

Ministre des Affaires indiennes et  
du Nord canadien et interlocuteur fédéral  
auprès des Métis et des Indiens non inscrits



Minister of Indian Affairs and  
Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor  
for Métis and Non-Status Indians

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0H4

AUG 29 2006

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SEP 08 2006

Grand Chief Herb Norwegian  
Chair  
Dehcho Land Use Planning Committee  
PO Box 199  
FORT PROVIDENCE NT X0E 0L0

Dear Grand Chief Norwegian:

This is in response to your correspondence of June 13, 2006, submitting the Dehcho Land Use Planning Committee's Final Draft of *Respect for the Land: The Dehcho Land Use Plan* for my consideration as per the *Deh Cho First Nations Interim Measures Agreement* and the *Deh Cho Settlement Agreement*. I have asked departmental officials to undertake a detailed review of the document.

The submission of the Final Draft Plan addresses an important feature of the Interim Measures Agreement. Moreover, I believe its submission is timely in light of the recent offer made by Canada to the Deh Cho First Nations on a comprehensive agreement as it could inform the negotiation of specific land use planning provisions in a Final Agreement with the Deh Cho First Nations.

Part of my consideration of the Final Draft Plan will be to make sure that it "... will promote the social, cultural, and economic well-being of residents and communities in the Deh Cho territory, having regards to the interests of all Canadians." Accordingly, I will be seeking the opinions of my federal colleagues, the Government of the Northwest Territories and other stakeholders in the Deh Cho region along with the results of the departmental review.

While I appreciate the Committee's desire to commence as soon as practical, I will consider the implementation issues only at such time as I have had the benefit of a thorough analysis of the document. Therefore, I will not provide written policy direction to the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board with respect to the exercise of its functions, nor will I direct departmental officials to begin implementing the Final Draft Plan at this time.

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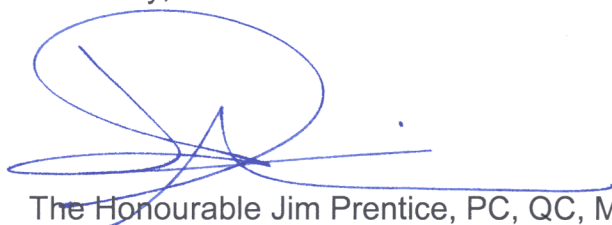
Canada

Once departmental officials have completed the review of the Final Draft Plan, we will be able to consider a meeting with the members of the Dehcho Land Use Planning Committee to discuss any outstanding issues or concerns.

The Dehcho Land Use Planning Committee should be commended on its achievement as this was a complex and difficult endeavour.

Thank you for writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized loop at the top and several horizontal strokes below it.

The Honourable Jim Prentice, PC, QC, MP