



November 18, 2015

AlecSandra MacDonald
Land and Water Technician
Gwich'in Land and Water Board
Box 2018
Inuvik, NT
X0E 0T0

Dear Ms. MacDonald,

**RE: DOT GNWT
Water Licence Application – G99L8-001
Water Licence Application – G99L8-002
Peel and Mackenzie Ferries
Deposit of Gravel - Modification of the Banks
Request for Comment**

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources has reviewed the applications at reference based on its mandated responsibilities under the *Environmental Protection Act*, the *Forest Management Act*, the *Forest Protection Act*, *Waters Act* and the *Wildlife Act* and provides the following comments and recommendations for the consideration of the Board.

Topic 1: Request for a 25 Year Water Licence

Comment(s):

ENR understands from the Water Licence Renewal Application, as per section 13 "Proposed Time Schedule", that DOT is looking to be issued a 25 year Water Licence.

Recommendation(s):

- 1) ENR recommends that the proponent be issued with a standard 5 year Water Licence term as this ensures that the Water Licence and supporting documents are updated consistently and that any issues or incidents that occur can be addressed. This also effectively gives the opportunity to all interested parties to

submit comments and concerns which serve to inform the updated terms and conditions of the Water Licence and supporting documents.

Topic 2: Environmental Impacts Mitigation Measures

Comment(s):

ENR understands from the Water Licence Renewal Application, as per section 10 “Predicted Environmental Impacts of Undertaking and Proposed Mitigation”, that to mitigate environmental impacts from toxins and heavy metals, the Department of Transportation, GNWT (DOT) is to wash ferry decks when moored only. The 2014 Annual Reported filed as per the Water Licence requirement states that DOT intended to wash the deck in the middle of the river during the 2015 season.

Recommendation(s):

- 1) ENR recommends that the proponent follow the mitigation measure as described in the Water Licence renewal application to minimize the amount of contaminants being washed into the rivers. Ensure that the mitigation measures described are being followed at all times.

Topic 3: Proposed Locations of Spill Contingency Plan Copies

Comment(s):

ENR understands from the updated Spill Contingency Plan (SCP), as per subsection 2.4.1, that DOT is to keep a copy of the SCP at the Highway #8 Ferry Camp on the Northeast bank of the Mackenzie River and at the Fort McPherson Highways Maintenance Facility near the Peel River Ferry Landing.

Recommendation(s):

- 1) ENR recommends that the proponent keep a copy of the SCP on the ferries in addition to the proposed locations. This would be more prudent as most of the ferry staff and emergency spill response equipment are located on board.
- 2) ENR recommends that the proponent keep a copy of Water Licences G99L8-001 and G99L8-002 attached to all SCP copies.

Topic 4: Suitable Communications Measures

Comment(s):

ENR understands from the updated SCP, as per subsection 2.4.2, that DOT have suitable communications equipment and all emergency numbers available prior to commencement of all field activities.

Recommendation(s):

- 1) ENR recommends that that DOT list a complete inventory of the communications systems and devices available on board of the ferries, at Highways Maintenance Facility and at the Highway Ferry Camp.
- 2) As noted in recent and past Water Licence inspection reports, ENR recommends that all ferry staff have access to satellite phones on board of the ferries so that staff may have the ability to communicate from their location at any time in the event of an emergency such as a mechanical issue or a spill incident.

Topic 5: Training Programs

Comment(s):

As part of their SCP Under subsection *8.1 Outline of training programs*, DOT added that their crew members working on the ferries and ferry landings undergo seasonal spill training at the start of each ferry operating season, but in-house capacity for training for field crews is currently being developed. It is unclear what type of training is provided to staff seasonally and who the course and training provider is, given the current on-going development of in-house training.

It is also noted that a formal training program (Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response Training Program) was held in August 2010 and attended by DOT Policy, Planning and Environment staff in August 2010; however, ENR has noticed that no other formal training has been provided for staff since August of 2010 (over 5 years) and there is no mention of formal training offered to new staff members and potential first-time crew members.

Recommendation(s):

- 1) ENR recommends that subsection *8.1 Outline of training programs* be expanded to provide clarity on the type of training that is provided to current crew members seasonally. Suggested information to include:
 - a) who is conducting the training for crew members at the start of each ferry operating season;
 - b) a summary of course content; and
 - c) if hosted by more than one operating body (or various instructors), whether or not it is standardized from year-to-year.
- 2) ENR recommends that all staff working on-site review and read the SCP at the start of each ferry operating season and that this requirement will be included in the SCP.
- 3) ENR suggests new staff members and first-time crew members be provided with formal training, and staff who have undergone formal training receive a refresher or renewal (ie. every 5 years)?

Comments and recommendations were provided by ENR technical experts in the Inuvik Region and were coordinated and collated by the Environmental Impact Assessment Section, Conservation, Assessment and Monitoring Division (CAM).

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Patrick Clancy, Environmental Regulatory Analyst at 920-6118 or email at patrick.clancy@gov.nt.ca.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Clancy', written in a cursive style.

Patrick Clancy
Environmental Regulatory Analyst
Environmental Impact Assessment Section
Conservation Assessment and Monitoring Division
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Government of the Northwest Territories