



THE PREMIER OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Mr. Herb Norwegian
 Chair
 Dehcho Land Use Planning Committee
 PO BOX 199
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MAR - 1 2007

Dear Mr. Norwegian:

Dehcho Land Use Plan

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) has had the opportunity to review the Draft – *Respect for the Land: The Dehcho Land Use Plan (DLUP)* developed by the Dehcho Land Use Planning Committee (DLUPC). Our government has determined that we are unable to approve the DLUP at this time. During our review a number of issues were identified which may be summarized as follows:

- i) Implementation of the DLUP would create additional complexities in the existing regulatory framework that were not intended by the GNWT as a signatory to the Dehcho Interim Measures Agreement;
- ii) The Plan includes zoning and other conformity requirements that do not present adequate opportunities for economic development and could constrain community and public infrastructure development; and
- iii) The Plan limits potential land selection options.

During our review of the DLUP, it became clear that many of the GNWT's issues and concerns with the DLUP are similar to, or the same as, ones we have raised with the DLUPC over the last several years on earlier drafts of the DLUP.

Consequently, I have instructed the GNWT's Chief Negotiator, Mr. Mark Warren to work closely with the other Parties to the Dehcho Process to develop an interim DLUP, through the Dehcho Process negotiations, that is acceptable to all Parties. The GNWT would be prepared to implement an acceptable and agreed upon interim DLUP upon the approval of a Dehcho Agreement in Principle (AIP).

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- 2 -

The GNWT remains committed to developing an interim Regional Land Use Plan for the Dehcho Region. However, from the GNWT's perspective an interim DLUP needs to be compatible with land selection pursuant to the Dehcho Process negotiations which is consistent with the link established in the Interim Measures Agreement between the DLUPC and the Dehcho Process negotiations. Further, the DLUP should be implemented within the existing legislative and policy frameworks of Canada and the GNWT.

Following an AIP, the GNWT would be prepared to develop a 'final' DLUP that would come into effect on the Effective Date of a Dehcho Agreement. The development of this DLUP should take into account and reflect the features of a Dehcho Final Agreement such as land selection and resource management. Consequently, the work of completing the development of this 'final' DLUP should also occur under the direction of the Main Table of Dehcho Process negotiations.

The draft DLUP represents a significant body of work and the GNWT recognizes the efforts of all those involved in the creation of this document. The GNWT remains supportive of land use planning and the benefits it can provide to First Nations, the public, developers and government.

Sincerely,



Joseph L. Handley

c: The Honourable Jim Prentice, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs and Northern Development

The Honourable Michael McLeod
Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs

Grand Chief Herb Norwegian
Dehcho First Nations

Chief Harry Deneron
Acho Dene Koe First Nation

.../3

- 3 -

Chief Bema Landry
Deh Gah Got'ie Dene Council

Chief Alec Sunrise
Hay River Dene Reserve

Chief Stanley Sanguéz
Jean Marie River First Nation

Chief Lloyd Chicot
Ka'a'gee Tu First Nation

Chief Keyna Norwegian
Liidlii Kue First Nation

Chief Eric Betsaka
Nahanni Butte Dene Band

Chief Lloyd Moses
Pehdzeh Ki Dene Band

Acting Chief Dolphus Jumbo
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Chief Karen Thomas-Felker
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Ms. Marie Lafferty, President
Fort Simpson Métis Nation

Mr. Ernie McLeod, President
Fort Liard Metis Council

Mr. Albert J. Lafferty, President
Fort Providence Métis Council

Mr. Mark Warren, Acting Chief Negotiator
Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations