but nothing is scheduled at this time.
 - Devon Stephenson: Were the survey results as expected?
 - James Hodson: The 2005 survey (with slightly different methods) suggested a density of 1.6 caribou per 100 square km, and 2.8/100 km² were found this time, so almost twice as many caribou were found using the method from the 2020 surveys.
 - Tammy Steinwand-Deschambault: Is there any prior data for the wolf populations to compare with the new data?
 - James Hodson: Nothing from North Slave, but in South Slave and Dehcho there were wolf surveys done in prior years. Generally, the wolf density is low in NWT, less than 1 wolf per 1000sqkm. Based on available data it would take 6 wolves per 1000sqkm to create problems for caribou density.
 - Jean-Francois Dufour: Are there any maps to show the TASR alignment's effect on caribou movement? Any observed results to share?
 - James Hodson: We have not yet analysed this; it will be part of the first comprehensive WMMP report which will come after the final year of construction (sometime in 2022). Collar data indicates caribou are crossing the alignment as they did before construction.

Environmental Plans update presented by Dave Green (NSI)

- Presented environmental plan update from NSI including spill data.
- Version 1.2 of Water Monitoring Plan submitted to WLWB December and approved March 2020; waste management has been greatly improved compliance via signage, training and monitoring.
- Project is compliant with Fish and Fish Habitat Protection Plan and Federal fisheries act, and following all measures and precautions for fish protection.
- The Erosion and Sediment Control Plan was modified to address winter 2020 construction progress; no issues to report in Spring 2020.
 - Jessica Hurtibise: Are the spill statistics for this project typical for its size?
 - Dave Green: Difficult to compare to other companies/projects, but NSI is operating under strict reporting rules therefore reporting more small spills than some other companies might. He is not alarmed by these numbers.

Quarry Operations Plan and Permafrost Management Plan – adaptation to thermistor monitoring presented by Terry Brookes (GNWT INF)

- ARD being rolled out in NWT quarries. Spoke with Clint Ambrose (Lands inspector) recently and Terry is happy with the Lands reports. NSI has been very responsive to incidents.
- Permafrost measurements paused during construction period. Original test pits were in the more forested areas and now that clearing has transformed the landscape to a more granular base, there will be erratic temperature changes. Monitoring will resume after construction is finished and the

ground has stabilized. Hopefully flagged thermistors survive alignment changes / construction; some new ones may be added. 4 sites out of 24 found with any permafrost (very warm). Predicted within ten years all permafrost will be gone, which will be relevant to the maintenance contractor.

- Stephanie Behrens: A couple of quarries were out of compliance in December. Have those issues been rectified?
- Terry Brookes: Yes, we took that information earnestly and reacted quickly. All noncompliant quarry issues have now been resolved and quarries brought into compliance.

Final Caribou Habitat Offset Plan presented by Keenan Rudichuk (AE)

- Purpose of the plan is to respond to Measure 6-3: to offset residual effects of TASR on boreal caribou with collaboration from territorial, federal, and Indigenous governments (the “Collaborators Working Group”). Offset is a new concept in the NWT, borrowing playbook from other parts of Canada therefore much of the draft plan describes the offsetting process. The final plan will be much more focused, drawing from comments we heard throughout the engagement process. The final plan will identify specific measures to offset the disturbance of habitat from construction and operation of the TASR.
- What’s completed: traditional knowledge working group meetings have taken place, scientific background review, draft plan distributed to groups identified in Measure 6-3 and a strategy was selected. New data has become available since the draft plan. We have mapped the existing disturbance along the alignment. Previously there was no way to quantify the value of the habitat being affected, but ENR has since produced a boreal caribou habitat model to determine how much boreal caribou habitat will be disturbed by TASR and how much/what parts of it are important to the caribou.
- Challenges right now: Outstanding data gaps include the areas that will be affected by quarries (21 are proposed, 11-14 to be developed). Pit lines they have currently are conceptual. Uncertain of the total affected footprint so difficult to quantify the offset right now. Using conceptual design for quarry pit design overestimates the total area that may be disturbed, which translates to an overestimate of area required to be offset, which results in a more costly and inaccurate offsetting estimate.
- Next steps: After today, finalize the plan and deliver to all parties for comment, then official submission to WRRB 90 days prior to public opening. Continued collaboration and consultation with gov’ts (via phonecalls and screensharing) to describe the approach being taken to quantify residual effects of the TASR in the final offset plan. An Operational Implementation Plan (separate from the Habitat Offset Plan) will be required to identify specific personnel, locations, and cost estimates to conduct offsetting. Once the Implementation Plan has been finalized, it will be executed.

11. Engagement Plan

- Engagement triggers that we are required to be discuss at the CWG presented by Benjamin Bey
 - Harvest monitoring study design- EA Measure
 - Weekly updates from the Project Company regarding location and types of activities taking place during construction – WLWB direction
 - Extent of wetlands (potential moose habitat)- NSMA
 - Ongoing performance of blasting protocols – TG comment
 - Bison entering Whatl - CGW
- Benjamin Bey: NSI’s Bison observation in the southern 40 kms of road matches James Hodson’s team’s data. If bison migrate closer to Whatl using the road alignment, measures such as Texas gates could be employed.
 - Dave Green: More bison sightings observed in the southern area but that may be because most operations are currently there. Texas gates are effective but it should be noted that bison also cross ice and can swim.
 - James Hodson: It’s early to draw conclusions because the right-of-way is just being cleared now, and that bison are attracted to vegetation that grow in the right-of-way. Further monitoring in future needed.
 - Stephane Behrens: Whatl residents have noted bison within 20kms of Whatl. Wondering what other sightings have been noted and where? Is this being monitored?
 - James Hodson: It’s unusual to have them that far north. Monitoring will continue.
 - Benjamin Bey: Measures can be put into place with the help of ENR and Whatl to continue collecting data.

12. BREAK

13. Summary of meeting and expectations for next year

Summary:

- Parties have made many adaptations as a result of COVID-19 at the TASR work site to keep everyone safe
- The Type A water license application is moving forward which will increase the volume of water that can be used, as per the details in the WLWBs work plan
- Ongoing collaboration and work to meet the various EA measures and to develop the required plans
- A few plans will soon be sent for review; the WMMP will be updated with bird nest protocols in the coming weeks, the Habitat Offset Plan will be sent for review to the collaborators group before it goes to the WRRB for its final review 90 days before the road opens, the Fisheries Management Plan is being developed.
- Compliance issues in the quarries have been resolved.

Action Items:

- INF to develop a plan to tie in from the road to Whatì at kilometer 97 and bring Lisa from the CGW on the site visit
- NSI is to take note of Violet's dust suppression issue as NSI and INF work towards the Type A licence
- Continue to monitor bison movements regarding proximity to Whatì as construction progresses
- INF to update the agenda for the next meeting to remove the adoption of meeting minutes

Expectations for next meeting:

- Ziaur Rahman: continued environmental safety and COVID-19 safety remain top priority. Keep progressing the road with environmental stewardship in mind. Collaboration with stakeholders to push forward.
- Zabey Nevitt: The motion to adopt the previous meeting minutes should be removed, the Terms of Reference does not have any provisions for that formality. Once they are reviewed by the group they should be considered final.

14. Discuss possible dates for next meeting

- Next meeting tentatively scheduled for Tuesday December 1, 2020, if COVID-19 restrictions allow.
- Lisa Nitsiza confirms Whatì can host if restrictions are lifted.

15. Closing Remarks

- Benjamin Bey is looking forward to driving 80kmh to Whatì
- Devon Stephenson is looking forward to continued feedback on future NSI reports and presentations, and thanks to the group for its attention
- Cameron Wilson thanked the group for their collaboration, invited final remarks, and looks forward to seeing folks in December

16. Closing Prayers

Led by Tammy Steinwand-Deschambault

Meeting Adjourned: 2:45pm MT

Legend:

AE - Associated Engineering / Associated Environmental
ARD - Acid Rock Drainage
CANNOR - Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency
CGB - Community Government of Behchokò
CGW - Community Government of Whatì
DFO - Department of Fisheries and Oceans
EA - Environmental Assessment
ECCC - Environment and Climate Change Canada
ECE - GNWT Dept of Education, Culture and Employment
ENR - GNWT Dept of Environment and Natural Resources
FIN - GNWT Dept of Finance
INF - GNWT Dept of Infrastructure
Lands - GNWT Department of Lands
NSI - North Star Infrastructure
NSMA - North Slave Métis Association
TG - Tlicho Government

WLWB - Wek'èezhì Land and Water Board
WMMP - Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan
WRRB - Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board
WSCC - Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission
YKDFN - Yellowknives Dene First Nation

Meeting Minutes

Tłı̨chǫ Highway Corridor Working Group



Date: December 1, 2020

Time: 9:00am MST

Location: Teleconference or Microsoft Teams

Call-in (audio only)

Attendees:

Tammy Steinwand-Deschambault – Tłı̨chǫ Government
Zabey Nevitt – Tłı̨chǫ Government
Michael Birlea – Tłı̨chǫ Government
Tyanna Steinwand – Tłı̨chǫ Government
Catherine Fauvelle- North Slave Metis Alliance
Lisa Nitsiza- Community Govern. Whati
Anneli Jokela – WLWB
Jessica Pacunayen – WLWB
Laura Meinert- WRRB
Ginger Gibson- The Fire Light Group
Adrian Paradis- Fed Gov. (CNEDA)
Victoria Shore- Fed Gov. (ECCC)
Olivia Sroka- Fed Gov. (DFO)
Brandon Bradbury – GNWT Lands
Clint Ambrose – GNWT Lands
Naomi Smethurst – GNWT (PWNHC)
Andrea Patenaude- GNWT ENR
Ariel Greenblat- GNWT ENR
Bruno Croft- GNWT ENR
Heather Beck- GNWT ENR
David McQuinn- GNWT ENR
James Hodson- GNWT ENR
Laurie McGregor- GNWT ENR
Binay Yadav- GNWT INF (Chair)
Benjamin Bey – GNWT INF
Mark Cronk- GNWT INF
Jon Posynick- GNWT INF
Nancy Shaw- GNWT INF
Salah Uddin- GNWT INF
Stephanie Harris – GNWT INF
Terry Brooks- GNWT INF
Yasir Jamal- GNWT INF
Ziaur Rahman- GNWT INF
Keenan Rudichuk – Associated Engineering
Bruno Pigeon- Kiewit/NSI
Dave Green- Kiewit/NSI
Devon Stephenson- Kiewit/NSI

Regrets:

Stephanie Behrens- Tłı̨chǫ Government
Grace Mackenzie – Tłı̨chǫ Government
Longinus Ekew – Tłı̨chǫ Government
Violet Camsell-Blondin – Tłı̨chǫ Government
Johanne Black – YKDFN
Sarah Gillis- YKDFN
Jessica Hurtubise – North Slave Metis Alliance
Larry Baran – Comm. Gov. Behchoko
Treeva Richardson- Comm. Gov. Behchoko
Ryan Fequet – WLWB
Jodi Pellissey- WRRB
Alexandra Sorckoff – Fed. Gov (DFO)
Daniel Coombs – Fed Gov (DFO)
Mark D’Aguiar – Fed Gov (DFO)
Olivia Sroka – Fed Gov (DFO)
Jean-Francois Defour- Fed Gov (ECCC)
Glen Mackay GNWT (PWNHC)
Marie Nietfeld – GNWT ENR
Sean Craig – GNWT FIN
Cameron Wilson – GNWT INF
David R. Moore – GNWT INF
Kamran Ata- GNWT INF

1. Opening Prayer

Led by Tammy Steinwand-Deschambault (TG)

2. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Binay Yadav (GNWT INF): On behalf of the GNWT Department of Infrastructure, I'd like to welcome everyone to the meeting today. This meeting is for information sharing and to satisfy EA Measure 14-3. As we all know, that this year has been a challenging one due to COVID-19. We've had to "pause" the project for about 6 weeks but I am pleased to report that the project is back on schedule.

There were several site visits coordinated this year so folks could get a view of what was going on at the construction site. We've received much feedback from these visits, which was quite helpful moving forward.

3. Introduction of Participants

(Round table of introductions from participants)

4. Review of Agenda

Binay Yadav (GNWT INF): Are there any comments on the agenda?

(No comments or questions brought forward)

Nancy Shaw (GNWT INF): Just a reminder that this meeting is being audio recorded and meeting minutes are being taken by me and Stephanie Harris (GNWT INF).

Binay Yadav (GNWT INF): Thank you, Nancy.

5. Matters arising from previous Meeting Minutes, review of action items

Item 1: INF to develop a plan to tie in Tłıchq Highway to Whati Access Road.

Response: Ziaur Rahman (GNWT INF) *Significant progress on that. Our engineering team has visited the site numerous times to look at the greater details and have completed surveying the area. The in-house design is now complete. We are now looking at permitting and culverts in regards to this section.*

Item 2: NSI is to take note of Violet's dust suppression issue as NSI and INF work towards the Type-A licence.

Response: Ziaur Rahman (GNWT INF) *The NSI team has reviewed and this has been addressed.*

Item 3: Continuing to monitor bison movements regarding proximity to Whati as construction progresses.

Response: Benjamin Bey (GNWT INF) *We continue to monitor the movement of the bison via weekly reports from NSI. They are mostly sighted below the 50km of the highway. If they move any further up north, I will notify ENR and the Community Government of Whati so we can put measures in place to protect the community right away.*

Item 4: INF to update the agenda prior to the next meeting. Removal of the adoption of meeting minutes.

Response: Binay Yadav (GNWT INF) *This has been completed.*

Item 5: Continued environmental safety and COVID-19 safety remain top priority. We will continue progression of the road with environmental stewardship in mind.

Collaboration with stakeholders to push forward is very important.

Response: Binay Yadav (GNWT INF) *This is on-going and we will continue to do so.*

6. General Overview of TASR/Update on Construction activities and schedule

Bruno Pigeon (Kiewit/NSI) provided construction update via MS Teams PowerPoint presentation. (See attached for photos and notes)

Slope & Ditch Work

- Roadway Embankment
- Culvert Installation
- Gravel Placement
- Bridge Abutment Walls
- 4 Bridges Construction
- Drill & Blast
- Crushing at Km 34, 59, 78

2021 – Construction Activities

- Finish slopes and ditches
- Place and finish gravel surface
- Signage and Guardrail
- Drainage, Erosion & Sediment Control
- Tie-In to Highway 3
- Inspections and Safety audits
- Completion for November 2021

(No comments or questions brought forward)

7. Regulatory Compliance: Updates, Expectations, Concerns, and Recommendations - Reporting Overview By Regulators

Tłı̨chǫ Government Ginger Gibson (The Fire Light Group)

With respect to the Tłı̨chǫ Government there a couple of shared priorities that they share with the GNWT. We currently sit on a working group that is developing social and cultural indicators. As an example if we see sexual transmitted infections (STI's) go through the roof in the first quarter of the operation of the road, then we know we will need to apply pro-active programs and measures right away. That is one example of Tłı̨chǫ Government work that is on-going. We are happy to be doing that work with Health and Social Services (HSS). You can expect to see a report card come from that working group in January.

There is a second working group made up of the Tłı̨chǫ Government and the two Tłı̨chǫ Community Governments as well as Tłı̨chǫ Community Services Agency. This is the Emergency Response working group. We are really grateful that MACA has developed a report that shows exactly where the emergency response services of Behchoko and Whatı̨

falls. So we are quite aware right now that if there were to be an accident on the road there will be no capacity in Whati or Behchoko to respond to that accident currently. We are working with MACA to address that situation right now. We are looking at a risk assessment to look at what we might expect for this road route with respect to accident potential. Those are the two activities that we are busy on. We wanted to report back to our partners that we are really grateful for all the hard work everyone does in these working groups. It's making a huge difference and making us feel very confident for the ability to respond.

Community Government of Whati Lisa Nitsiza (CGW)

Like Ginger had mentioned, we are part of the working groups. It has been progressive. I was able to take a tour of the road the last week of September. It is great to see it first hand as opposed to see it on slides. And how wide it is, how long it is. I can tell you it is a wonderful road because on the way back we all fell asleep. Other than that, Whati has been completely busy even in the COVID times. We have the office closed to the public. We managed to do some projects for the upcoming year and the fact that we have a new year coming up we are looking at new infrastructure for the community to get ready for this road for possible tourism. We are looking at getting an upgrade in our culverts and our road and we are looking for some funding. We are glad to know that the last section of the road will be worked on. Yay to that. And we are working towards to getting some housing in the community. Whati continues to be busy, even though we are on a shut down. Thank you.

Wek'èzhii Renewable Resources Board Laura Meinert (WRRB)

WRRB has received the WMMP for review and will be reviewing it at a board meeting this week. And will responds to INF shortly after that. That is really our only update.

Wek'èzhii Land and Water Board Anneli Jokela (WLWB)

I'll give to you a regulatory update. Most people are up to date but just in case. Ben mentioned earlier this morning or Binay did, about the type a water license. That was approved by the minster on November 19, 2020. This is the license that allows more water use for construction of the road. The board's reason for the decision for the Type A – stated that the cancellation request is expected for the Type B water licence so essentially the Type A one here will replace the Type A. And the board had also indicated that there might be some management plans that will require some updates to reflect the changes in the increase water use and some of the water source names that were clarified through that process and that those changes could come in whenever GNWT INF conducts its annual review of its plans.

Laura from WRRB talked about the wildlife management and monitoring plan. That is version 4 that was submitted September 15 and it went out for review through the WLWB platform. Version 4.1 is sitting with WRRB right now and the WLWB is expecting version 4.2 after the WRRB final recommendations. Other than that our board recently approved 4.3 of the waste management plan which was circulated 2 weeks ago. We also wanted to note our board members were on the road for a tour at the end of September and really appreciated the opportunity to get their eyes on the project to see what is going on. They appreciated all the help from the staff there that provided a great tour.

And I will just conclude with reminding everyone that you can access all of the TASR plans including the ones that are out for public review through the board public registry. If you ever have any questions or need help to find any documents, you can reach out to Jessica (Pacunayen) who is the lead on that file or me to help you find any documents.

Fisheries and Ocean Canada Olivia Sroka (DFO)

Throughout the last number of months Kiewit and the DFO have had open and ongoing communications. We were able to visit the work site in July as well as the beginning of September to observe ongoing work that was taking place as well as the progress of construction. As of right now the DFO is really pleased with the quality of work that has been completed. That would be at the larger crossing as well as the culvert installations. We want to thank Kiewit for all their hard work.

Environment and Climate Change Canada Victoria Shore (ECCC)

I don't have a whole lot to say. Our enforcement department is aware of the project and if any issue should arise, (although I am not aware of any at the moment) and our experts will continue to review and provide comment on various management plans and reports.

Department of Lands Clint Ambrose (GNWT Lands)

Brandon Bradbury and myself were doing regular inspections of the road bi-weekly is typically what we tried to do, depending on activities out there, monthly. But for the most part bi-weekly. The cooperation and professionalism, quality of work that we're seeing by the contractor NSI/Kiewit and of course the Infrastructure being the permanent project owner, we've had minor non-compliances under the project. When I say minor, waste segregation was one of the minor concerns. Best practices to address the concerns happening and implemented.

For the camp ops quarry development, road construction, erection of the bridges along the route, we've had no major non-compliances. Thank you for all the cooperation from Kiewit, Infrastructure and all the subcontractors as well.

Environment and Natural Resources James Hudson (GNWT ENR)

Just a couple updates. So the wildlife management monitoring plan had been submitted to the WLWB mid-September and went out for a 30 day public comment period. There were comments submitted by each the Tłı̨ch̨ Government, WLWB and WRRB. Then on November 6th GNWT submitted responses to the comments on the plan. So right now that plan is with the WRRB and then we're expecting INF to submit review 4.2 plan to ENR. Just a couple other minor updates, the Wildlife division went on a site tour in October. Thanks to Kiewit for organizing that with us. It was a great tour. It was great to see the project on the ground. I think that's it for us.

Tammy Steinwand-Deschambault (TG) – I don't have a question for James but I would like to request that Michael and Tyanna share some of the projects that they have been working on. This is referring to what Ginger was referring to earlier. If that's ok?

Binay Yadav (GNWT INF) – Yes of course, that's fine.

Tyanna Steinwand-Deschambault (TG) – I will share an update on the signage and as well as the wildlife management monitoring program. For the signage we are interviewing elders for the (inaudible) signage? We've also held interviews for a coordinator. They will be hired from either Behchoko or Whati.

Michael Birlea (TG) – Heads-up of a Traditional Knowledge workshop coming up Dec 9-10. The information will essentially guide the recovery strategy within the Wek'èezhii and we will have elders and harvesters participate.

8. Management and Monitoring Plans: Updates, Implementation, Outcomes, Constraints, Concerns, and Recommendations

Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan James Hodson (GNWT ENR)

For the upcoming winter we have two field programs planned that ENR is responsible for leading. One being the areal moose abundance survey. This is going to be a regional survey for a lot of the north slave region and it will cover the Tłı̄ch̄o All Season Road area. It will be done in two phases. Phase one will be a moose classification which is planned to start this week and that is to get sex ratio's so bull/cow ratio while the bulls still have their antlers on and the actual abundance survey will take place in March 2021. The area is about 60,000 square kms. The second thing that's planned for this winter is more GPS collar deployment on Boreal Caribou. We started the collaring program in March 2017. 20 collars were deployed that year. Those 20 collars are scheduled to drop off March 1, 2021. So we need to go out and replace those collars that are dropping off. We also had 2 fatalities and 1 premature collar that fell off. So there are 3 additional collars that we need to replace. So we will be putting out 23 collars this year. We are also going to do our regular annual classification survey. Which is when we go out to find the groups with the collared females and we classify the individuals in the group. Cows, bulls and calves and we calculate the cow/calf ratio which we need to calculate the population trend index. So the wildlife research permit for the collaring is currently out for review and the wildlife research permit abundance survey is already being looked in. So that's our plans for the winter. Thank you, Binay.

Water Monitoring Plan, Waste Management Plan, Fish Habitat Protection Plan, Adaptive Management Plan, Erosion and Sediment Control Plan Dave Green (Kiewit/NSI)

All 13 Environmental Management and Monitoring Plans are approved and actively being administered.

Annual Wildlife Monitoring and Management Plan

(Version 4.1) update has been prepared and submitted to WLWB on November 6, 2020.

Waste Management Plan (Version 1.3) updated and submitted to WLWB on November 9, 2020.

Type A Water License Application was referred by WLWB on October 5, 2020 to the Minister for approval and is expected at the end of November. Upon receipt of Type A Water License, GNWT-INF will submit application to cancel Type B Water License.

Erosion and Sediment Control Plan

- “Living” document intended to protect water crossings
- Prescribes ESC treatments for all sensitive crossings
- Modified to address construction progress winter 2020
- Temporary rock/geotextile berms at major crossings
- Rip rap lined ditch sections, rock check dams, rip rap aprons as per design
- Routine monitoring during spring to inform modifications
- No ESC issues encountered during construction season of 2020

Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan (WMMP)

WMMP elements being followed (up to 10-Nov-20)

- Pre-blast Surveys (97)
- Wildlife Road Surveys (298)
- Wildlife Surveillance surveys (64)
- Pre-clearing Surveys for RoW and Pits (110)
- Wildlife Sightings Recorded (559)
- No unforeseen or major impacts to wildlife

Waste Management Plan (WMP)

- Periodic challenges with waste segregation
- Maintained signage on bins
- Ongoing awareness (Toolbox Talks, Orientations, Meetings)
- Increased monitoring maintained (Daily Monitoring)
- Cameras Installed
- Greatly improved compliance
- Proactive communication with GNWT-DOL Inspectors

Fish and Fish Habitat Protection Plan (FFHPP)

- Compliance with FFHPP and Federal Fisheries Act
- Following Measures to Avoid Causing Harm to Fish and Fish Habitat
- Respected prescribed in water construction timing window
- Followed Protocols for Winter Water Withdrawals
- Utilized fish screens for all water withdrawals
- Utilized only approved water withdrawal sources
- Adhered to daily water withdrawal limits
- Documented all consumptive water withdrawals
- Proactive communication with DFO and GNWT-ENR

Water Monitoring Plan (WMMP)

- Ongoing refinement of NTU-TSS Correlation during active construction
- Monitoring of in water/near water construction
- Field and lab samples taken as prescribed
- Photographic and work activity records maintained
- Documented compliance with established Guidelines
- Ephemeral stream crossings closely monitored throughout construction

Adaptive Management Plan

- Active Adaptive Management
- No examples during construction activities
- Passive Adaptive Management
- Following established process for in water turbidity thresholds
- Following process for wildlife mitigation
- Adaptive Co-Management
- No examples during construction activities
- Slow speed of process makes it challenging to keep pace with construction
- Impromptu Adaptive Management
- No examples during construction activities

Quarry Operations Plan and Permafrost Plan Terry Brooks (GNWT INF)

Not too much to add here. I would like to repeat the comments from Clint (Ambros) from the lands department. Regarding NSI. The quarry operations have been very good in compliance. No real issues nothing that was not noted by Clint already. So I have to give congratulations to NSI and their operations. The permafrost plan monitoring is on hold until post construction. So nothing really to add in terms of data.

The one question I do have, and I will follow up with NSI, don't feel like you need to answer this now, is the condition of the various thermistor locations. Last fall when we held our last meeting, we did a lot of work to flag and hopefully identify these locations for protection of them during the construction. We realize something might go amiss in terms of something getting knocked over or whatever. I will follow up with NSI to see if they still have them located and there still protected. That's all I have at this point.

Final Caribou Habitat Offset Plan

Just as a reminder the caribou habitat offset plan was required under measure 6-3 and we've been working with a number of organizations to finalize that plan. We've had a lot of back and forth and we've incorporated comments from all the participants. On Sept 11, we delivered our draft final plan to the participants and received comments back from everyone. All those comments have been complied and will be incorporated into an accordance table which will be appended to the final plan so we can track comments to make sure everything has been address. Through review of those comments, there was some discussion about how the habitat offset plan would actually be implemented as well as some timelines for the implementation. So through discussion with WRRB and with ENR we decided to create an appendix that would be framework that ties the habitat offset plan into an implementation plan. The implementation plan is ultimately the piece that will be required to do the work in the field. It's a fairly complicated process so the purpose of the appendix is to tie those two together so we've started working on the appendix. Some of the specific activities in prep for that are additional mapping of existing disturbance in the region. So if we recall, offsetting for caribou we will focus more on returning disturbed habitat to compensate for the foot print of the TASR. So there is some further mapping to occur and the final appendix will have outlining that existing disturbance in the region. It will also have methods to develop a prescription and a path for moving forward so that the implementation plan can proceed smoothly once the road is completed. I think that's about it. We're looking to finalize and have a final submission to the WRRB early to mid-February.

9. BREAK (15 mins)

10. Engagement Plan Benjamin Bey – (GNWT INF Environmental Analyst)

This section is an open discussion session where we seek input from the group. Specifically on 5 items so as to help us improve our mitigation and monitoring measures. I have a couple of points that are very important that I will use to lead the discussion. I will introduce them as a topic and I will open the floor for discussion and suggestions.

Harvest monitoring study design- EA measure 7-1.

Benjamin Bey (GNWT INF) - That is supposed to incorporate TK into harvest monitoring program and it is supposed to be guided by the TG. I am happy to report to the group that over the summer INF worked collectively with the TG and ENR so that the TG developed a scope of work as to what needed to be done to satisfy this measure. It was reviewed by

ENR and everything is now ready to go. I don't know if TG would like to give a quick update to where we are and how we are moving forward. If also ENR would like to make a comment on it, that would be great. Everything the scope has been developed approved so the real work can now start. If Tammy, Tyanna or Michael would like to make any comment then after that I will open the floor to any other suggestions or comments from the group.

(No comments or questions brought forward)

Extent of wetlands (potential moose habitat) Benjamin Bey (GNWT INF)

This resulted from comments from NSMA. Given that wetlands are a potential moose habitat and the concern is that the construction/alignment will destroy the wetlands, which is potential moose habitat. So this summer what I did was I worked with NSMA (Jessica and Twanis) and Catherine and also with the department of geometrics. They mapped out the alignment for me identifying all the wetlands along the Tłı̄ch̄o Highway. So I got a beautiful map that indicated that the alignment actually afforded the guard of wetlands. So I shared this with NSMA and they reviewed it and are satisfied with what I submitted to them. We will put that to rest. And the next meeting it will not be on the agenda as we have satisfied NSMA.

(No comments or questions brought forward)

Ongoing success of air horns as wildlife deterrent and if there have been observations of disturbed wildlife behaviour in response to blasting.

Dave Green (Kiewit/NSI) – So for all of the mitigation measures that were in place for any of the blasts taking place have seemed to have worked quite effectively. In all but one case we never observed any large mammals in the pre-blast sweeps. A lot of it had to do with the sequence of drilling and blasting. So the activities basically throughout the day and night leading up to the blast was heavy in the local area which would have pushed wildlife away from the area with the sound of the constant drilling for the various shots. The process leading up to that moment in time before the blast was followed were the warnings given over the radio as well as the air horn blasts. Even in some cases where wildlife was observed within the vicinity, I'd say a KM on either side, our blasters were very aware of the surrounding they were working in and would often advise if they saw anything in particular. But they often took it upon themselves to drive up and down the road honking the horn if they thought in any way there was going to be issues with wildlife interactions. Based on what we've seen on the pre-blast sweeps that have been done, I think we have a fairly good system in place. I'm not sure if any additional deterrents would be required at this point in time.

(No comments or questions brought forward)

Ongoing success of weekly updates from NSI regarding location and type of construction activities.

Benjamin Bey (GNWT INF) - NSI has done a really good job in the weekly report. This is a public document that is posted on the WLWB website and those of you that haven't got a chance to look at them they are all there. They are very thorough and they are looking good. So kudos to NSI for their reporting and that is all that I have on that one.

(No comments or questions brought forward)

Open floor for suggestion to improve monitoring and mitigation measures.

(No comments or questions brought forward)

11. Summary of meeting and expectations for next year

Binay Yadav (GNWT INF) – So during our meeting what I have noticed is a lot of communication and collaboration happening behind the scenes. Folks are working hard on this project. We need to continue the work and how the hard work people are doing until the project is done. So it's not done and let's continue on during the next few years to complete this project.

Tammy Steinwand-Deschambault (TG Government) - I also would like to thank everyone for working so well together. I know from our staff that sometimes things get a bit hectic. We're still working to fulfill other positions (*inaudible – connection poor*). If anyone has any questions or concerns or anything that people would like to bring forward to me, Zabey or Ginger (*inaudible – connection poor*).

Ginger Gibson (The Fire Light Group) – I just want to acknowledge that the measures really of the report of the environmental assessment are what really has held us all together in a lot of ways. And gives us kind of requires we report and requires we get work done between sessions. I just want to mention that the TG reporting was put out there along with the GNWT. Everybody did a good job of kind of sharing their information in advance. And of course the TG report has been posted to the review board website so I think that is a good summary as well for people to take a look at. I actually am quite grateful for those measures as it does cause and require everybody to do the work that they promised; they thought they may do between sessions.

Ziaur Rahman (GNWT INF) - In September 2019 we started construction and we've received tremendous support from regulators to move forward with this project and now we have made significant progress on this project and we plan on opening in 2021. I would like to thank TG and CGW, Behchokq, WRRB, WLWB, DFO, ECC, ENR, PWNHC, WSCC and CPHO. Moving forward health and safety and the environment will continue to be our priority.

Anneli Jokela (WLWB) – The board doesn't typically have any expectations to communicate. Our regular meeting we've been having between staff and various people on the TASR project has been helpful in keeping us informed of what's going on so we can talk about some of the regulatory processes that may be coming up. Hopefully outline some efficiencies and get communication out to staff. I think that has been working well for your team and our team. That is all I can say at this time. Thanks.

12. Discuss Possible Dates for Next Meeting

Binay Yadav (GNWT INF) – Let Stephanie (Harris) know if there are any particular dates your group would prefer for the next meeting. We are suggesting the dates of June 15 or 16 or 17. So think about it and let us know which date is good for most of the folks and then we can figure it out after that. Does anyone have any comment or suggestions?

(No comments or suggestions brought forward)

In the next few weeks we will like to solidify the next meeting date.

13. Closing Remarks

Binay Yadav (GNWT INF) - So again, thanks to Stephanie, Tammy, Nancy, Ziaur and Ben for organizing this meeting. A lot of behind the scenes work was done to coordinate this meeting. And also a big thanks to the entire team for everyone's cooperation and support for this project and this is why the project is moving on track and on schedule is due to your support. I look forward to seeing you all at the meeting in June. Thanks again for meeting today. It was a fruitful meeting in sharing information and learning from one another.

Does anyone have any other comments or information before we go?

Tammy Steinwand-Deschambault (Tłıchq Government) – Hello! It's Tammy. I just commented in the chat box there but maybe for the next agenda in terms of timing if we could adjust the timing and go for half the day. Just from today's meeting we have more than enough time.

Binay Yadav (GNWT INF) - Yes, good point Tammy. Lesson learned today is that half day is more than enough. So we will show this in the next agenda.

Tammy Steinwand-Deschambault (Tłıchq Government) – Also if we could have all the presentations included in the meeting invite that would be good.

Binay Yadav (GNWT INF) – Yes, we will. Does anyone else have anything to add?

(No comments or questions brought forward)

14. Closing Prayers

Led by Tammy Steinwand-Deschambault (Tłıchq Government)

Meeting Adjourned: 10:54am

Legend:

AE - Associated Engineering / Associated Environmental
ARD – Acid Rock Drainage
CANNOR - Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency
CGB - Community Government of Behchokò
CGW – Community Government of Whatì
DFO - Department of Fisheries and Oceans
EA – Environmental Assessment
ECCC - Environment and Climate Change Canada
ECE - GNWT Dept. of Education, Culture and Employment
ENR - GNWT Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources
FIN - GNWT Dept. of Finance
INF - GNWT Dept. of Infrastructure
Lands - GNWT Department of Lands
NSI - North Star Infrastructure
NSMA - North Slave Métis Association
TG - Tłı̄chǫ Government
WLWB - Wek'èezhìi Land and Water Board
WMMP – Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan
WRRB - Wek'èezhìi Renewable Resources Board
WSCC – Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission
YKDFN - Yellowknives Dene First Nation

Meeting Minutes

TŁJCHQ ALL-SEASON ROAD CORRIDOR WORKING GROUP

June 16th, 2021



Date: 16 June 2021

Time: 9:00am – 12:00 pm Mountain Time

Location: Microsoft Teams and +1 867-675-1042 Conference ID: 515 456 994#

Attendees:

David Moore (Chair) – INF
Mark Cronk – INF
Alicia Kelly – ENR
Benjamin Bey – INF
Binay Yadav – INF
Bruno Pigeon – NSI
Dave Green – NSI
Devon Stephenson – NSI
Fraser Neave – DFO
Gabriel Lacaille-Bernard – DFO
Ginger Gibson – TG
Grace Mackenzie – TG
Clint Ambrose – Lands
Brandon Bradbury – Lands
James Hodson – ENR
James William – NSI
Jessica Hurtubise – NSMA
Jessica Smart – NSMA
Joelle Guedon – INF
Jon Posynick – INF

Kaitlyn Baker – CANNOR
Kamran Ata – INF
Keenan Rudichuk – AE
Laura Meinert – WRRB
Laurie McGregor – ENR
Paul Vecsei – TG
Randi and Jody – WRRB
Ryan Fequet – WLWB
Razvan Birlea – TG
Salah Uddin – INF
Sheyenne Jumbo – INF
Stephanie Behrens – TG
Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault – TG
Terry Brookes – INF
Tyanna Steinwand – TG
Yasir Jamal – INF
Ziaur Rahman – INF

Regrets:

Cameron Wilson – INF
Adrian Paradis – CANNOR
Glen MacKay – ECE
Johanne Black – YKDFN
Louisa Wedzin – CGB
Machel Thomas – YKDFN
Naomi Smethurst – ECE
Nancy Enn – AE
Robert Cornell – NSI
Zabey Nevitt – TG
Community Government of
Whatì
ECCC

1. Opening Prayer

Led by Tammy Steinwand-Deschambault

2. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Tammy Steinwand-Deschambault: Challenging months due to COVID-19 but there has been ongoing commitment to the project, the environment, and the safety of workers. Thanks to the GNWT for protective steps to keep COVID-19 out of our small communities. People from Whatì are looking forward to TASR releasing access to the rest of the territorial highway system, outside communities are also looking forward to visiting Whatì.

* Ginger – is on emergency calls, if there are any questions please leave them for a later point. Will be in and out of today's meeting.

3. Introduction of Participants

- Welcome and greetings from chair, David R. Moore (INF), Infrastructure Assistant Deputy Minister.
- Housekeeping items: keep cameras off and mics on mute when you are not presenting. A good suggestion from Terry Brooks – bandwidth is usually a challenge with teams/online meetings, keep videos off unless you are presenting.

4. Review of Agenda

- This meeting is for information sharing and to satisfy EA Measure 14-3. This provides a good opportunity to give updates, regulatory requirements, and results from the various departments (ENR, NSI, DFO, TG, AE, INF)
- Engagement plan and the next steps: substantial completion of the project is scheduled for this November; this is likely the last scheduled CWG meeting during the construction period.

5. Matters arising from previous Meeting Minutes, review of action items

- INF to develop a plan to tie-in Th̄chq Highway with Whatì Access Road at KM 97.
 - Ben - INF has been working on this internally and weighing the different options. For the construction on design part, I will call on Ziaur and I talk about the regulatory part of this process.
 - Ziaur - as you know TASR is ending at KM 97, however, the Whatì Community Government, raised a concern about the remaining 13 km into the community that it needs improvement. In response, the site has been visited twice to identify the scope of work that is required on the remaining 13 km. Currently, INF is working on the design of the road and permitting. Once the permit has been approved, technical investigations will happen for a bridge design and final road design. Once finalized, the construction stage will commence.
 - Ben - permitting status - LUP permit application and WL application has been submitted to the WLWB. If there are no delays with the permitting processes and approvals, we are hoping to start the geotechnical study early August 2021. WL will be in place for next year.
- Ginger - Emergency Repose Working Group, working with MACA on Accident Response
*Not at meeting during this time
- Continued monitoring of Bison movements
 - Ben - with construction put on pause for the winter season (Dec-May), documentation of bison sightings was not very adequate during this period. Once construction resumed documentation of the sightings showed that they are still limited to the southern half of the road up to KM 45. This summer, I will be following this closely to see if they are still limiting themselves to the southern part of the road. If they are moving up and begin to cross Lac La Marte, I will communicate with Whatì and ENR to put measures in place to prevent them from moving into the community. They have not yet crossed the 50km mark.
 - Tammy - The bison are eventually going to be coming in, we (CWG) should start brainstorming on measures needed for that.
- Caribou Habitat Offset Plan - Final submission to WWRB
 - Ben - update will be given later in this program by consultant, Keenan (AE). They are on course to meet the deadline and looking to submit by the end of June/early July to meet the 90 days prior (deadline) to the opening of the road.
- Th̄chq Government update on TK workshop and WMMP Coordinator
 - Tammy - interviews have been done with the community Elders from Whatì.
 - Tyanna - Will give an in-depth update later.
- Terry Brooks: Thermistor locations and how they are being protected
 - Terry - question back to NSI if they are protected, tripods and flagging have been placed at the sites, hopefully, that is not making them an easy target the last time they were on site. The thermistor reading program for the permafrost plan had been suspended during construction, just wanted to have the sites protected so that they can be easily found during operations when the program resumes; just a flag to NSI to ensure they are being protected. Don't want to lose any thermistor sites due to accidents as it would be expensive to redrill and reinstall. No notice to the public (i.e., informative signs on the devices, do not touch, etc.) is needed for these, they are small and underground.
- Safety update:
 - Ziaur - since construction started in 2019, the team has been working cooperatively with all other departments and organizations (WLWB, WRRB, DFO, Lands, ENR, TG, ECE, Community Governments). Environmental safety is a priority for the team. If there were any kind of issues or concerns that turned up on site, professional opinions were sought on how to resolve any type of issues. In regard to COVID, in March 2020, the team (INF, NSI, WSCC, TG) worked together to develop an exposure control plan. During the peak construction season, around 270 personnel were on site with ensured safety.

Questions

- Ryan to Ben (in chat): does INF anticipate being able to submit the outstanding information for the Whatì rehabilitation applications before the end of day this coming Sunday?
Ben - we are working with structures, there is only one outstanding request. We are working on getting back to the Board by Sunday. The information will be coming.

6. General overview of the Tłı̨chǫ Government Highway: updates on construction activities and schedule

- Devon Stancombe and Bruno Pigeon (NSI): summary on construction updates, upcoming construction, environmental updates and operation and maintenance activities.

Questions

- Ryan (WLWB): rumors that TASR may open early to accommodate the ongoing elections, is this being discussed?
 - Devon: there have been discussions to host tours prior to the elections but the road will not be opening prior to the set date of November 30, 2021.
- James (ENR): when will signage be put up? We are looking for a sense of timing, whether it is possible to have discussion on wildlife signage.
 - Bruno: we are happy to have discussion about signage and will involve GNWT. Signs will be in both English and Tłı̨chǫ.
- Tammy (TG) requests that highway signage be in both languages as much as possible.

7. Regulatory Compliance: Updates, Expectations, Concerns, and Recommendations

Community Government of Whatì – not present, busy with elections.

- Ginger Gibeson (Firelight Group): Whatì Community Government has been participating as an active member in implementing TASR EA Measures 5-1, 5-2 and 5-3 (i.e., the Socio-Economic, Emergency Management Measures, and Community Well-being).

Tlı̨cho Government

- Tyanna Steinwand: Working on TASR Caribou Monitoring Plan Measures 6-2, 7-1, 7-2, 9-1. Finalized the scope of work and the budget has been submitted. Currently working to establish a group of 4 harvesters to help with baseline studies, planning a volunteer harvester reporting program, and working toward a Tłı̨chǫ Staff checkpoint on the road alignment to be stationed during winter hunting season.

Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board

- Jody and Randi: the WRRB has been actively involved, sitting in on meetings, helping with the Fisheries Management Plan, and reviewing the weekly Environmental Reports. The board was able to go on a tour of the highway on May 27th. Currently waiting for the Caribou Offset Plan and the Interim Boreal Caribou Range Plan for review and approval.

Fisheries and Ocean Canada

- Gabriel: with the Fish and Fish Habitat Protection Program – First CWG and will be replacing Olivia Sroka. Conducted a site visit with Kiewit to observe crossings and progression of construction of the road. Satisfied with the current work being done. At KM 46.2, Kiewit had to install a culvert to allow for a fish passage on a stream that had been missed during the fish habitat assessment. There are still a couple of necessary tweaks, we are currently working together to ensure there will be a long-term fish passage at that location.
- Paul (TG) on behalf of Fraser Neave (DFO -Fisheries Management) said he would be in and out of the call, there is a joint DFO-TG presentation later in this meeting.

Wek'èezhì Land and water board

- Ryan: continue to comply with the permit and licenses, nothing to report.

Department of Lands

- Clint: no concerns over the winter season. Made it through the winter with no incidents or unexpected releases from fuel tanks or equipment. Regular inspections continue to be conducted with Brandon Bradbury; they are starting to ramp up. There was a minor incident at James River during freshet, but it was resolved in collaboration with Kiewit where all inspector concerns were addressed. Kiewit ensured compliance through their approved management plans, very impressed by the diligence of Kiewit. Communication was great and follow up reports were received within 30-days of the incident; we are pleased with the response and measures put in place. Throughout this incident, there were mentions of the

permafrost plan, sediment erosion control plan and the adaptation (heard from Kiewit) on how to best prevent future incidents from occurring along all locations of the project. Adaptive management will be implemented to ensure environmental protection has been put in place by the contractor and subcontractor and it is greatly appreciated. There are no major environmental concerns noted, routine inspections will continue. Compliance side of the LUP has been on the right track.

Tłıchǫ Government

- Ginger: acknowledges GNWT, NTHSSA, they have been strong movers in the development of the socio-economic report card, especially gathering the data. The final social-economic reporting will be coming soon (in November) and will be prepared for the Chief and this (CWG) group. Emergency management personnel have been working closely with MACA as they oversee the delivery and provision of services. An analysis has been done, and that is in play and what is deemed weak; when an accident occurs on the road, there is no ability to respond. This is a great concern to MACA, Behchokǫ and the Community Government of Whatı. There is no way forward to address this issue currently, it would require a large investment of infrastructure in the area. Smaller measures currently include the ability to have call reception/centres. There are larger concerns for liability and safety from the Community Government that are not actively being addressed at this point in time.
- Tyanna: for the wildlife monitoring program, two committee meeting (January/April) that have taken place so far with 9 members and 2 youth. The committee helps develop the WMP and provide input to the things that they want to do. In April, James Hodson (ENR) presented to the committee members to inform them on different monitoring programs/approaches, which was every helpful. We want to develop a Voluntary Harvest Report Program with logbooks. Posters and radio announcements will be used to inform people before the road opens in November. A baseline conditions reports was conducted with the elders and is being finalized. We are also going to hire 4 road monitors for harvesting, jobs descriptions have been done up, we just need to advertise. Once the monitors have been hired, we are looking at sending them to Tuk to job-shadow monitors along the ITH Highway. Approaches are being explored to develop a checkpoint on the highway, we will need to seek additional funding for operations. Elders and harvesters have mentioned that the vegetation and fish should be monitored, so Paul and DFO have been looking to monitoring fish at the four bridges. Jen with the Wilfred Laurie University has started looking into doing vegetation work. Highway signage (28) have been developed in collaboration with the elders and we would like to put them up, we have been communicating with Ziaur.

Environment and Natural Resources

- James: Leading the development on Interim Caribou Range Plan, it will be finalized and submitted to WWRB by August. In repose to measures 6-1 part 1 and 6-2, we are currently getting a report done to look at modelling sustainable harvest rates on caribou harvesting. Also following along the weekly environmental reports.

8. BREAK

9. Management and Monitoring Plans: Updates, Implementation, Outcomes, Constraints, Concerns, and Recommendations

Environment and Natural Resources

- James: WWMP presentation. No questions.

NSI: David Green and Bruno Pegin:

- Water Monitoring Plan: no significant difference since the last update in December.
- Waste Management Plan: monitoring takes place, there are no non-compliance issues. We would like to bring back the bottle recycling program to give back to the communities.
- Fish and Fish Habitat Protection Program: 46 +220 culvert, issue; we are being proactive with the DFO to create the fish crossings, continue to follow our measures, and no in-water construction activities are planned moving forward.
- There was an erosion sediment control incident on James River – North approach, West-side in the spring where the exposure of muskeg sections in the ditch line that greatly increased the amount of water being routed southward to the river. The Sediment Control Plan and design

elements are currently being reviewed to ensure there the plan is sufficient moving forward. Currently closing up some of the exposed ditch sections through muskeg north of James River and are continuing to look for final solutions for erosion and sediment control on the project once the temporary crossings are out.

- WWMP presentation: no major impacts to wildlife, we are implementing mitigation when interacting with wildlife and following plans without issue.
- Continuing to collaborate with the Lands inspectors to monitor any issues or concerns they may have.
- Spill Management and Reporting: 93 spills to date, vast majority have been very low-volume spills, we are following our Kiewit protocols on reporting to the environmental department. Seeing significant slow-down in spill events; construction is not as busy as last season. Most common cause of the spills are leaking hoses on equipment and the wear and tear when it comes to hydraulics. There are adaptive management plans in place where we have a pro-active management system with the equipment having scheduled maintenance.
 - o Bruno: (in chat) – We do have a preventive maintenance program at 250 and 500h for each piece of equipment. This includes visual inspection of the hoses and replacement prior to their life span end.

INF Quarry Plants & Permafrost Plan

- Terry Brooks: All quarries on southern end of project are currently inactive, quarries on the upper end are active at this point in time. There will be some quarry work near the end of the construction phase. I will be going out this fall to inspect thermistor sites to ensure they are still working, findable and active. The thermistor reading program will start next winter when the ground temperatures begin to stabilize. I have also been working with James (ENR) to put in portable traffic counters this fall before the road opens. ENR wants traffic counts in relation to wildlife harvesting and related activities.
 - o Question from Stephanie Barend (in chat) - How long will the traffic counters be put in place for?
 - o James – in the WWMP, we are committed to monitoring for at least 5 years. There is also permanent road traffic counter in place by NSI.
- Ziaur: one traffic counter will also be installed and managed by NSI.
 - o Terry: do you have a schedule for when they would be installed and what type of counters will be installed?
 - o Devon: we will send you the information.

AE – Final Caribou Habitat Offset Plan

- Keenan: the report is in its final stages of writing, will be sent to Ben soon and then submitted to the WRRB for approval. As apart of the plan, we developed an implementation framework appendix that outlines major items and things to consider as we move into the habitat offset plan. It includes clear timelines and commitments for INF to meet. We have also quantified burrow sources (thanks to NSI for providing footprints) and mapped the existing linear and polygonal features within 10km of TASR and Highway 3, in collaboration with James (ENR). These areas are the first-cut off candidate offset locations to complete the work. It is ready to be submitted on our end.

Fisheries Management Plan by DFO & TG

- Paul (TG): presentation on Tlicho Highway Fisheries. There will be a pamphlet that summarizes all fisheries related changes and regulations for the public as well as a required Angler Diary; it is a self-monitoring type survey/form that they have to fill out and submit. It will be in both languages: Tlicho and English.
- Ben: as Paul said, we are planning on developing the pamphlet so the public can know exactly what is going on, in addition to the plan itself. It is still in the working stages. One of the directives of the measure is to submit plans to the group for input, we hope that in 2 weeks time the CWG will be receiving the plan, when received, please review, and send any comments you may have back.
 - o Ryan (in chat): Is the pamphlet Ben mentioned being developed in collaboration with the TG?
 - o Ben: yes, TG and DFO, everything is going through TG.

- Ben: We (INF) have three major reports required to submit to the WLWB and one to the MVRB. Two annual WL reports have been submitted to the WLWB for 2019 and 2020, this year's will be submitted sometime in March. The EA Annual Report has also been submitted to the MVRB for 2019 and 2020, the 3rd one will be submitted this year in October. We also have the first annual review of the WMMP for 2020 which has been submitted and approved by ENR and the WLWB. No changes are anticipated to the WMMP prior to its annual review.

10. Engagement Plan

Ben: The Harvest Monitoring study design is to satisfy Measure 7-1, last year I worked with TG and ENR, TG was to work in collaboration with ENR. Any updates from James or Tyanna on this EA Measure?

James: no updates from ENR, Tyanna mentioned it earlier.

Open floor suggestion period:

Ben: actively asking for input on how to collect TK, what forum would be appropriate for collecting TK. Would like the group to consider a discussion on this so we can improve our monitoring and management plans. If anyone has suggestions or comments on the management plans, feel free to provide your input, you can also get back to me with suggestions at a later time.

Salah: in regard to item 9, DFO and TG, in terms of fisheries related signage that the TG is requesting (i.e., "no sport fishing"), is it related to DFO management? Would like clarification to help us understand the significance of those signs.

Ben: I will connect with Paul and we will figure out how to move forward.

Ben asking Ginger: looking for input on how we can collect TK at this point.

Ginger – I will reach out to the appropriate groups and get a team together. We like doing TK work, especially working with the elders as it helps to build the information we have.

Question from Ryan (in chat) – When is the annual meeting in Whatì expected to take place? and will this be coordinated with any other public meetings RE TASR? (e.g., next TASR WG meeting or other).

11. Summary of meeting expectations and moving forward

Summary:

- To reiterate, this is the last CWG meeting during the construction phase. Road opening is scheduled for November 30th, 2021.
- Parties have made many adaptations as a result of COVID-19 at the TASR work site to keep everyone safe.
- The Caribou Habitat Offsetting plan is in its final stages, the WRRB will be reviewing pending approval.
- Construction was on pause for the winter season with regular inspections conducted by Lands, there were no concerns or compliance issues. Compliance and collaboration with the contractor and sub-contractor have also been great, any issues were resolved within a timely manner. Construction resumed with the Highway 3 tie-in now complete and all quarries on the southern end of the project are inactive with the upper end quarries remaining active.

Action Items:

- Continue to monitor bison movements regarding proximity to Whatì as construction progresses.
- Highway signage to be put up with collaboration between TG, NSI and ENR.
- Terry: Traffic counters sub-project, collaboration between INF and ENR?
- Paul TG: developing pamphlets to notify the public of current on-goings.
- Ben: Engagement plan and TK input being sought.
- Ginger: Final Social-Economic Report Card and concerns of liability and safety for the Community Government.

12. Discuss possible dates for next meeting

- Next tentative meeting dates are December 14, 15, or 16, 2021, and to take place in Whatì if COVID-19 restrictions allow. Polls will be sent out to group members for choosing a date that works best for everyone. Meetings need to happen twice a year.

13. Closing Remarks

- David Moore thanked the group for their collaboration, invited final remarks, and looks forward to seeing folks in December.
- Devon (NSI) gave appreciation for everyone in attendance.
- Meeting minutes will be drafted and sent out for review.
 - The audio has also been recorded.

14. Closing Prayers

Meeting Adjourned: 11:51am MT

Legend:

AE - Associated Engineering / Associated Environmental
CANNOR - Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency
CGB - Community Government of Behchokò
CGW - Community Government of Whatì
DFO - Department of Fisheries and Oceans
EA - Environmental Assessment
ECCC - Environment and Climate Change Canada
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WSCC - Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission
YKDFN - Yellowknives Dene First Nation

Meeting Minutes

Tłı̨chǫ All-Season Road Corridor Working Group

December 15th, 2021



Date: 15 December 2021

Time: 9:00am – 12:00 pm Mountain Time

Location: Microsoft Teams and +1 867-675-1042 Conference ID: 888 608 08#

Attendees:

Cameron Wilson (Chair) – INF
Alexandra Sorckoff – DFO
Alicia Kelly – ENR
Anneli Jokela – WLWB
Benjamin Bey - INF
Binay Yadav – INF
Brandon Bradbury – Lands
Clint Ambrose – Lands
Dave Green – NSI
David-Scott McQuinn – ENR?
Devon Stephenson - NSI
Fraser Neave – DFO
James Hodson – ENR
Jessica Smart - NSMA
Janelle Kuntz – TG
Joelle Guedon – INF
Jon Posynick – INF
Kamran Ata – INF

Keenan Rudichuk – AE
Laurie McGregor - ENR
Mark Cronk – INF
Michael Birlea – TG
Naomi Smethurst – PWNHC
Nancy Enn – AE
Paul Vecsei – TG
Randi Jennings - WRRB
Jody Pellissey– WRRB
Ryan Fequet – WLWB
Salah Uddin - INF
Sheyenne Jumbo – INF
Stephanie Behrens - TG
Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault - TG
Terry Brookes - INF
Yasir Jamal - INF
Ziaur Rahman – INF

Regrets:

Bruno Croft – ENR
Bruno Pigeon – NSI
Curtis Coleman – CGB
Gabriel Lacaille-Bernard – DFO
Ginger Gibson – TG
Glen MacKay – PWNHC
Grace Mackenzie – TG
Jessica Hurtubise – NSMA
Laura Meinert – WRRB
Lisa Nitszia – CGW
Patrick Stancombe – AE
Robert Cornell – NSI
Tyanna Steinwand – TG

1. Opening Prayer

Led by Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault

2. Welcome and Opening Remarks

- Cameron Wilson, Chair: Welcomed everyone. The Tłı̨chǫ All-Season Road (TASR) was officially opened on November 30th, 2021. There will be some minor construction will be ongoing for the next year. For these last two years, the highway was in the construction phase, it is now open to the public for its intended purpose, which changes the environment and how we continue to work together. Moving forward, use of the highway will not be as controlled as it was during construction. Outlined within the Terms of Reference (ToR), we have continued our efforts with the Corridor Working Group (CWG) for the next 5 years to monitor the impacts of the highway through operations and ensure our environmental stewardship along with everything else being done does not have adverse impacts on the wildlife or environment. Our commitment is to continue these CWG meetings, twice a year, over the next five years. The Tłı̨chǫ, are very important to this as they use the land traditionally (and have for thousands of years), they know what is happening to the land. It is important that we understand and listen to their concerns that may arise over the coming years. David R. Moore, who previously Chaired these meetings will no longer be doing so as the project construction is completed. Operations, Maintenance and Repair (OM & R) will be chairing these meeting moving forward.

3. Introduction of Participants

- Cameron Wilson: Opened for any new participants to introduce themselves and their positions.
- Mark Cronk, acting ADM: Thanked and congratulated everyone for their hard work, lots of great cooperation throughout the TASR project.

- Devon Stephenson, NSI: Introduced Justin Granjambe who is the site superintendent on the O&M side for NSI.
- Alicia Kelly, ENR: EA Assessment Biologist replacing Ariel Greenbelt, for the TASR.
- Jessica Smart, NSMA: Recently started with NMSA as the Conservation Planner.
- Alexandra Sorckoff, DFO: Not new, filling in for Gabriel Lacaille-Bernard.

4. Review of Agenda

- Quickly reviewed the agenda and meeting timeline.
- Please come on camera when you are speaking or presenting.

5. Matters arising from previous Meeting Minutes, review of action items

Item 1: Continued monitoring of Bison movements:

Benjamin Bey: INF is continuing to review all reports and monitor bison movement. They have been sighted at km 76 and are still moving north. There is no active community engagement as to how this problem should be solved. INF would like to organize an in-person engagement session for next year, to ask for options and work with ENR/NSI to design measures to prevent the bison from moving into the community.

Item 2: Engagement Plan and Traditional Knowledge (TK) being sought:

Benjamin Bey: to date, there is no TK being sought, due to COVID. INF would like to wait and to tie TK into the bison movement and how the community would like to prevent the bison from moving into the community, through an in-person engagement session – if COVID allows – the alternative would be organizing virtual event. Ben's door is open if anyone would like to share some advice or TK, on mitigating the impact of highway, can be sent anytime.

Cameron Wilson: traditionally the bison have never moved that far north, but now that the corridor is open, there is high concern of the bison ending up in the community.

Dave Green: NSI has confirmation that the bison have moved past km 54, with Ben's comment on km 76, this will have to be investigated. A couple of bison had moved northward up to km 54, in 2020, that was the full length of the TASR. In terms of tracking the bison movement and watching the fluid movement northward, the last reports we saw – attributed to movement along corridor – shows that a couple of bison had moved to km 54, in 2020. Observations were made in each work area, the fluid movement northward they furthest.

*Has been confirmed by Dave Green, NSI on Feb. 03, 2022 that the bison have been spotted at km 76.

Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault: confirming where km 0 starts – is that right at Highway 3? km 76 bison sightings would mean that the bison are 35 km or so from Whati. With the harvest monitors, info should be shared with everyone. Suggestion to set up a system where info can be posted weekly.

Devon Stephenson: There is 21 km more up the alignment and then another 9.0 km to the community limit or 14 km to be right in the community. Taking it into account, that is 21 km plus approximately 14 km.

Cameron Wilson: from a risk and liability standpoint, signs will have to be posted if there are bison in the area. NSI and the project team will look into that. If a lot of bison were seen along the alignment, signs would have to be posted from a risk and liability standpoint.

Devon Stephenson: there are signs indicating where there are bison along the alignment. Data has also been collected, there are already warning signs located appropriately.

Item 3: Final Socio-Economic Report Card and concerns of liability and safety for the Community Government:

Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault: will be presenting for Ginger, most of TG staff and consultants are on leave – The GNWT and TG have been working closely to prepare the reporting. The project has been hampered by the lack of commitment of funding from ITI as well as capacity. Raw data has been rolled out, meeting within the next year. Data can be shared once funding becomes available and will continue to work forward.

Item 4: Development of pamphlets to notify the public of current on-goings:

Michael Birlea: Paul was working with DFO to create the pamphlet in regard to fisheries management.

Benjamin Bey: the development of the pamphlet is still in progress but is not active, would like to finalize the final fisheries management plan before moving forward. Plan has been shared with the CWG members, reminder to review the plan and submit any comments/concerns back to INF.

Salah Uddin: Many factors involved with Bison Signage. We, i.e., ENR, TG and INF through coordination, need to keep in mind that wildlife monitoring is more than just bison.

Cameron Wilson: as part of the construction contract, wildlife signage has been and continues to be meaningfully installed. As our obligation, the public must be informed that they may encounter wildlife on the TASR.

Ryan Fequet, in chat: RE: Engagement Plan and Traditional Knowledge for Ben: is the movement of Bison the only topic that INF wants and/or is required to seek TK and/or conduct engagement on?

Benjamin Bey: Bison are not the only concern, we continue to use TK for a variety of topics, not just the movement of bison. TK was sought prior to construction and was incorporated into the design. We are open to receiving input/advice on any topic at any given time.

Item 5: Traffic counters sub-project:

Terry Brooks: we have been working with ENR, three counters were planned to be installed. Due to COVID only one unit was installed at unnamed bridge – now Boreal Caribou Creek – it is in place and is operating, reports should be coming from these. Next spring three more units will be installed if the weather and ground conditions permit.

Ryan Fequet, in chat: RE: Monthly reports – Where are the monthly reports available?

Terry Brooks: Monthly traffic reports are apart of maintenance projections, will verify and get back to everyone.

Devon Stephenson: Woodland Caribou Creek is where the one traffic counter is installed. It has been up and running since November 30, 2021, and data from these will be included in the monthly report that gets submitted to Cam's Group (Regional Project Manager – Troy, and Project Manager – Ceasar).

Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault: TG is still finalizing our emergency services. If there is anything that needs to be addressed right away, a monthly report is a long wait time to have those reports – Enforcement along the road?

Terry Brooks: traffic counters are only counting the number of vehicles passing by; it includes no indication of speed or direction of the vehicle. These units are not to address safety concerns.

Cameron Wilson: the highway is now open and forms part of the Public Highways Act – Highway 9. It is now under operations and maintenance (O&M) – NSI has O&M contract, therefore there is always a presence along the highway. NSI is aware of the triggers if there is a MVA – motor vehicle accident, fatal accident or anything along those lines, NSI will inform the RCMP and provide support: close lanes or close the highway. GNWT's forces in Edzo will be travelling the highway informing Cam's project team of anything they may see. It is a compliance and licencing

issue, NSI has been in conversation with the RCMP in regard to reporting.

Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault: Data to be included in monthly reports - Along Highway 3, regarding past accidents and fatalities, post-meetings and discussions were around prevention. It was shared that there is very little enforcement presence from highway patrol. TG is keen on prevention, with emergency services not sorted out, it brings worry.

Cameron Wilson: understood, it is a something that the governments – TG and GNWT – are continuing to work on, the challenges with this topic are for another forum.

Devon Stephenson: have been in communication with the RCMP, there is a reporting process. The monthly report will include accidents incidents, but mainly the quantity of vehicles using the alignment. Within 24 hours of an accident a formal report will be sent and 2 hours with a fatality.

Cameron Wilson: reminder to take pictures, for reporting regarding risk management insurance. Documentation is important. Bring people back onto the agenda.

6. General overview of the Tłıchǰ Government Highway and construction/operation updates

Devon Stephenson and Justin Grandjambe (NSI), presentation on O&M operations. Project has been very successful; it was a great achievement for all groups involved. Saw lots of happy faces.

Questions:

Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault: schedule for the winter maintenance staff – How does this coincide with Cameron’s staff schedule?

Devon Stephenson: crews driving from the north end (Whatı) start around 7am to complete and submit road reporting by 9am, for the crew from Behchokǰ to drive in. 7am – 4pm is the general time for works on the project. One person from either community will be on call. On the weekends, road reporting will continue as well as any maintenance required – snow removal – same schedule 7am – 4pm.

Cameron Wilson: During the winter hours two crews that run through the night – to reponed to any snow events – as travel public could be travelling at any given time. October 24th is when we switched to winter hours.

Justin Grandjambe: current working schedule is a 40-hour work week because this is still such a new project, we want all hands-on deck with a 5-day work week. Moving forward, we may move towards a 7-day on 7-day off schedule.

Cameron Wilson: within the contract – there is a note suggesting that there is a certain amount of time required to respond to a snowstorm/event. Highlighting that there are performance conditions within the contract, the project team staff oversees this. There is a commitment to respond to these types of events in real time.

Dave Green, NSI: summary presentation – end results of the project.

7. Regulatory Compliance: Updates, Expectations, Concerns, and Recommendations

Tłıchǰ Government, Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault:

Wildlife – the Tłıchǰ Wildlife Monitors started December 1, they monitor harvesters, wildlife, and habitat. There are 3 crews with 2 monitors each, working schedule is 9-5 – including weekends, on a one-week on two-week off schedule. The recent meeting was on November 24 and 25, to discuss what has been completed to date identifying Tłıchǰ future plans, the process of requesting more funding for the program from ENR, and the need to submit an application to build a cabin for the monitors along the route.

Emergency response planning – the fire chief and MACA continue to work with the WCG and BCG on emergency response. In the past week the SAO of Fort Providence met with the SAOs from Whatı and Behchokǰ to describe their approach to local community-based response planning. The SAOs in both communities are now preparing job descriptions and equipment needs for fire chiefs to bring to councils for

approvals. MACA continues to support, the next meeting is in the third week of January. SAOs in both communities are focused on in-community response and not on the TASR road response. The team did receive a cost for a proposal to respond and provide services from Mr. Peter Siemens, however both SAOs only have the capacity to focus on community boundary response, not highway response. Looking at Measure 5.6 – development and implement in collaboration with local governments – the GNWT will develop and implementation of an effective ground ambulance and highway rescue action plan along the road that will be designed in collaboration with the TG, Tłıchǫ Service Agency CGB and CGW. We bring this forward again as a big concern, something needs to be put in place.

Signage – after verification with Tłıchǫ transcribers, have decided to set the signs up but in a way for them to be installed more permanently after the spring.

Community Government of Whati:

SAO had sent her regrets due to duty travel.

Wek'èzhì Renewable Resources Board, Jodi and Randi:

Continuing to review the weekly environmental reports. In September, reviewed and approved the Caribou offset plan. The December board meeting approved a wildlife research permit for monitoring along the road, the interim boreal range plan and version 5.1 of the WWMP.

Wek'èzhì Land and Water Board, Ryan Fequet:

No update from the WLWB at this time.

Fisheries and Ocean Canada, Alexandra Sorckoff:

The DFO team did make it on site earlier this summer to review the culvert installed for the fish issue. No other update

Environment and Climate Change Canada:

No representative.

Department of Lands, Clint Ambrose:

To give a summary as inspectors under the land use permit: 46 inspections were completed over the last 2 years. No compliance issues, very great contractor, and sub-contractors – best project Lands has been a part of regarding compliance. There were minimal spills, any spills were relatively minor in nature and addressed immediately. Any concerns or unacceptable items were easily addressed. There were 14 incidents out of the 46 inspections that took place. These incidents were mainly drip tray issues, minor fuel spills, clean up, and camp waste management. Very pleased with the compliance of the contractor and sub-contractor.

Moving forward: the majority of quarries have been restored and were designed with restoration in mind. Majority of quarries along the route have been restored and reclaimed to satisfaction of the inspector, meeting obligations of the permit and applicable legislation. With construction complete and the road being new, lands will conduct a spring freshet inspection to ensure the ESC plans and measures are functioning in place as designed. With the NSI crew using the road on a consistent basis, they will be the eyes and ears to ensure things have been installed and are functioning correctly for this project – gives us reassurance that things will be done correctly. The main camp at km 19 + 800 has been demobilized, there are fuel stored there and a couple shops. Routine inspections will take place here when we are in the area for any other inspections or activities. If a quarry does recommence during the offset plan – now that it is approved – if there is any use of equipment or anything required to meet the needs of the offset plan, please keep Lands involved. NSI is aware that they have to communicate with us under the permit.

Environment and Natural Resources, James Hodson:

ENR is reviewing the weekly reporting as they are useful to ensure compliance with the WEMP. No major issues identified during the construction phase. There was one inspection conducted during the summer by a Renewable Resource Officer, no issues identified. Other updates include the submission of the Interim Wek'èzhì Range Plan that underwent public review, it has recently been approved by the WRRB. A report on the sustainable harvesting of boreal caribou was also released in September to assist in meeting the requirements of Measure 6.2; ENR has been meeting with the TG and NSMA to discuss the findings of the report. A meeting with the YKDFN was supposed to take place but was postponed until January.

8. BREAK

Break at 10:20. Resumed at 10:30.

9. Management and Monitoring Plans: Updates, Implementation, Outcomes, Constraints, Concerns, and Recommendations

Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan:

ENR, James Hodson – presentation slides.

Cameron Wilson: the next four plans were covered by NSI – Dave Green – in item six during presentation, no objections to continue onto the next plans – Quarry Operations and Permafrost.

Water Monitoring Plan:

Waste Management Plan:

Fish and Fish Habitat Protection Plan:

Erosion and Sediment Control Plan:

Quarry Operations Plan and Permafrost Plan:

INF, Terry Brooks: not too much to add to what Clint Ambrose had to say regarding the quarry operations. All quarries are officially closed with some requiring maintenance. As noted, some of the piles are on-going and will be for the next five years, there could also be some excavation of those sites and will be addressed when needed.

Issues relating to permafrost – the measuring of permafrost was put on hold until after construction was completed. Terry's team will have to go out and check the thermistor cables, in April-May 2022 to address the pictures that were sent in September 2021; there were cables above ground. Every thermistor will have to be checked and repaired as needed. The start of official thermistor readings will start next year – there will be two readings; one when the ground is at its warmest (April/May) and the other when the ground is at its coldest (February/March). We will be producing reports, graphs and charts as needed, as well as comparisons and the sharing of all information produced. There is a lot of interest for this information from the NWT Geological Survey because of the project area being in a sporadic permafrost section.

Questions:

David-Scott McQuinn: are the thermistor readings one-time readings?

Terry Brooks: They are one-time readings; continuous readings would have been ideal. Next time there will be downloadable thermistor readers.

Final Caribou Offset Plan:

INF, Benjamin Bey: worked on the plan for 2 years, led by Associated Engineering, Keenan Rudichuk.

Requirements for this measure have been met, the draft plan has been developed as well as the final plan. The plan was developed in collaboration with ENR. Moving forward, the plan will now need to be implemented, therefore requiring an implementation plan. There was no allocated budget for this phase, we are working to secure funding to continue with the next two phases this plan.

Questions:

Salah Uddin: Is there any rational factor on what Zone of Influence will differ for two cases (1) During Construction and (2) Post Construction phases so that the final Offsetting area (post-construction) can be benefited by having lesser value than presented in the report.

Keenan Rudichuk: It is not just the construction impact effect but the linear movement of Caribou also. I will look into that question to see if there are any options or possibilities, we will follow up.

Fisheries Management Plan:

TG, Paul Vecsei: The Lac La Martre FMP was submitted to the CWG for TASR, it is there for all to review and comment, no later than Dec. 22nd. Led by TG and DFO – in terms of authorship. History of the work on the FMP – working group was established in 2019, in 2020 work began with the goal of completion by 2021. We have also been working to have signage in place, meeting all measures of public outreach. Other outcomes of the work include the angler diary to monitor recreational activity. An important component of this includes the drop off and pick up box approach, this will allow for the collection and assessment of fisheries data. Another important outcome is the proposed variation order – down to zero – for inconnu near the Lac la Martre River below near the falls, this zone is where migratory fish, coming from afar, move to so they can spawn. The species use this area, any disturbance here can be of great dangers and impact the biomass of fish.

Annal Reports and Reviews:

INF, Benjamin Bey: We are in the process of the second annual WWMP review, version 5.1 was recently approved by the WRRB. The final 5.2 version will be submitted to ENR and the WLWB by late-January. The annual EA report was also submitted to the MVEIRB, the next annual WL report will be done prior to the end of March 2022.

10. Engagement Plan

Harvest Monitoring Study Design – EA Measure:

Janelle Kuntz, TG Consultant –

- Present day: monitoring program was developed in response to several measures and continues to be a work in progress since July 2020. A working committee was developed and is comprised of local elders and knowledge holders. Together, TG and the committee created ToR and a monitoring work plan in anticipation of the road opening. Work completed and outcomes to date include: 3 committee meetings – virtual and semi-virtual, held focus groups to establish baseline conditions for various areas of interest along the highway, a track survey was also completed to understand baseline conditions over the winter months. This summer, prior to the road opening, a vegetation survey was completed to better understand vegetation in relation to proximity to the road. There are now 6 Tłıchǫ trained – through Blyth and Bathe – monitors who are now doing highway monitoring and checks, reporting any sightings of animals, and are communicating with harvesters on the land. There is also a voluntary harvester program in place, this was created through collaboration with the local community members to voluntarily report harvesting in and around TASR as well as within the communities.
- Moving into 2022: TG will continue to work with ENR to discuss ongoing monitoring now that the road is in operation. We are also hoping to do a dust collection study to see if there are any impacts to vegetation, repeat monitoring from the previous year now that there is baseline data collection, and are looking to set up wildlife cameras along the road.

Questions:

Benjamin Bey: dust collection study – what would the study inform us of?

Janelle Kuntz: it was brought as a concern by the traditional knowledge holders and elders one of the key concerns, is the amount of dust coming from the road affecting the vegetation along the road – will vegetation be impacted in a way that would further affect the wildlife in the area, overall reducing the opportunity to harvest animals such as moose and caribou or adversely impacting their habitat. To what extent is dust impacting the moose and caribou in the area – this is a study we are hoping to do in the next year.

Benjamin Bey: INF would be interested in viewing the data, as would ENR.

11. Summary of meeting expectations and moving forward

Summary:

- Although minor construction will be continuing for the next year, the project is now in the operational phase. A lot of the items that were of environmental concern during the construction phase will be moving towards the impact of the actual highway having on the environment and wildlife.
- Moving into the highway being fully functional, we are not able to control movement along the highway as we did when it was in the construction phase.

Action items moving forward:

- Continued monitoring of Bison movements
- Traditional Knowledge being sought from the Tłıchǫ
- Traffic counters and permafrost monitoring
- Establishing Emergency Services/Emergency Response – more wholesome approaches.

12. Discuss possible dates for next meeting

Cameron Wilson: next tentative meeting date: June 14, 2022 or earlier on June 7, 2022.

- Meeting tentatively set to Tuesday, June 7, 2022, but will coordinate with Liza – CGW.

Benjamin Bey: when aiming for an in-person meeting we will have to communicate with the Community Government for Whatì to see what works best with them, in the event we are able to travel.

Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault: reminder that in the terms of reference, one meeting is to be in Whatì. Recommendation to plan for that and connect with Lisa for the summer meeting to take place there.

13. Closing Remarks

Cameron Wilson: thanked everyone for attending the meeting, sharing information and perspectives. Hopefully the next meeting can be in person in Whatì.

Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault: Harvest Monitoring Reports – there has been a lot of requests of the sharing of this information. TG will meet with the rest of team to discuss the timing of the reporting and will be shared with parties interested. Mahsi cho to everyone for participating in the meeting. With the road being open, Chief Daniels shared during the council meeting that you can feel the excitement for Christmas with the road now being open. A lot of great things have been happening, with the road only being open a couple of weeks.

14. Closing Prayers

Meeting Adjourned: 11:30 am MT

Legend:

AE - Associated Engineering / Associated Environmental
CANNOR - Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency
CGB - Community Government of Behchokò
CGW – Community Government of Whatì
DFO - Department of Fisheries and Oceans
EA – Environmental Assessment
ECCC - Environment and Climate Change Canada
ECE - GNWT Dept of Education, Culture and Employment
ENR - GNWT Dept of Environment and Natural Resources
FIN - GNWT Dept of Finance
INF - GNWT Dept of Infrastructure
Lands - GNWT Department of Lands
MACA – Municipal and Community Affairs
NSI - North Star Infrastructure
NSMA - North Slave Métis Alliance
PWNHC – Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre
TG – Tłı̨chq̓ Government
WLWB - Wek'èezhì Land and Water Board
WMMP – Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan
WRRB - Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board
WSCC – Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission
YKDFN - Yellowknives Dene First Nation

Meeting Minutes

Tłı̨chq̓ ALL-SEASON ROAD CORRIDOR WORKING GROUP

June 13th, 2022



Date: 13 June 2022

Time: 1:00pm – 4:00 pm Mountain Time

Location: Whatı Cultural Centre & Microsoft Teams

Attendees:

Alastair Beattie – DFO
Amiee Guile - WRRB
Benjamin Bey - INF
Binay Yadav – INF
Cameron Wilson (Chair) – INF
Chuck Hubert – MVEIRB
Dana Harris – DFO
Daniel Drimes – INF
Dave Green – NSI
Devon Stephenson - NSI
Dolphus Nitsiza - CGW
Emily Finstad – WLWB
James Hodson – ENR
Jessica Hurtubise – NMSA
Joelle Guedon – INF
Justin Grandjambe – NSI
Laura Meinert -WRRB

Kathy Unger – ENR
Jess Hurtubise – NSMA
Michel Moosenose - CGW
Paul Vecsei – TG
Regan Jeremicka – NSI
Ryan Fequet – WLWB
Sheyenne Jumbo INF
Stephanie Behrens - TG
Tatiana Leclerc – DFO
Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault - TG
Yasir Jamal - INF
Ziaur Rahman – INF
Violet Camsell-Blondin – TG
Ziaur Rahman – INF

Regrets:

Clint Ambrose – Lands
Glen MacKay - ECE
Grace Mackenzie – TG
Jessica Smart - NSMA
Kamran Ata – INF
Nancy Enn – AE
Naomi Smethurst – ECE
Salah Uddin - INF
Terry Brookes - INF
Tyanna Steinwand – TG

1. Opening Prayer

Led by Tłı̨chq̓ Elder Michel Moosenose

2. Welcome and Opening Remarks

Cameron Wilson, INF: this was the first trip up the highway, a bit of dust but overall, a nice drive. It is amazing to see what has happened these last couple of years, with the highway officially opening on November 30th, 2021. It is a new highway; we are working on a lot of things to make the experience better for people travelling on the road. Gave thanks to the people in the kitchen for preparing lunch for the group.

Dolphus Nitsiza, CGW: Overview of housekeeping items (i.e., emergency exits, muster station, washrooms, etc.)

3. Introduction of Participants

Welcome and greetings from chair, Cameron Wilson (INF), Regional Superintendent for the North Slave. Reminder to use microphones provided during the meeting so that the translator is able to hear everyone and that the meeting is being recorded.

4. Review of Agenda

5. Matters arising from previous Meeting Minutes, review of action items

- Continue to monitor bison movement toward Whatı
- Ben, INF - Engagement Plan and Traditional Knowledge being sought
- Ginger Gibson - Final socio-economic report card and concerns of liability and safety for the Community Government of Whatı
- General Overview of the Tłı̨chq̓ Highway operation updates and Management/Monitoring Plans.
- Devon Stephenson, NSI/Kiewit - No change in personnel.

- Tłıchǫ Government on the development of the fisheries pamphlet to notify the public of current on-goings

6. General overview of the Tłıchǫ Government Highway: updates on construction activities and schedule

- Justin Grandjambe, NSI: provided operational updates through a PowerPoint presentation.
- Devon Stevenson, NSI: A lot of the environmental monitoring plans are in the process of transitioning from the construction phase into the operations & maintenance (O&M) phase of the highway. Environmental update: Culverts installed at km 46 and km 220, upstream and downstream installation of tap and rockfill cap, riprap added to prevent fish getting trapped, James River treatment options on all sides forwarded to Kiewit for review. Monitoring will continue in spring of 2023.
- Devon, NSI: 5-day wood harvesting program review regarding tree harvest for Tłıchǫ residents. Wood harvesting program plan includes closing one lane on highway while harvesting happening. Date of program not finalized yet.
- Stephanie Behrens, TG: asked for signage to be posted about who is allowed to harvest trees and fish to prevent altercations.
- James Hodson, ENR: asked how long the construction camp at km 19 would be in use.
 - Devon, NSI: responded that the camp is nearly closed, and no one is staying there overnight. Camp may, however, be used again later if required.
- Laura Meinert, WRRB: How far north have the bison been spotted?
 - Dave, NSI: two individual bison have been observed at KM 76, however observations stopped in November. With the presence of monitoring and observation on the road now that construction is complete, observation is now left to users of the road. Cannot speak to the current ongoings, we do not have an update that we can offer you.
 - Amiee Guile, WRRB: on that note, in the Action Item update to continue to monitor bison movement, is that the monitoring that is ongoing?
 - Devon, NSI: responded that less people are on site now that most of the work has been completed so less chance for staff to monitor and report bison movements.
 - Benjamin Bey, INF: INF does not have an active monitoring plan and there is no additional monitoring planned as part of the contract. This summer is a good opportunity to start long-term monitoring program, then determine the best way to prevent bison from encroaching Whatì.
 - Stephanie, TG: we have started including bison observations to the Tłıchǫ Highway Monitors. To start a monitoring program, a meeting is needed.
 - Cameron, INF: to clarify, the monitoring of bison is through TG and NSI.
 - Devon, NSI: we are reporting on any wildlife we do see but formal reporting is through TG.
 - Laura, WRRB: is a change to bison movements expected?
 - James, ENR: this was discussed in the Environmental Assessment, and he will have to look up the anticipated impact on bison.
 - Ziaur Rahman, INF: there shouldn't be an impact.
- Ziaur, INF: reminder to include ENR in the coordination of the wood harvesting and keep them in the loop.
 - Devon, NSI: Yes, the right date still needs to be decided on. When it does happen, one lane of traffic will be shut down with all of the traffic management signs and guides on either ends to inform people.
- Ryan Fequet, WLWB: Do any of the 'Different Treatment Options' identified on PDF #8 of 11, require any revisions to any of INF's management plans? (This info was included in a PDF sent to everyone)
 - Dave Green, NSI: this is corrective work that will be done by NSI/Kiewit, The ESC Plan would be the guiding plan as a driver for the work. No other plans are in effect.
 - Ryan: All of the Plans within the TASR Licence and Permit apply through all phases of the TASR Project, unless approved otherwise. (As per the RFD or their approved purpose). To clarify - are any of the activities identified on the list of 'Different Treatment Options' different than currently approved? (i.e., therefore, requiring proposed revisions)
 - Dave, NSI: No need for an additional long-term plan, no instream work is planned. The

Wildlife Management Plan will address any issues but currently still working within parameters of the Water Licence and Land Use Permit. All treatment options are under the current LUP, no revisions expected. The Emergency Management Plan will cover anything after that.

7. Regulatory Compliance: Updates, Expectations, Concerns, and Recommendations

Community Government of Whatì

- Lisa Nitiza: Road has been open for 6 months, concerned about traffic control and signage. Social impact has been hit hard based on increase in RCMP calls about domestic violence and sexual violence. A 2-person detachment is insufficient. Concerned about “stranger-danger” as new people come into the community. On the positive side, costs are down, additional flights added, and new houses are coming into the community, including a brand-new house that was brought in by road for the first time ever.
 - o Cameron, INF: INF will relay these concerns to the Socio-Economic Working Group so long- and short-term social impacts can be discussed. We have a duty to make sure things get back to normal.
 - o Ziaur, INF: Health and Social Services and TG are working collaboratively to address this.
- Laura, WRRB: as per clause 14.3, the CWG meetings are not solely for regulatory updates but also for other concerns to be raised.
- Devon, NSI: additional concerns with the amount of dust highway. Dust suppression (calcium chloride spray) has been sourced and will be applied to the roads in early July. It should last until the snow comes. The dust suppression application will take about 7 days. There will be no road closure, just traffic management and a single lane
- Lisa, CGW – Should the public be notified so they know what to expect? Michel Moosenose was at a council meeting on July 6th and said there is an obligation to inform public to notify of dust.
- Michel Moosenose, CGW – People gather a lot, just like in the old days and there is too much dust.
- Cameron, INF: In the meantime, users of the road should use caution and slow down.
- Ryan, WLWB: is there a stop from the water lines?
 - o Dave Green, NSI: it is not delineated yet, but we will follow the plan.

Tìchq Government

- Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault, TG: comment that the pullouts are too small and dangerous due to the proximity to the highway; there should be ditches for separation, like at Boundary Creek. They are also not signed so it's easy to drive by and miss them.
 - o Ziaur, INF: additional signage will be installed by INF, just let them know where they are wanted.
 - o Cameron, INF - both types of the pull-outs were assessed by a professional engineer and were deemed safe.
 - o
- Tammy, TG: There is also a concern that there are no outhouses along the road so elders would have to use the bush. The road is too long to not have outhouses. No garbage bins are at the pull-outs, and they should be big enough to hold enough trash that it doesn't end up on the road, we are concerned about garbage getting into the water and fish could be killed, so the garbage and outhouses are really needed
 - o Cameron, INF: restrooms are not required for pull-outs, also concerned with household trash being put in larger bins. If there are any changes that are material changes in design and contract, the P3 contract for is for 25 years and any changes would have a cost impact in discovery so a larger conversation will have to be had. Additionally, INF is not responsible for putting up outhouses once road construction has been completed. The responsible department is ITI. TG should channel their request through ITI.
 - o Tammy, TG: the monitors travel up and down that road and recommendations are also coming from Whatì and Behchokò, so it is the users requesting these things. If it means looking at additional funding, they will go through those channels.
 - o Cameron, INF: that is a decision for a higher group, above our level.

- Laura, WRRB: asked about the process for submitting suggestions for additional signage.
 - o Cameron, INF: signage goes through Kiewit, then NSI, then the GNWT. We need to address interest groups putting up unapproved signs. All signs must go through Terry Brookes (INF), then respond to NSI.
 - o Tammy, TG: apologized for signs that were put up without protocol, they will follow the protocol now.
 - o Cameron, INF: will streamline the process for signage. Font and everything else can be a distraction. Signs should not be a visible nuisance to drivers. It is not the GNWT doing it.
 - o Devon, NSI: there is a 3rd party design firm, and the safety auditor must review signs for safety and ensure they are up to code.
 - o Lisa, CWG: an application has been submitted for Whatì limits, signage for the limits is also in process.
 - o Cameron, INF: GNWT will work with CGW on the process for getting signs made for historical/traditional places and landmarks, like fishing spots.
- Tammy, TG: Behchokò/Edzo has signs with blue and green lights when construction workers are working on the road. Bison are camouflaged against the background. Signs are needed to be aware of caribou and bison in the area, including a speed limit when approaching bison. You can't see the bison at night.
 - o Cameron, INF: signs are on the way, but they need to know where to put them.
 - o Devon, NSI: there is a message at km 0 to watch for construction. NSI will also put-up similar signage when leaving Whatì.
- Tammy, TG: would like to have emergency response figured out on the road. They are worried that nobody is on the road if something happens.
 - o Devon, NSI: does have to respond but staff are not medically trained.
 - o Cameron Wilson, INF: we need to work on a communication procedure and a number for highway emergencies on a sign heading north. A communication Plan is needed as soon as possible.
 - o Lisa, CGW: are there lessons learned from the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway (ITH) emergency response that the CGW can learn from.
 - o Cameron, INF: Further discussion is needed if there is a response required by NSI. NSI will have a look at it.
 - o Lisa, CGW: we need first responders available; cell phones don't work everywhere along the highway. Fire Departments are not required in communities. Whatì would like a fire department with paramedics and first responders but there is nothing in the legislation that requires it.
 - o Ziaur, INF: INF will look at it as an Essential Plan.
 - o Ben, INF: There are measures in place for MACA to look at emergency response.

Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board

- Laura Meinert: would like to be involved in the discussions about bison in Whatì. Anything that the GNWT is going to do in response to the bison, an action management plan would have to go to the WRRB for review.
 - o Cameron, INF: work with Ben on this.
 - o Ben, INF: INF will work collaboratively with the WRRB to design a management plan, including TK and a comprehensive management plan. Based on the movement this summer, INF has been having discussions with ENR about holding an engagement session with the community, possibly, this fall to create a comprehensive monitoring plan.

Fisheries and Ocean Canada

- Tatiana Leclerc: Everything has been in compliance: road work, bridges, culverts, fish mortality issue has been fixed. Went to each culvert and bridge, no concerns.
 - o Lisa, CGW: asked that when DFO does inspections, they should contact TG fish monitors. DFO agreed to do that.

Wek'èezhì Land and Water Board

- Ryan Frequet: link to the Annual Report for TASR Project is up and available. Comment on the report, would like to express gratitude about the table on page 31 for water use.
- Land Use Inspectors sent reports and are also on the registry.

- Question for the group: Leading up to expiry of the type A water license, in 2026, how much watering will be required. It's time to start chatting about it: How much road watering might need to continue? Or if there are any other triggers that may require the water licence or land use permit to remain open.

Environment and Natural Resources

- James: The WWMP was updated and submitted for public review. This review of the WWMP is done every year, initiated in September, the plan is posted through the Online Review System. This will be done again this upcoming fall. No regulatory concerns were brought to attention.

Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board

- Chuck Hubert: MVEIRB would like to add to the agenda. The Board is very pleased and looking for improvements after each project. The MVEIRB would like to be included in future meetings.
 - o Cameron, INF: asked that MVEIRB be added to the agenda and have a regular slot at meetings moving forward.

8. BREAK

9. Management and Monitoring Plans: Updates, Implementation, Outcomes, Constraints, Concerns, and Recommendations

Wildlife Monitoring and Management Plan

- James provided updated through a presentation on Wildlife Monitoring Effects:
 - o Tammy, TG: Why is there a difference in wolf abundance rates between Alberta and the NWT?
 - James, ENR: The south is more productive for moose and whitetail deer, so much more choice for prey. We have a lot lower density for everything up here in the North.
 - o Devon, NSI: Why are only female caribou collared?
 - James, ENR: to calculate population index, the birth and survival rate need to be collected. There are some males collared to get other information, but they aren't needed to determine the population.
 - Ben, INF: Why was there a drop in calf to cow ratio?
 - Lisa, CGW: Why less productive?
 - James, ENR: No idea, could be many things. This needs to be checked over a 10-year period to learn any long-term information and get a better picture, not just a single-year drop.

Caribou Habitat Offsetting Plan

- Ben, INF: The final plan was completed and approved prior to the opening the road, the measures have been satisfied. The next phase of the plan is implementation of the plan, unfortunately, there was no budget allocated for this phase. Worked with ENR to submit a proposal to FMB, to get funding for the next phases of the offsetting plan.
 - o WRRB: Did the EA measures mention anything about implementation?
 - o Ben, INF: not before the road is opened, just that the measure specifically said that the plan should be finalized, but it does need to be implemented.

INF Quarry Plants & Permafrost Plan

- Terry Brooks sent his regrets.

Fisheries Management Plan by DFO & TG

- Pau Vecsei, TG: DFO update of FMP to fishers about what the FMP covers. A working group is in effect. People must follow the rules. An angler's diary will be available in some locations. It is important to fill this out; DFO will be politely forceful because catch information is extremely important. The FMP timeline update: complete. An Integrated Fisheries Management Plan will allow for small fishing operations, but for as of now the FMP is in place. The corridor is from Highway 3 to Whatì, but the impact goes far beyond that because of the east/west road. The area below the falls on Lac la Martre is a very sensitive area where spawning happens in an 8 km section upstream that now open to the world. TG is concerned enough to suggest limited access beyond the falls with gating. Whatì folks will be able to get a key for access further downstream. TG does not want new people accessing this area. Whatì has its own monitors. Buffers are now in

place so no one can fish on either side of it, but it is difficult to enforce. TG monitored 100s of Dwarf White Suckers; they are immune to angling. Several things were tried to make sure they won't take bait. Signage is close to being ready.

- Ben, INF: finalizing signs, specifications are going to be sent to the designer. Randy Jennings (WRRB) was instrumental in the planning and design.
- Paul, TG: not controlling the production of documents, once a draft has been received, TG can show parties what the pamphlets may look like and seek input.

Annual Reports and Review

- Ben, INF: Annual report (EA Annual Report)/reviews (WWMP) have been submitted and approved. The EA annual report was sent to MVEIRB in October. The Dept. of Lands should also be sending a policy assessment email soon. Reporting aspects have been going well.
- James, ENR: the Annual reporting for the WWMP is contained in Annual Water License Report that was sent to the WLWB review system.

10. Engagement Plan

Stephanie Behrens, TG: We have been working the Tł̓ch̓q Highway Harvest Monitoring Program (HMP) with elders and harvesters the area of TASR. A HMP committee was formed in 2021 and used as a guide to develop and implement monitoring plan. Interviews were done by a wildlife coordinator with hunters. Currently TG has trained monitors are active on the highway everyday, each week the monitors are rotating Sunday-Sunday, and have been working since the opening of the road. These monitors also helped with a baseline vegetation study. Elders are going to be interviewed for TK on vegetation along the highway. Our HMP is focused on Wildlife Harvesting, impacts to wildlife habitat. Monitors have been taking note and reporting wildlife observations, sighting of tracks or any other signs of wildlife, any harvesting along the highway. There have been signs of moose, lynx, bison, marten, rabbit, wolverine, chickens, and grouse. Monitors have noticed an increase of roadkill; fox and wolverine carcass were collected by ENR. There is also an increase in garbage and wood harvesting, they have been picking up garbage and taking note of who is harvesting. We do believe that there will be an increase in moose and caribou harvesting along the road in the fall, once residents are ready to do their hunt. There have been lots of concerns of bison become a problem in Whatì, herd compositions, behaviors using daily logs, the monitors have stated to include bison monitoring within the HMP. Lots of concerns with dust, last years vegetation study shows that dust was found anywhere from 15-200 meters from the road. This year the plots will be extended to 500 meters and will be placing dust fall collectors alongside. An invite was sent to the ITH monitors crew for job shadowing, currently waiting for a response, this would be a great transfer of knowledge and insight on the areas of monitoring that should be focused on. There was consideration of including drones, but we do not see this necessary, so it is put aside for now.

Open floor suggestion period – TK Input and EA Lessons Learned

- Ben, INF: would like to actively ask participants to feel free to provide input to improve monitoring and mitigation measures and the TK aspect of our monitoring. Based on this summer's observation of the bison movement, it is likely we will have an engagement session this fall, not just related to the bison but any management plans that are in place to satisfy the EA measures, feel free to send an email. A mini project of Lessons Learned during the EA process was undertaken by a consultant. They completed interviews and worked with different stakeholders to complete a final report of what went right/wrong, this was sent out with the agenda prior to the meeting, this is a comprehensive document that we may not have time to discuss today, but if there are any suggestions or questions, please let us know.
 - Chuck, MVEIRB: Measures regarding socio-economic and environmental implementation may have been too soon – more so the socio-economic, recommend that in the next report of EA in October 2022, they be discussed then to determine the effectiveness. The MVEIRB is looking forward to seeing this.
 - Ben, INF: the next report will capture the social issues mentioned earlier by Lisa.
- Tammy, TG: the CWG should review and revise the ToR so the cost of travel for community members to future meetings could be defrayed by INF.

11. Summary of meeting expectations and moving forward

Cameron, INF: Provided a summary of meeting expectations, asked that the TASR CWG to go through the

Guiding Principles of the CWG to note the sharing method and means to communicate. Discussions regarding the design or lack of design is not for this forum, discussions about dust will be addresses because there is an environmental concern about that. Am not going to move forward with discussions that will in any way lead to a material change of the contract in place between NSI and the GNWT – which includes the TG. These topics can be discussed at other forums. Discussions need to be topical at the next meeting to stay on track.

Action Items:

1. Stephanie Behrens, TG: meetings are needed to start a bison monitoring program and asked for signage to be posted about who is allowed to harvest trees and fish to prevent altercations.
2. New signage for roads required (goes through Kiewit). Cameron will work to streamline process for places and landmarks; warning of bison/caribou in area; Bison Control construction sign when leaving Whatì, same as a km 0.
3. Communication Procedure and contact number required for road emergencies.
4. CGW asked for first responders available, INF will look at it as an Essential Plan.
5. CGW asked to contact TG fish monitors when DFO does for inspections. DFO agreed to it.
6. MVEIRB would like to be included in future CWG meetings.
7. TG is working on a TASR Engagement Plan for the Tł̨chq̨ Highway Harvest Monitoring Program (HMP) with elders and harvesters.
8. Continue to monitor Bison movement toward Whatì.

12. Discuss possible dates for next meeting

- Next meeting date tentatively set for December 7th, 2022, in Yellowknife, meeting location may be changed to Behchokò.

13. Closing Remarks

14. Closing Prayers

Led by Tł̨chq̨ Elder Michel Moosenose

Meeting Adjourned: 4:35 pm MT

Legend:

AE - Associated Engineering / Associated Environmental
CANNOR - Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency
CGB - Community Government of Behchokò
CGW – Community Government of Whatì
DFO - Department of Fisheries and Oceans
EA – Environmental Assessment
ECCC - Environment and Climate Change Canada
ECE - GNWT Dept of Education, Culture and Employment
ENR - GNWT Dept of Environment and Natural Resources
FIN - GNWT Dept of Finance
INF - GNWT Dept of Infrastructure
ITI – Industry, Tourism and Investment
Lands - GNWT Department of Lands
NSI - North Star Infrastructure
NSMA - North Slave Métis Alliance
MVEIRB - Mackenzie Valley
Environmental Impact Review Board
TG - Tł̨chq̨ Government
WLWB - Wek'èezhì Land and Water Board
WMMP – Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan

WRRB - Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board
WSCC - Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission
YKDFN - Yellowknives Dene First Nation



Meeting Minutes

TŁJCHQ HIGHWAY CORRIDOR WORKING GROUP

December 7th, 2022

Date: 07 December 2022

Time: 11:00am – 3:15 pm Mountain Time

Location: Explorer Hotel & Microsoft Teams

Attendees:

Alicia Kelly – ENR
Benjamin Bey – INF
Cameron Wilson – INF (Chair)
Chris Tourangeau – ENR
Chuck Hubert – MVEIRB
Clementine Bouche – MVEIRB
Clint Ambrose – LANDS
Daniel Drimes – INF
Dana Harris – DFO
Ziaur Rahman – INF
Dave Green – NSI
Devon Stephenson – NSI
Garry Snyder – INF
Grace Mackenzie – TG
Janelle Kuntz – TG
Joelle Guedon – INF
Karine Gignac – Lands

Laura Meinert – WRRB
Lisa Nitsiza – CGW
Lisa Worthington – ENR
Michael Birlea – TG
Paul Gauthier – TG
Paul Vecesi – TG
Rafael Castro – NSI
Ryan Fequet – WLWB
Sally Wong – DFO
Sheyenne Jumbo – INF
Simon Toogood – MVEIRB
Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault – TG
Tatiana Leclerc – DFO
Terry Brookes – INF
Yasir Jamal – INF
Ziaur Rahman – INF

Regrets:

Binay Yadav – INF
Bruno Pigeon – NSI
Gary Brennan – INF
Jessica Hurtubise – NSMA
Jody Small – ECCC
Morgan Moffit – HSS

1. Opening Prayer

Led by Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault.

2. Welcome and Opening Remarks

- Welcome and greetings from chair, Cameron Wilson (INF), Regional Superintendent for the North Slave.
- Revisions to the Terms of Reference (ToR) have been sent out, 5.1 and 5.3 reference 14.3, draft ToR have been sent out and still be discussed when item 8. Apologize on behalf of the GNWT for excluding the social issues.
- Housekeeping items: ringers off, review of emergency exits and muster point, washrooms are down the hall. Reminder that the meeting is being recorded for minute taking.

3. Introduction of Participants

4. Review of Agenda

5. Matters arising from previous Meeting Minutes, review of action items

- Continue to monitor bison movement toward Whatl

- Ben, INF: TG is incorporating monitoring of bison movement in their monitoring programs. Monitoring is ongoing.
- TG to start a bison monitoring program
 - TG will update later.
- TG: Development of a TASR Engagement Plan for the Tłjchq Highway Monitoring Program (HMP) with Elders and Harvesters
 - TG will update later.
- INF: TASR first responders as an Essential Plan
 - MACA is working with the community, MACA is not here, will defer this to another time. INF will find someone to get an update and update the group later.
- New signage process for roads goes through NSI
 - Ziaur, INF: if additional signage was to be put up, an application has to be completed and submitted to Design and Technical Services (DTS), Transportation, and it will be passed to NSI for review.
 - Cam, INF: any signs within the right-of-way (ROW) need to be reviewed. There is a robust application process for public and highway safety reasons.
- INF: warning of bison/caribou in area; Bison Control construction sign when leaving Whatì, same as a km 0.
 - Allicia, ENR: what is meant by bison control?
 - Ben, INF: Bison might stray to the community and become an issue for the residents. We are monitoring how far they go and work with the community and ENR to limit how far they can go. The right word is not ‘control’ but prevent them from endangering/entering the community. It is more of a safety issue.
 - Allicia, ENR: if signs are going to be installed, they will have to be approved by ENR.
 - Laura, WRRB: in regard to bison control, if the GNWT were to try to control the bison, it would have to come to the WRRB as a management action/plan for approval. “Control” may not be the right wording here.
 - Ben: community engagement would happen if the GNWT were to come up with a bison management plan. The farthest bison are being seen is km 76, there is no concern regarding them yet.
 - Laura: is the community of Whatì coming today?
 - Ben: yes, they will pop into the meeting later on as they are in a different meeting next door.
 - Cam: the community was concerned about the bison coming into the community; if they were getting close then a plan would be discussed and would be brought to the WRRB.
- TG: Asked for signage to be posted about who is allowed to harvest trees and fish to prevent altercation.
 - Cam: Asked Lands to comment.
 - Clint, Lands: some signs are arriving on Friday, will work with Gary and the contractor to determine where they need to be along the highway.
 - Gary, INF: they have been submitted to Construction and Design, once that review has been done, INF will work with the with NSI on putting them up.

6. Lunch Break

7. General overview of the Tłjchq Government Highway: updates on construction activities and schedule

- Devon, NSI: provided operational updates through a PowerPoint presentation.
- Cam, INF: comment on the vegetation growing within ROW and if NSI has a migratory bird protocol in place.

- Devon, NSI: confirmed there is no actual vegetation in the ROW but in the ditch lines, the small growth helps with the erosion and sediment control.
- Cam, INF: reminder that the GNWT has a Migratory Bird Protocol in place.

8. Updated Terms of Reference

- Cam, INF: the Terms of Reference (ToR) as amended include the socio-economic factors as they pertain to the environmental, this would be up to the Department of Health and Social Services (HSS). As INF was not meeting this commitment, it is recommended that HSS is invited to all meetings moving forward and report their findings or on whatever matter they have.
- Ben, INF: To give background on why the ToR have been updated: recap of the concerns raised during the last working group meeting, so we have updated the ToR to include socio-economic discussions. The original ToR describes the commitment to model the CWG after the ITH CWG, which was specific to environmental issues. With the Tłjchq Highway, a different WG was determined to handle the social issues, handled by HSS. This is the reason social issues had been previously excluded from this group. HSS will be invited and will have a time slot moving forward. ToR have also been updated to reimburse travel expenses from those traveling from outside communities. Other suggestions from the WLWB and WRRB have not been reflected in the ToR yet, would like to have a separate meeting to discuss. The suggestion to release meeting minutes within seven days after the meeting would be difficult to do as INF does not have the manpower/dedicated staff to do so.
 - Ryan, WLWB: seven days is a typical best practice, if INF would like to suggest another number, we would be happy to discuss.
 - Ben, INF: ToR say two months after the meeting takes place; if that is too long, we can shorten it down to one month.
- Laura, WRRB: reviewing the ToR. Were any Elders invited today?
 - Ben, INF: TG previously identified the Elders to come to these meetings.
 - Cam, INF: the intent is that TG and CGW would bring the Elders, it would not be appropriate for the GNWT to choose Elders to be invited.
- Cam, INF: reminder that the agenda is sent out in advance of meetings and people are asked to provide input, so the CWG is not walking into topics last minute.
- Janelle, TG: comments from Tammy: there is a strong desire to have these meetings in Whatì or Behchokq̓ to increase Elder participation, it would make it easier for Elders to attend and to open the meetings to the public to encourage more community participation. The culture could also be incorporated by including opening prayers by local Elders and drumming.
 - Ben, INF: reviewing the ToR, it states that one of the meetings should be held in Whatì. It was unclear as to where the other meeting should take place. But INF is open to having the meeting alternate between Whatì and Behchokq̓
 - Janelle: TG is also open to co-chairing and help planning for these meetings.
- Janelle, TG: There is also a request to update the name of the CWG, would like to update the name in the ToR to “Tłjchq Highway” or “Highway 9”.
 - Ben, INF: There are no issues with that.
- Janelle, TG: Roles and responsibilities: can presentations be shared one week in advanced to review materials? Can the ToR be reviewed bi-annually? Can the SAOs from both Whatì and Behchokq̓ be invited, there is a new SAO in Behchokq̓; we can share his contact info.
 - Ben, INF: Comments and will be taken into consideration.
- Ryan: what are the next steps for the ToR? Will discussions happen outside of this forum to review all of the suggestions that have been made and not yet incorporated into the ToR? Or is now the time to discuss them?
 - Cam, INF: All suggestions mentioned today are being recorded and will be incorporated as soon as we can. They will eventually be reflected in the ToR and shared in advanced of the next meeting.

9. Updates, Expectations, Concerns, and Recommendations

Tłı̨chǫ Government

- Janelle: provided an update through a PowerPoint presentation.
 - Ben, INF: question on caribou range planning being underway - is TG working with ENR on that?
 - Lisa, ENR: a working group meeting took place last week and TG was a part of it.

Community Government of Whatı̨

- Lisa, CGW: it has been one year since the road opened, there have been good and bad impacts. Positive aspects include shopping for the household is no longer done last minute to bring on the winter road, lots of youth have been attending more recreational activities, youth got to attend the Arctic Winter Games tryouts, more sightseeing, have seen lots of wildlife along the Highway. Lots of community members are happy with the year-round road. The CGW is getting ready for tourism, take a look at the CGW social media page where events are posted. Lots of tourism activities are coming up, starting to prepare a day-use area, and are planning for festivals and sporting tournaments. There are many ATV and walking trails in place. The community is also working to have chip-seal done before the next election in 2025 and will be a dust-free community.
- Lisa, CGW: the negative aspects of the road include more alcohol and substance use as there is an easier access to it. There has also been an increase in the number RCMP calls is a concern from the public and council. There is a fire chief in the community on a 2-year contract but there is a concern of where emergency response fits into this. Alcohol use is the biggest concern right now.

Wek'èezhı̨ Renewable Resources Board

- Laura, WRRB: quick update, we are part of the Boreal Range Plan Caribou Working Group, Mackenzie Wood Bison Working Group and are working on approvals on just fisheries and wildlife in general.

Wek'èezhı̨ Land and Water Board

- Ryan, WLWB: the Tłı̨chǫ Highway (TH) has various authorizations; we have inspectors in the room who are the eyes and ears on the ground. All inspection reports are available on the website. The current permits and licence expire around 2026, there will need to be discussions prior to that date to ensure INF has the permits they need.

Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board

- Chuck, MVEIRB: thanked GNWT for revising the ToR. It is appreciated that the group has been broadened to reflect the intent of the measures. The Review Board pays attention to the results of these meetings to know the measures are being implemented and their effectiveness. It may be too early to determine the effectiveness but, in the future, we look forward to seeing what works and what can be improved.

Fisheries and Ocean Canada

- Tatiana, DFO: not many updates since the last meeting. Will be chatting about the FMP with TG later in the agenda.

Department of Lands

- Clint, Lands: Not too much going on now that construction is done. The km 19 maintenance shop and km 0 camp still in place and under the Land Use Permit (LUP). On the north side of the La Martre River, a minor amount of restoration was completed due to requirements LUP. Keeping an eye on monitoring for spills. Quarry management operations have been great, kudos to NSI.

Environment and Natural Resources

- Chris, ENR: 123 timber cutting permits have been issued, 59 more wood cutting permits. 15 of them are from kms 8-12.

10. Break

11. Management and Monitoring Plans

Wildlife Monitoring and Management Plan

- Alicia, ENR: the WWMP is being implemented by NSI, INF and ENR. ENR has a lead role in monitoring the impacts of the project on wildlife at a regional scale. GNWT committed to monitoring impacts for at least five years after the road opens to the public; we are now in year one. Intent of the plan is to show how impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat from construction and operation of the road will be managed and monitored and ensure that the results of monitoring are reported. Species that are being monitored by ENR near the TH area include Boreal Caribou, Moose, Bison, Wolves, and Black Bear, brief updates on each were provided. ENR's monitoring programs are focused on Boreal Caribou, Moose, Bison and Barren-ground Caribou; Barren-ground caribou have not been observed near the area of the Highway in several years, but if they return to this area then more intensive monitoring such as patrols along the road will be triggered. GNWT is also required by EA Measure 6-1, Part 2 to monitor abundance, movements, and predation rates by predators. ENR is working with INF on the Construction Phase Comprehensive Report; it is on track to be completed March 2023. Some of the CWG members can expect to be contacted by the Contractor to provide information required for the report, they are working to determine the impact of construction on the wildlife. Brief updates on species monitoring were also provided.
 - Janelle, TG: question on the distressing of the trapped bear that occurred this summer. The bear was trapped, and the monitors were not able to respond or release the bear; the bear died of dehydration. A letter was sent by the TG, has there been any progress or response on this?
 - Alicia, ENR: bear mortalities in traps are extremely uncommon. As a result of this mortality a number of changes were implemented: the checking time is now twice a day in-person, and we are working to decrease the response time. Prioritizing a fast response time and to have a wildlife officer release the bear rather than the bear remaining in the trap until ENR arrives are also changes being made.

Caribou Habitat Offsetting Plan

- Ben, INF: to satisfy Measure 6-3, the final plan was approved by the WRRB. Next steps are to develop an implementation plan and then to implement the plan. There are no budget allocations for these next two phase. FMB gave a positive response; within the next two years we will be focusing on the implementation of the Final Plan. Will be working with the community to identify areas to offset; this is a long-term project: 5-10 years to develop and implement the plan. Ben also provided an update on INF's wildlife cameras through a PowerPoint presentation.

Waste Management & Erosion and Sediment Control

- NSI provided an update through a PowerPoint presentation.
 - Alicia Kelly, ENR: question on the mentioned bear incident, was it a vehicle collision?
 - Dave, NSI: confirmed it was a vehicle collision.

Quarry & Permafrost Plans

- Terry, INF: not much to add as major construction is complete. Compliments to NSI on operations. Bad news on the Permafrost Plan. There were 20 boreholes for thermistors: 14 were not found, three were found damaged, three may still be operational. We now have less ability to monitor the permafrost. Of the 20 or so thermistors that were in, the coldest was maybe -1 to 1.5 degrees Celsius, this is an area of very sporadic permafrost. There is warm permafrost now that the ESC is done so permafrost will probably be gone in seven years or so. With the permafrost and insulation barriers gone - a question for the technical team: would it be valuable to reinstall those thermistors? If so, a new drilling program will be required, maybe in three to five years due to the stripped vegetation.
- Chuck, MVEIRB: What would the value of this information be to the Mackenzie Valley Highway?

How would you recommend greater survivability next time?

- Clint, Lands: we could offset from centre of alignment.
- Terry, INF: Not sure about greater survivability. We have the locations in the plans but not sure if the importance was relayed to the contractors. The conceptual idea at the beginning of the project does not always work out once things get changed, like alignments. When the thermistors were initially put in, the design was tentative.
- Terry, INF: INF is also working on switching the Quarry Permit for Pit # 105 from NSI to INF.

Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) by DFO & TG

- Paul, TG: recap that the FMP has been completed. As the next step, various public outreach documents were created, which included an angler's form and information pamphlet to give people an idea of the angling in the area. The falls are also being developed to become a proper tourist site. As a protective measure, a sign was developed to put up near the La Martre River as it was identified as a sensitive location.
- All of the outreach steps have been completed. A small working group is meeting with DFO to sort out the last bit of changes. With the change in staffing there are a few things left to sort out, the next meeting will be the final stage. The next meeting update on this will tell how many pamphlets have been printed and what signage has been put up.

DFO Update

- Dana, DFO: Working with DOF monitoring team to roll out the monitoring plan on the culverts and crossings along the TH. It is a survey the monitors will fill out, looking to collaborate with TG. Hoping to roll it out for the next freshet and meeting with TG in the new year.
 - Laura, WRRB: monitoring plan done by DFO will have to come to the WRRB for review.
 - Gary, INF: any new works along the highway, please touch base with the North Slave Construction Manager so we can notify NSI.

Annual Reports and Review

- Ben, INF: Annual EA Report has been submitted. ENR and INF will be working on the comprehensive report for the WMMP; it may also include the annual review for the WMMP.

12. Social, Health and Well-being impacts

- Cam, INF: no representative from HSS. HSS has sent their regrets. However, TG updated the group on behalf of HSS as TG and HSS are working collaboratively on the social issues
- Janelle, TG: no additional comments on this topic at this time.

13. Engagement Plan

- Ben, INF: opened the floor for discussion, reminder to the group that INF is seeking input on TK and noted the [CBC news article](#) that talks about the benefits of the TH from a local perspective. Would also like to bring up lessons learned from the CWG perspective as another project, how can we improve on the environmental components, would like to hear from the group.
- Devon, NSI: it has come to NSI's attention that there are many activities occurring on the Highway that NSI is unaware of. Please notify NSI if you or your groups are going to be conducting work along the highway, or within the ROW, and keep the lines of communication open. If NSI comes across of something (i.e., an empty vehicle and people are in the bush doing monitoring) we will have to act accordingly, coming from a safety point of view, giving us more information to keep people safe and accounted for is important. Would just like more information on what everyone is doing out there.

14. Summary of Meeting Expectations and Moving Forward

- Cam, INF: INF will go back and review the ToR to get it out to the CWG. None of the suggestions brought up during this meeting are difficult to implement. INF will take these items from the ToR and agenda to review and will work to streamline it in some way.
- Cam, INF: What we have seen today is that we are able to come together and work together and refine the ToR and possibly the agenda; these are things we keep coming to. Cam will work with Ben and his team to make sure we don't come back to topics that have already been covered. My wish is not to condense it, but that discussion stays on topic in a meaningful way.
- Allicia, ENR: suggestion to include off-road access as a topic at the next meeting. With the road being narrow and people pulling off the road harvesting, are there thoughts of adding more pull-outs for people to access the road cutting locations? Construction is also gearing up to improve the community access road. Does it fall under the same regulations? Or is it an INF project that does not require regulation?
 - Ziaur, INF: there is a plan to improve the access road. The 12-kilometre road is not a part of this P3 project. INF is working with the Tłı̄ch̄o Investment Corporation and has a separate LUP, WL and QP. It will not have a CWG meeting such as this, but updates can be provided if the CWG wishes. To address the pull-out concern: there are two pull-outs that have been designed up to standards and TAC guidelines. We cannot build additional pull-outs
 - Cam, INF: there is no commitment to provide something at this time, we are looking at it and keeping it in mind. We understand the challenges but currently do not have a solution.
 - Gary, INF: there have been discussions regarding this issue, once the scope is better understood and a better idea of the locations, a meeting with ENR will take place to determine a long-term solution.
 - Cam, INF: apologies that we do not have a fulsome answer at this time.

15. Discuss Possible Dates for Next Meeting

- Cam, INF: Next meeting date tentatively set for June 14th, 2023, in Whatì and the following winter one in Behchokò. Will get the meeting minutes out as soon as we can and respond to the ToR suggestions.

16. Closing Remarks

- Cam, INF: thanked everyone for coming out. With the respectfulness shown today, we are moving in the right direction. Look forward to seeing everybody at the next meeting.

17. Closing Prayers

One minute of silence.

Meeting Adjourned: 3:15 pm MT

Legend:

CGB - Community Government of Behchokò
CGW – Community Government of Whatì
DFO - Department of Fisheries and Oceans
EA – Environmental Assessment
ECCC – Environment and Climate Change Canada
ECE – GNWT Dept of Education, Culture and Employment
ENR – GNWT Dept of Environment and Natural Resources
FIN – GNWT Dept of Finance
INF – GNWT Dept of Infrastructure
ITI – Industry, Tourism and Investment
Lands – GNWT Department of Lands
NSI - North Star Infrastructure
NSMA – North Slave Métis Alliance
MVEIRB – Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board
TH – Tłıchq Highway
TG – Tłıchq Government
WLWB – Wek'èezhìi Land and Water Board
WMMP – Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan
WRRB – Wek'èezhìi Renewable Resources Board
WSCC – Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission
YKDFN – Yellowknives Dene First Nation

August 19, 2022

Diane Archie
Minister, Department of Infrastructure
Box 1320
5015 – 44th Street
Yellowknife NT, X1A 2L9

via email: Diane_Archie@gov.nt.ca

Re: Excluding social issues from the Tłı̄chq Highway Corridor Working Group

Dear Minister Archie,

On June 17, 2022, the Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board (WRRB) wrote to the Review Board to express its concerns about the exclusion of topics and limiting of subjects for discussion at the June 13, 2022 Corridor Working Group meeting in Whatì, chaired by the GNWT Department of Infrastructure.¹ The meeting was attended by staff from Tlı̄cho Government, Community of Whatì, the WRRB, federal and territorial government representatives and other participants, including Review Board staff.

The WRRB letter expresses alarm that during the meeting, GNWT Infrastructure told the WRRB that the Corridor Working Group would not entertain topics unless they were specifically on the agenda, including topics that may affect a private contract that the Department of Infrastructure holds to maintain the Tłı̄chq Highway. The WRRB expressed alarm with this approach, noting that discussion should not be limited to items on a set agenda. The WRRB noted that this approach is “contrary to the requirements and intent of the CWG, outlined in the Report of Environmental Assessment...” (p. 1). The purpose of the Corridor Working Group is for broad discussion of impacts, mitigation, and adaptive management of the impacts of the Tłı̄chq Highway on the environment and people.

¹ [Letter WRRB to MVEIRB re concerns with Tlı̄cho Highway CWG](#)

Measure 14-3 includes impacts on people

The Review Board issued its Report of Environmental Assessment for the construction and operation of Tłıchq All-Season Road (now called the Tłıchq Highway) in 2018. In it, the Review Board predicted that the Tłıchq Highway would have a short-term significant adverse impact on community well-being, particularly during the construction and initial operation period of the road unless additional mitigation occurs. The Review Board nonetheless decided to recommend that the project could proceed, provided that specific measures are followed to mitigate the predicted significant impacts. Measure 14-3 in the Report of Environmental Assessment set out a requirement for the Corridor Working Group to impacts on the environment and people so that the impacts would no longer be significant.²

The preamble to the measure 14-3 is explicit that the Corridor Working Group is intended to be a forum for discussion about impacts from the new highway on both the environment and people. It states “To mitigate significant adverse impacts from the Project to the environment **and people** [*emphasis added*], the developer will implement the TASR Corridor Working Group...”. The measure is approved and legally binding.

Corridor Working Group should not exclude social issues

The Corridor Working Group was a key mitigation measure particularly for the early operation phase because that was the time predicted to have the greatest period of social adjustment for the community of Whatì. The Corridor Working Group is meant to provide a forum to discuss a wide variety of topics including monitoring, mitigation, and adaptive management to help the project proponent improve its management of the new highway, to adaptively reduce or avoid impacts on the environment and people that would otherwise be likely.

The Review Board relies on the Corridor Working Group as part of a suite of mitigations to address short-term well-being and socio-economic impacts that would otherwise be significant. The Review Board agrees with the concerns expressed by the WRRB that the Corridor Working Group meetings should not be narrowly constrained by the agenda for each meeting, particularly in Whatì where it is a community meeting. If working group participants ask to discuss topics such as their observations of social issues resulting from the road or emergency considerations along the route, the Corridor Working Group should discuss them. In this way,

² [Report of Environmental Assessment and Reasons for Decision pp 380-381](#)

the Corridor Working Group can serve as a feedback mechanism so that impacts of the highway can be better identified and adaptively managed. The measure also requires the developer to invite Elders to participate in the Corridor Working Group. This clearly implies that Indigenous Traditional Knowledge must not be excluded from its discussions.

On a related matter, the Review Board observes that the Terms of Reference for the Corridor Working Group currently states that a key area of interest of the Corridor Working Group is “Environmental Assessment commitments and measures (**other than socio-eco**) [*sic; emphasis added*]”.³ The exclusion of socio-economic matters appears to conflict directly with the above stated intention of Measure 14-3. The Review Board respectfully suggests that the Terms of Reference should be corrected to reflect the legal requirements of the working group.

The Review Board appreciates the GNWT’s efforts to implement the Corridor Working Group and looks forward to participating in the meetings during the early operations phase of the Tłıchq Highway.

Sincerely,



JoAnne Deneron
Chairperson
Mackenzie Valley Review Board

- c. Cameron Wilson, North Slave Regional Office, Infrastructure
Jody Pellissey, Wek’èezhì Renewable Resources Board
Tammy Steinwand, Tłıchq Government
Lorraine Seale, GNWT Lands

³ [See Tłıchq All Season Road Corridor Working Group Terms of Reference pdf p13](#)



NOV 01 2022

DISTRIBUTION LIST

Tłı̨chǰ All-Season Road Corridor Working Group Terms of Reference Update

Dear Corridor Working Group Members:

The Government of the Northwest Territories' Department of Infrastructure (GNWT-INF) would like to propose an update to the Tłı̨chǰ All-Season Road Corridor Working Group (TASR CWG), Terms of Reference (ToR). Specifically, INF is suggesting that Social Issues be added as a key area of interest for discussion at the TASR CWG meetings. Additionally, the Government of the Northwest Territories' Department of Health and Social Services (GNWT-HSS) will be added to the CWG distribution list and will lead the discussions on the social issues.

This update is in response to a letter sent to Minister Archie by the Mackenzie Valley Review Board on August 19, 2022, outlining the importance of including social issues on the TASR CWG meeting agenda to reflect the intent and spirit of Measure 14-3. INF suggests revising the ToR under principles (d) (i) from "Environmental Assessment commitments and measures (other than socio-eco)" to "Environmental Assessment commitments and measures, including socio-economic and health and well-being commitments related to environmental considerations, as per Measure 5-1 and 5-2".

INF is also proposing an update to GNWT-INF's Role d) to remove the wording specific to the provision of a charter flight from Yellowknife on the day of the meetings in Whatì as the road is now operational and members are able to drive motor vehicles as a mode of transportation. GNWT-INF's Role d) states that:

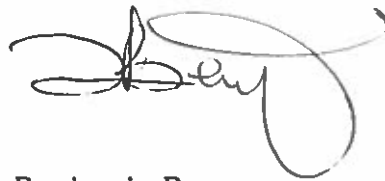
"GNWT - INF will fund the Tłı̨chǰ Government, Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board, Yellowknives Dene First Nation and North Slave Métis Alliance to participate in twice annual working group meetings, one of which will annually take place in

.../2

Whatì, through the provision of a charter flight from Yellowknife the day of the meetings in Whatì, and the provision of hospitality/meals during these meetings. Alternate travel arrangements are outside the funding umbrella.”

Attached is an updated draft-for-discussion ToR for your review and comments. Should you have any questions or concerns please contact me at (867) 767-9086 ext. 31058 or by email at Benjamin_Bey@gov.nt.ca at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Benjamin Bey', with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end of the name.

Benjamin Bey
Environmental Analyst
Department of Infrastructure

c. Cameron Wilson
Regional Superintendent
Department of Infrastructure

Ziaur Rahman
Manager, Surface Design and Construction
Department of Infrastructure

TŁCHQ ALL SEASON ROAD CORRIDOR WORKING GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Effective Date: November 2022

PURPOSE

Provide a forum for information exchange that meets the overall commitment made by the Government of the Northwest Territories' Department of Infrastructure (GNWT-INF) during the Mackenzie Valley Review Board environmental assessment (EA1617-01) and to meets the details outlined in Measure 14-3.

GNWT-INF Commitment:

- Forum will provide advice on monitoring and mitigation results that will inform adaptive management;
- May also serve as a forum to exchange information with academic parties and researchers;
- Will include the GNWT, regulatory boards and government departments, Indigenous governments and organizations, interested parties, and contractor representatives; and,
- Will be modeled off the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Corridor Working Group.

Measure 14-3:

- The Developer (GNWT-INF) will establish the Tłchq All-Season Road Corridor Working Group by:
 - Funding the Tłchq Government, Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board, Yellowknives Dene First Nation and North Slave Métis Alliance to participate in twice annual working group meetings, one of which will annually take place in Whatì;
 - Requiring the participation of the P3 operator; and,
 - Inviting Tłchq Elders to participate.
- The Developer will make meeting minutes publicly available.
- The Developer will maintain the working group through the Project construction phase and for five years of Project operations, unless an extended term is agreed to by parties.

Principles

In keeping with the commitment GNWT-INF made during the Mackenzie Valley Review Board environmental assessment (EA1617-01), and Measure 14-3, the Tłchq All-Season Road Corridor Working Group (TASRCWG) will function in accordance with the following principles:

- a) The TASRCWG is an information sharing mechanism for GNWT-INF to report on the Tłchq All-Season Road (ASR) Project and to review outcomes of the multiple environmental management and monitoring plans with invited interested parties.
- b) The GNWT-INF will use this forum as a means to communicate and report broadly to the interested parties on the Project on a biannual basis (at least once per year in Whatì).
- c) Tłchq Elders will be invited to participate.

- d) Key areas of interest for the TASRCWG are as follows:
- i. Environmental Assessment commitments and measures, including socio-economic, health, and well-being commitments relating to the environment considerations, per Measure 5-1 and 5-2.
 - ii. Construction Authority Land Use Permit
 - iii. Construction Authority Water License
 - iv. Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan
 - v. Fisheries Protection Program advice
 - vi. Annual reports, management plans review and adaptive management
 - vii. North Star Infrastructure (NSI) annual reports and commitments
 - viii. NSI's current and subsequent activities, and
 - ix. Any additional subjects at the discretion of the Chair.
- e) TASRCWG representatives should be selected for their expertise and strategic insight in the relevant traditional knowledge, scientific area or user needs and expectations.
- f) NSI will attend the TASRCWG in order to communicate Project Co related issues and compliance associated with this group's purpose.
- g) The TASRCWG does not replace the legal authorities of the Tłıchǵ, federal or territorial regulators or co-management bodies.
- h) Meetings of the TASRCWG will not replace any Project-specific sub-working group meeting requirements.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the TASRCWG are to:

- a) review and provide comments to the GNWT-INF on the design of Project-specific monitoring programs;
- b) review Project-specific annual and other monitoring reports and provide comments to the GNWT-INF for the following year's Project-specific monitoring and mitigation program; and
- c) provide advice to the GNWT-INF on Tłıchǵ ASR monitoring and mitigation results that may contribute to adaptive management and/or regional cumulative effects monitoring programs.

COMPOSITION

In addition to the GNWT – INF Chair and Administrative Coordinator, the TASRCWG will be comprised of at least one representative from:

- Community Government of Whatì
- Community Government of Behchoko
- Tłıchǵ Government
- North Slave Métis Alliance
- Yellowknives Dene First Nation

- Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board
- Wek'èezhì Land and Water Board
- GNWT – Department of Infrastructure (Project specialists)
- GNWT – Department of Lands (Inspector)
- GNWT – Department of Environment and Natural Resources
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- Environment and Climate Change Canada
- NSI

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

GNWT-INF's Role

- a) The GNWT-INF will chair the meetings.
- b) The Administrative Coordinator will prepare agendas and issue notices for meetings and ensure all documentation for discussion or comment is attached to the agenda.
- c) The Administrative Coordinator will distribute the agenda one (1) month prior to each meeting, which will be held in the spring and fall of each year.
- d) GNWT – INF will fund the Tł̨chq̨ Government, Wek'èezhì Renewable Resources Board, Yellowknives Dene First Nation and North Slave Métis Alliance to participate in twice annual working group meetings, one of which will annually take place in Whatì. The GNWT-INF will accept ground transportation claims using the prevailing GNWT Duty Travel Rate on the day of meetings and the provision of meals during these meetings. Alternate travel arrangements are outside the funding umbrella.
- e) The Administrative Coordinator will take notes of proceedings and prepare draft meeting minutes/Action items for circulation to members for review.
- f) The Administrative Coordinator will post meeting minutes/action items on GNWT-INF's Tł̨chq̨ ASR webpage within two (2) months of each meeting.
(<https://www.inf.gov.nt.ca/en/t%C5%82%C4%B1%CC%A8ch%C7%AB-all-season-road-project>)
- g) The Administrative Coordinator will also perform all necessary preparatory administrative duties such as booking the venue and catering, arranging transportation, teleconference setup (if required).

Invited Representatives' Role

- a) Review documents and data circulated prior to each meeting.
- b) Contribute experience and ideas.
- c) Have experts within respective organizations verify and analyze the data collected and provide recommendations or modifications.
- d) Cooperate in issue resolution.

DURATION OF MEETINGS

Length of meetings will vary based on the agenda. At each meeting there will be a standard agenda as per Appendix A, recognizing different needs between the construction, operation and transition phases. Travel to and from the meeting is additional time. Longer meetings are expected earlier in the project construction phase.

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting minutes will include action items if required and will be formatted in a similar fashion to the template found in Appendix B.

DURATION OF WORKING GROUP

The TASRCWG will be established by May 2019 and will operate for the construction period and for five (5) years of highway operations which commenced in November 2021, unless an extended term is agreed to by its parties.

REVIEW PERIOD

This Terms of Reference will be reviewed and updated as required.

Appendix A

Agenda