



**ROW BRUSHING, MAINTENANCE AND ANCHOR ASSESSMENT**

**ENGAGEMENT PLAN**

**TALTSON HYDROELECTRIC FACILITY  
TALTSON RIVER, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**

**August 2022**

## DOCUMENT MAINTENANCE AND CONTROL

The Director, Health, Safety & Environment is responsible for the distribution, maintenance and updating of the Engagement Plan. This document will be reviewed annually, or when engagement practices are changed at the request of an engaged party. Changes in phone numbers, names of individuals, etc. that do not affect the intent of the plan are to be made as required. Additional copies can be provided by the Director, Health, Safety & Environment.

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

The Taltson Hydroelectric Facility (Taltson Hydro), located within the Taltson River watershed, ~56 km northeast of Fort Smith in the Northwest Territories, was built in 1965 to supply electricity to the Pine Point Mine. Following the mine closure in 1986, Taltson Hydro has continued to supply power to the South Slave communities of Hay River, K'atlodeeche First Nation, Fort Smith, Fort Resolution and Enterprise via a 115 kV transmission line (L150 and L350) of approximately 285 km.

The Northwest Territories Power Corporation (NTPC) operates part of the South Slave Electrical System (SSES) which is outlined in Figure 1. NTPC owns and operates the transmission and distribution infrastructure from Taltson Dam to Fort Smith, Fort Smith to Pine Point, Pine Point to Fort Resolution and within Fort Smith and Fort Resolution. Infrastructure from Pine Point to Hay River and Hay River to Enterprise is owned and operated by Northland Utilities. NTPC has several Right-of-Way (ROW) agreements within the SSES which contain conditions allowing and regulating the maintenance of the transmission infrastructure within the ROW.

Projects planned for parts of this ROW which include:

- Brushing activities within the existing ROW between Fort Smith and Fort Resolution (both L150 and L350)
- Use of heavy equipment and machinery within the existing ROW for general maintenance and repairs (both L150 and L350)
- An anchor assessment involving a geotechnical study (drilling) and excavation at select tower locations to extract and replace anchors as required between Taltson Hydro and Pine Point within the existing L150 ROW.

NTPC is seeking a Land-Use permit to authorize the use of heavy equipment and machinery within the existing ROW for the purpose of brushing and transmission line maintenance within the ROW, and to carry out an anchor assessment, and drilling operation to identify the main cause(s) of anchor degradation along the Transmission Line.

This Engagement Plan provides an engagement framework for the ROW Brushing, Maintenance and Anchor Assessment from Taltson Hydro to Fort Resolution.

The brushing and anchor assessment activities will require a land-use permit through the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board (MVLWB) under the direction of the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act and the Waters Act. As part of the land-use permit application process, NTPC is required to gather input from stakeholders on the application package and to continue engagement throughout the term of permit. Engagement will provide an opportunity for stakeholders to contribute knowledge and solutions to the process, which is mutually beneficial to all parties involved.

This plan was developed through consideration of the MVLWB Engagement Guidelines for Applicants and Holders of Water Licences and Land Use Permits, and the MVLWB Engagement and Consultation Policy.

## 1.1 BRUSHING WITHIN ROW

Brushing of vegetation will occur within the existing ROW, most notably in areas affected by forest fire and to widen the ROW's to the original design width regulator standard for three phase line of 30m from center line.

No brushing activities will be conducted outside of the existing ROW. Brushing will be a combination of:

- Manual brushing with chainsaws and brush saws around towers and/or waterways
- Brushing with equipment where possible, including use of bobcat style equipment with rubber tracks and mulchers, or hydro axe attachment which will reduce ground disturbance.
- A feller buncher attachment will be used for removal of select hazard trees that are tall enough to contact lines if they fall.

Keeping the ROW clear will prevent outages resulting from trees contacting the transmission lines and will create safer grazing area for buffalo herds, reducing contact between wildlife and vehicles. Mulching will promote a stronger healthier tree line protecting the park from highway dust and providing a natural barrier for wildlife from roadway.

Regular upkeep would be required once complete. However, completion of this project will result in simpler less invasive maintenance work in the future.

## 1.2 TRANSMISSION LINE MAINTENANCE

As a contingency, NTPC is including use of heavy equipment within the ROW of L150 and L350 as part of the LUP application for the purpose of carrying out general maintenance, as well as for emergency response purposes (outages) in which lines and/or structures may need to be repaired quickly. These activities may include, but are not limited to, use of heavy equipment for inspections, repairing damaged lines and/or structures, removal and replacement of existing structures, erecting poles and/or towers, raven nest removal.

Heavy equipment will only be operated within the ROW as a last resort to prevent outages or restore power as needed.

## 1.3 L-150 ANCHOR ASSESSMENT AND REPLACEMENT

L-150 is a 115 kV transmission line forming the South Slave Grid. It is comprised of approximately 800 guyed-Y aluminum transmission towers spanning 285 km and is strung with single 3/0 ACSR Pigeon conductor. It was constructed in the 1960s and is currently experiencing widespread issues with its anchors.

NTPC plans to carry out an anchor assessment to identify the main cause(s) of anchor degradation along the Transmission Line, the extent of degradation and replace anchors deemed to be in

unsuitable condition. Anchors are used to stabilize towers and power poles along the transmission line.

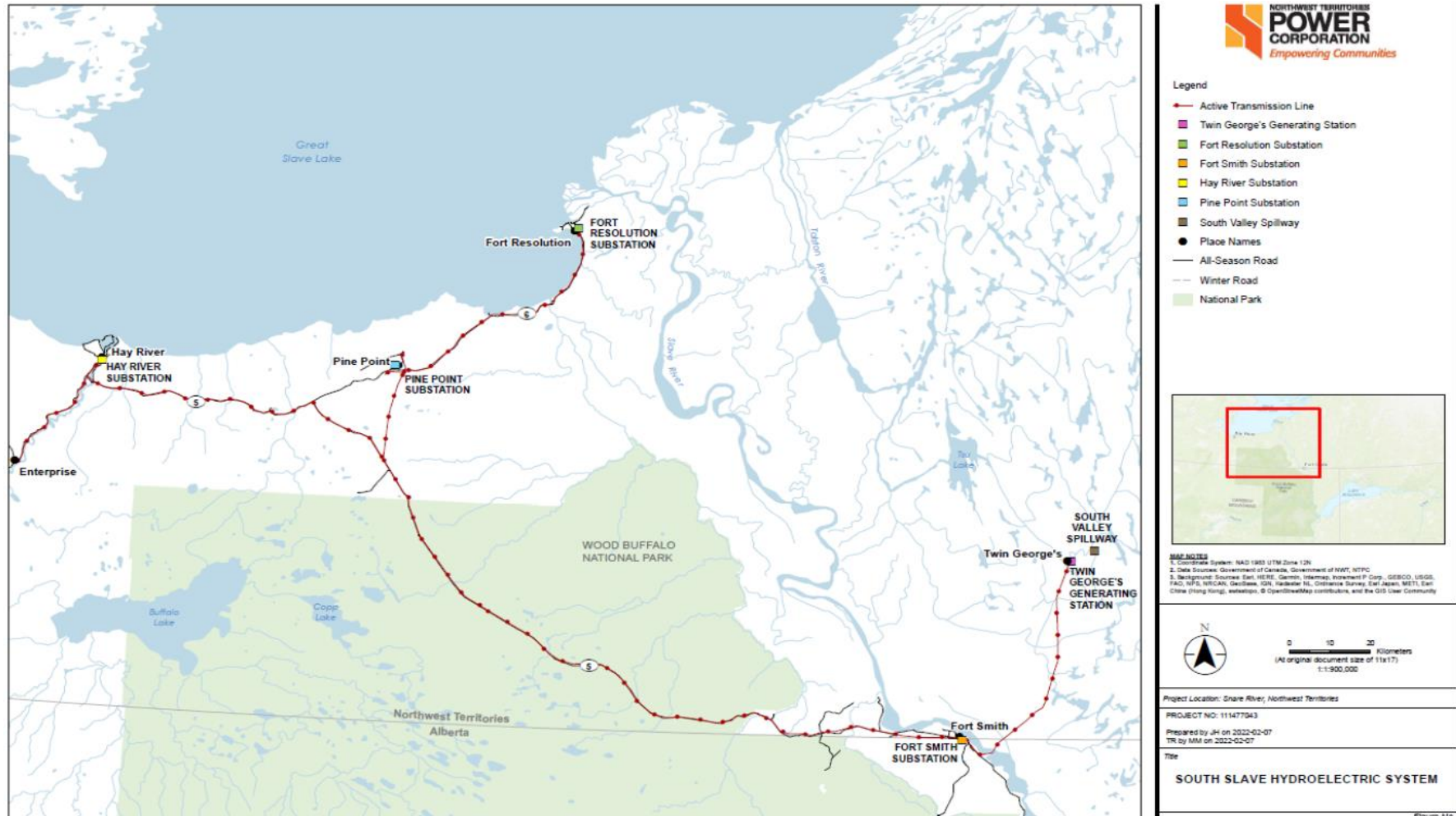
As part of the anchor assessment, a drilling program is planned to take place starting in the Fall of 2022 between Fort Smith and Pine Point. Prior to the drilling activities, a desktop study will be carried out in to determine the location of the boreholes. Based on the results of the desktop study, the locations of the boreholes will be selected.

The boreholes will be drilled with a tracked rig using either 125 mm diameter solid stem augers or 200 mm diameter hollow stem augers. Drilling will be carried out using hollow stem augers only if seepage and sloughing is encountered during drilling, otherwise solid stem augers will be used.

On completion of drilling the test holes will be backfilled to surface using auger cuttings. Any excess cuttings will be left mounded over the test hole. All test holes will be backfilled to surface with cuttings. If additional material is required to get to surface the remainder will be backfilled with bagged bentonite chips.

Based on the results of the borehole logs, recommendations will be made for 8 excavations at towers along the distribution line to extract the anchors for corrosion assessment. The 8 extracted anchors will be sent for testing, and new anchors will be installed in their place. Excavation depths are expected to be 8-10 feet and carried out using small-tracked excavators.

Figure 1: South Slave Electrical System



## 1.4 CORPORATE CONTACT INFORMATION

NTPC contact information for the ROW Brushing, Maintenance and Anchor Assessment land-use permit is as follows:

Matthew Miller  
Senior Environmental Licensing Specialist  
4 Capital Drive  
Hay River, NWT X0E 1G2  
Tel: (867) 874-5314 [mmiller@ntpc.com](mailto:mmiller@ntpc.com)

Dean Hendrickson  
Manager Plant Operations, South Slave  
Box 66, NT  
867-669-3312 [dhendrickson@ntpc.com](mailto:dhendrickson@ntpc.com)

Doug Prendergast  
Manager, Communications  
4 Capital Drive  
Hay River, NWT X0E 1G2  
Tel: (867) 874-5202 [dprendergast@ntpc.com](mailto:dprendergast@ntpc.com)

David Kopp-van Egteren  
Project Manager, Engineering  
4 Capital Drive  
Hay River, NWT X0E 1G2  
867-874-5280 [dkopp@ntpc.com](mailto:dkopp@ntpc.com)



## 2 OBJECTIVES

Engagement, as defined by the Engagement and Consultation Policy of the Land and Water Boards of the Mackenzie Valley, is “the communication and outreach activities a proponent undertakes with affected parties prior to and during the operation of a project.” Engagement is required as part of the land-use permitting process and the Boards require that proponents provide both an Engagement Record and an Engagement Plan as part of an application package.

Objectives of the engagement process are listed below along with NTPC’s commitment to fulfilling these objectives.

**Table 2-1: Engagement Objective and Commitments**

	<b>Engagement Objectives</b>	<b>NTPC Commitment to the Public</b>
1.	<p><u>Inform</u> by providing information to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify stakeholders of any issues/operational decisions.</li> <li>• Assist stakeholders in understanding the operation and issues that may arise.</li> <li>• Prepare stakeholders for more intensive forms of engagement should they be required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep the public informed.</li> <li>• Proactive, timely communication.</li> <li>• Help stakeholders understand the undertaking.</li> </ul>
2.	<p><u>Listen</u> to stakeholders and their feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the needs and priorities of the stakeholders so that decisions can be made with these needs and priorities in mind.</li> <li>• Build cooperative and inclusive relationships.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge when and how public input influenced decisions.</li> <li>• Understand views, concerns, interests and expectations.</li> </ul>
3.	<p><u>Involve</u> work directly with stakeholders to jointly resolve issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge when and how concerns and aspirations are reflected in the design of the operation.</li> </ul>

### 3 OPERATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

The engagement process for the ROW Brushing, Maintenance and Anchor Assessment will follow the engagement framework that NTPC follows for the Taltson Facility which is regulated under MVLWB water licence MV2011L4-0002.

NTPC openly engages with the public regarding the South Slave Electrical System by:

- Providing information about electricity generation, transmission and distribution on the NTPC website ([www.ntpc.com](http://www.ntpc.com));
- Providing information about outages, safety, employment opportunities, community donations and other matters through:
  - NTPC Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/NTPC-Northwest-Territories-Power-Corporation-591764887576712/>);
  - Twitter ([https://twitter.com/ntpc\\_news?lang=en](https://twitter.com/ntpc_news?lang=en));
  - Email alerts (<http://ntpc.com/safety-outages/outage-alert-signup>);
- Having NTPC staff attend trade shows, conferences and job fairs to engage directly with members of the public; and
- Placing paid advertising in the media (radio and print) to provide information about matters of public interest.

Public engagement regarding the ROW Brushing, Maintenance and Anchor Assessment will employ the above practices of engagement as well.

## 4 LICENCE APPLICATION ENGAGEMENT

As part of the ROW Brushing, Maintenance and Anchor Assessment land-use permit application process and throughout the life of the licence and permit some key tools employed in the engagement process are:

- Electronic mail (email)
- Phone conversations and teleconferences
- In-person meetings with representatives of affected organizations, if requested
- Community public meetings with affected communities, if requested

### 4.1 ENGAGEMENT TRIGGERS

There are standard triggers at key milestones related to activities authorized under the permit that will trigger engagement. Table 4-1 presents the structure for engagement that includes the triggers, methods and expected dates for engagement. All engagement activities will be recorded in the Engagement Record and submitted to the MVLWB.

**Table 4-1: Engagement Structure for ROW Brushing, Maintenance and Anchor Assessment**

Engagement Trigger	Purpose for Engagement	Organization to be Engaged	Format of Engagement	Approximate Date
Pre-Application Engagement	To inform parties that NTPC is planning to for apply for a Type A Land-Use Permit	Refer to Table 4-2	Email with corresponding letter with application information including maps, phone calls, in-person meetings and presentations	August 2022
Information Sessions	To inform parties of details of Type A Land-Use Permit for activities within the ROW and to accept input from public on application.	Refer to Table 4-2	Information Session (presentations) with specific parties upon request	August 2022
Application submitted to the MVLWB	Inform parties of how to stay engaged through the MVLWB process	Refer to Table 4-2	Email with link to the MVLWB Public Registry site with the complete application	Application will be submitted by August, 2022
Start of LUP permitted activities within the ROW	Inform parties that brushing and anchor assessment activities within the ROW has started.	Refer to Table 4-2	Email information for ROW Brushing, Maintenance and Anchor Assessment.	October 2022
Land-use permit issuance, amendment, extension, or assignment	Inform parties of possible changes to the land-use permit	Refer to Table 4-2	Email with link to the MVLWB Public Registry site with the complete application, follow up if required	As required
Ongoing engagement	Inform parties of ongoing activities within the ROW	Refer to Table 4-2	As requested, including emails, phone calls and in-person meetings or information sessions	As required

## 4.2 PARTIES TO BE ENGAGED

NTPC has identified a number of aboriginal, municipal, territorial and federal governments and governmental organizations as parties to be engaged as part of the ROW Brushing, Maintenance and Anchor Assessment land-use permit and water licence application. These parties and organizations are presented in Table 4-2.

**Table 4-2: Parties to be Engaged**

<b>Organization</b>
Akaiicho IMA Implementation Office
Athabasca Denesuline Nation
Dene Nation
Deninu K'ue First Nation
Fort Resolution Metis Council
Fort Smith Metis Council
GNWT - ENR - South Slave Region - Fort Smith
GNWT - INF
GNWT - Lands - South Slave Region - Fort Smith
Hamlet of Fort Resolution
Hay River Metis Government Council
Katloodeeche First Nation
Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation - Wildlife, Lands and Environment
Nonacho Lake Fishing Camp
North Slave Metis Alliance
Northwest Territory Metis Nation
Salt River First Nations
Smith Landing First Nation
Taltson Bay Big Pike Lodge
Town of Fort Smith
West Point First Nation
Yellowknives Dene First Nation

## 5 FOLLOW-UP REPORTING

During engagement activities, NTPC will track comments, concerns, or inputs, received relating to a permitted or licensed activity and will provide a summary as detailed in Section 4 above. In order to process comments, concerns and input throughout the engagement process, NTPC will endeavor to respond in a timely manner, respecting the nature of the input.

Reporting on an engagement after it has been completed is an important step in the engagement process. All Engagement Logs will acknowledge those that participated and will provide an accurate record of the engagement process, and how final decisions were reached.

### 5.1 ENGAGEMENT RECORD

A summary of all engagement undertaken for the Application is listed in the Engagement Record. The Engagement Record includes an entry for each engagement, including the following information:

- Date of engagement;
- Name of party or group;
- Format of engagement;
- Individuals attending;
- Issue or topic of discussion;
- Comments received by NTPC; and
- Description of issues that were jointly resolved or which remain outstanding.

Relevant documents from each engagement will also be included in the Engagement Record including presentations, handouts and posters.

## 6 COMMUNICATING THE PLAN

Communicating the Engagement Plan is an important element to the success of the engagement process. NTPC intends to use engagement methods already familiar to them but also recognizes that not all potentially affected parties are the same and that what might work for one particular group or individual may not be the best method of engagement for another. NTPC is open to applying methods that work best for a particular situation and affected party in order to keep lines of communication open, build rapport, and establish trust.

## 7 PLAN REVIEW

It is important that engagement efforts be monitored. Where a method does not appear to be effective or when the scope of importance of an issue changes, it will be necessary to modify the Engagement Plan. Evaluating the effectiveness of the engagement process is a fundamental part of the Engagement Plan as it is important to understand what was done well and what could be improved upon moving forward. NTPC and the affected parties will assess the effectiveness of its engagement efforts over the course of time and will make necessary changes on a case by case basis. Any revisions to the Engagement Plan will be forwarded to the MVLWB.