



Tłıchǫ Government

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October 18, 2023

Mr. Mark Cliffe-Philips
Executive Director
Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board
200 Scotia Centre
Yellowknife, NT
X1A 2N7

Re: Report on Tłıchǫ Government Measures of Environmental Assessment for 2022

Dzẹ nezı Mark,

The Tłıchǫ Government is providing this cover letter as part of our report on activities to implement the Report of Environmental Assessment (EA) Measures for the Tłıchǫ All-Season Road (EA-1617-01) as required by Measure 14-2.

Please see the attached table (Table 1) with updates on EA measures for which the TG holds or shares responsibility. Please also refer to the Government of the Northwest Territories' (GNWT) Annual EA Measures Report for additional information on the measures that have shared responsibility for implementation.

In Tłıchǫ Unity,

Michael Birlea
A/Director
Tłıchǫ Government
Department of Culture, Language & Lands Protection



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Report for the 2022-23 Tłıchǫ Government Annual Reporting on the Tłıchǫ Highway

Measure 14-2 requires the TG to:

a) describe the actions being undertaken to implement the measures or the part(s) of the measures for which the regulatory authority or government is responsible; and,

b) explain how these actions, including those implemented through adaptive management, fulfill the intent of the EA measures, including consideration of the following questions:

- i. How are implementation actions addressing a likely significant adverse impact on the environment?
- ii. How effective are implementation actions at reducing or avoiding the impact or its likelihood?

Table 1: Reporting on Measures for Which the TG holds Authority and/or is a Collaborative Partner

<u>Measure</u>	<u>Required completion date</u>	<u>Measure 14-2(a) Impacts TG's Recent Progress and upcoming dates</u>	<u>Measure 14-2(b) Reducing or avoiding</u>
5-1 Developer's support of monitoring and adaptive management of adverse health and well-being impacts	Annually during construction & for at least 10 years of operations	<p>Ongoing: Consisting of Whatı and other Tłıchǫ Government and GNWT representatives, the Tłıchǫ Highway Socio-Economic Working Group continues to meet monthly to discuss and assess progress on monitoring activities for the following indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population health • Mental health and addictions • Child & family services • Economic well-being • Cultural well-being • Early childhood & education • Community safety & policing <p>Utilizing the report and data tracking system established in June 2020, the Working Group continues to track and compile relevant data to inform the development of bi-annual progress reports.</p>	<p>Reflections/Recommendations:</p> <p>All key indicators have spiked when the road initially opened. At the moment, Client Services has prepared Community Action Plans to address impacts. However, the parties haven't yet managed to address impacts with new programs or funding.</p>
5-2 Tłıchǫ Monitoring, engagement and reporting of adverse health and well-being impacts	Annually during construction & for at least 10 years of operations	<p>Updates: With consultant support, Tłıchǫ Highway Socio-Economic Working Group is working together to synthesize findings from data collection into the next Highway Health & Well-Being Technical Report. The goal is to complete the next report by November 2023. Efforts to gather and synthesize data have been hampered by lack of data availability. Data requirements and timelines are being solidified in an MOU between stakeholders. The MOU has been approved by Tłıchǫ Government and is currently awaiting GNWT review and approval.</p>	
5-6 Include Behchokǫ in Accident Response Planning	Before Road open to public	<p>Ambulance and Highway Rescue Action Plan</p> <p>MACA conducted an operational risk assessment and developed recommendations for community specific action plans that would develop community emergency service capacity in a phased approach. No funding has been made available to implement these recommendations.</p>	<p>Whatı has hired a new Fire Chief and has new volunteers. There have been accidents on the road.</p>



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		<p>TG continues to work with partners to explore options for building first responder and emergency response capacities despite lack of funding. A number of community members have been identified as willing to act as volunteer fire fighters. But lack of funding for training and gear is a barrier to engaging volunteer services.</p>	
<p>6-1 Implementation of the Recovery Strategy for the Boreal Caribou in the NWT, and required range plans, for boreal caribou affected by the Project</p>	<p>Submit to WRRB under s.12.5.1 of Tłı̨chǫ Agreement at least 90 days before road open to public.</p>	<p>Woodland Caribou Recovery Strategy & Range Plan: ENR/ECC resubmitted the interim Wek'èezhii range plan to the WRRB on November 05, 2022. TG and GNWT are now actively co-developing a permanent range plan that will be completed in the next 2 years. This process involves adapting the interim plan with traditional knowledge insight and other collaborations and proposed amendments.</p>	<p>Reflections/Recommendations: It would be beneficial for TG to know how many tags are being used by non-Indigenous peoples. Unsure if ENR/ECC keeps track of where caribou and moose are harvested, but they should report it to Indigenous governments. This would help determine sustainable harvesting.</p>
<p>6-2, 7-1, 9-1 Temporary no-hunting corridor for boreal caribou (tòdzı)</p> <p>Incorporate Traditional Knowledge into Monitoring of Barren-ground Caribou (ʔekwò)</p> <p>Monitoring Harvest and Managing Wildlife to Maintain Successful Harvest</p>	<p>GNWT to set Sustainable harvest level.</p> <p>TG to report on monitoring: Annually</p>	<p>Caribou habitat & harvest monitoring</p> <p>TG continues to receive advisory support from the K'àgòò Tłìlì Deè Committee to support the incorporation of traditional knowledge into monitoring of barren-ground caribou (ʔekwò). There have been 5 Committee meetings that have occurred in January 2021, April 2021, November 2021, April 2022, and November 2022. In response to input from the Committee, TG is monitoring dustfall along the road and the impacts of dust on plants and habitat that are important for ʔekwò, tòdzı, and other wildlife.. With consultant support, TG highway monitors have set up 36 vegetation plots along the road, which are monitored each year to determine whether vegetation is changing. In addition, TG highway monitors are collaborating with NRCan and graduate students from Sir Wilfred Laurier to monitor dustfall and vegetation using drones. TG has a MOU with NRCan, who have agreed to provide financial, material, and analysis support to implement the dust study program.</p> <p>TG highway monitors also monitor hunting and fishing activity along the road during the fall, and conduct highway patrols every weekday to identify other issues and concerns along the highway. All monitoring data from the monitors to date has been compiled into a report. The monitors have not reported any Indigenous harvest of caribou or moose on the Tłı̨chǫ Highway. Data has been collected on the animals sighted, animal tracks sighted, instances of woodcutting, garbage left along the highway and instances of roadkill. The monitors have also highlighted the need for a washroom on Highway 9.</p> <p>April 2023: Highway monitoring program reinstated with updates to the program including: (1) Elders hired as part of the highway monitoring staff, (2) Monitors re-trained to complete data entry digitally on iPads as opposed to paper entries,</p>	<p>Reflections/Recommendations:</p> <p>The TK measures are important as Elders know how things were before the road. They understand health and abundance and how things will change.</p> <p>TASR monitors have noted that the current way the monitors are scheduled to be on the road they miss a lot of wildlife, as they're not on the road in the early morning or at dusk when they say the animals are usually out. This might have been brought up in the committee meeting too. There are some employment hurdles that would need to be addressed to make this a reality.</p> <p>TASR monitors have noted that they have seen people harvesting on the roads or at least know of people harvesting on the roads, but they don't seem to see them when they are on their shift. Hunting occurs early in the day and on weekends. The idea has been proposed to do check-stops along the roads to find out information regarding hunting. This would help with reports on wildlife data.</p>



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		<p>(3) Opportunities and incentives for public volunteers to participate in monitoring and reporting. In April, TG highway monitors also set up 9 dustfall monitoring stations.</p> <p>June 2023: One week of drone dust studies occurred to collect imagery of the habitat surrounding the highway and analyze the imagery to see if dust can be detected on the vegetation. This information will help us understand the impact of the road on habitat for both zekwò and tòdzi.</p> <p>Upcoming:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitors will establish reference point for dust/vegetation surveys 3 kilometers from road to establish control of natural dust levels to compare with the 3 current transept locations. Vegetation and dust fall survey reports from June and July 2023 will be shared to Committee members at the next meeting. TG has identified intention to increase female Elder participation in the K'àngòò Tìlì Deè Committee as female Elders often contribute additional insights on plants. 	
6-3 Habitat Offset and Restoration Plan	Submit to WRRB under s.12.5.1 of Tlicho Agreement at least 90 days before road open to public.	<p>Woodland Caribou Habitat Offset Plan</p> <p>The Final Caribou Habitat Offset Plan was completed, submitted, and approved by the WRRB. Approval was given on September 2, 2021.</p>	
8-1 Integrated Fisheries Management Plan	Submit to WRRB under s.12.5.1 of Tlicho Agreement at least 90 days before road open to public.	<p>Plan was submitted</p> <p>April 2023: In the retraining of the Highway Monitors, Paul Vesce gave a presentation to the monitors about what to look for in relation to fish and when to contact/ flag an issue for Paul.</p> <p>Ongoing: There are information pamphlets, signs, and angler diaries created to respond to the measure.</p>	
10-1 Bird Species at Risk and Migratory Bird Data, Mitigation, Monitoring, and Adaptive Management		<p>April 2023: Updates to the highway monitoring data entry process included the introduction of a bird and migratory bird data entry process. Specific migratory bird forms are now included as part of wildlife monitoring.</p>	
10-2 Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan Approval, Annual Review, and Reporting		<p>Ongoing: Wildlife monitors continue to submit daily reports of wildlife and harvesting on their digital data entry program. The Wildlife Monitoring Program continues to be managed by Tlicho staff who ensure proper protocol and update equipment and policy as necessary.</p>	