

December 11, 2018

Mr. Joe Mackenzie  
Chair  
Wek'èezhì Land and Water Board  
1 - 4905 48TH STREET  
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 353

Dear Mr. Mackenzie:

**Tł̥chq̣ All Season Road - James Creek Highway Alignment and Gravesite Mitigation Measures**

In an effort to identify potential areas of cultural interest and concern related to the proposed Tł̥chq̣ All Season Road (TASR), the Government of Northwest Territories - Department of Infrastructure (GNWT-INF) have engaged with the Tł̥chq̣ Government, as well as commissioned several archaeological impact assessments and Traditional Knowledge studies. As a result of these efforts, a potential gravesite concern was raised at the James Creek crossing. A brief history of relevant events is outlined below:

- GNWT-INF hired Stantec in 2014 to conduct an archaeological assessment of the proposed TASR right-of-way (ROW) (Stantec 2014). No archaeological or grave sites were identified at the James Creek crossing during these investigations.
- The Tł̥chq̣ Government (2014) provided a Traditional Knowledge Study for the proposed TASR. Although graves are mentioned in the report it states that: *"No burial sites were identified in immediate proximity to the proposed development area."*
- GNWT-INF conducted an elders water crossing workshop and alignment tour in October 2017. During the site visit of James Creek, Elders indicated that a gravesite may be located near the James Creek bridge. The area identified was the top of a hill on the north bank of the Creek and, east of the bridge



crossing. Although a grave feature was not identified during the low-level helicopter examination of the hill, Elders indicated the grave should be identified if possible at permitting time.

- GNWT-INF hired Golder Associates Ltd. (Golder 2018) in August of 2018 to visit the James Creek crossing in an attempt to locate the reported gravesite as part of additional archaeological assessments of the TASR. The hilltop area and location coordinates provided by the Tłıchǫ Government were examined with a community member; however, no evidence of a grave were observed.

Following further discussions between GNWT-INF and the Tłıchǫ Government on November 20, 2018, Territorial Archaeologists at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Center (PWNHC) were contacted by Golder on December 3, 2018 to identify appropriate mitigation measures regarding the reported grave at the James Creek crossing as they pertain to the Mackenzie Valley Land Use Regulations (MVLUR) and standard conditions as required in the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board (MVLWB) Land Use Permits.

It was determined that although an exact grave location is not known, a site boundary can be defined around the edge of the hilltop that encompasses the most likely area where the potential grave occurs. The boundary of the hill top is located approximately 24 m from the edge of the proposed road ROW, 54 m from the road centreline, and 105 m of the bridge location.

The PWNHC (N. Smethurst, pers. comm., December 3, 2018) indicated that the 24 m minimum avoidance distance between the road ROW and the edge of the hill is acceptable on the condition that:

- 1) the ROW is clearly demarcated during construction and absolutely no activity occurs beyond this boundary; and that
- 2) a community member and qualified archaeologist be on site to monitor the bridge/road construction to ensure avoidance of the hilltop and to address any chance finds should they occur.

These proposed mitigation measures were reviewed by GNWT-INF and the Tłıchǫ Government on December 5, 2018 and agreed to be acceptable with the provision



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that a final examination be carried out of the landform containing the potential grave. This examination would occur in conjunction with construction monitoring prior to any earthworks by the community member and archaeologist.

### Closure

The GNWT-INF trusts that the information provided in this letter is sufficient and looks forward to working collaboratively with all stakeholders for the successful completion of the TASR.

Please find attached a signatory page for all relevant stakeholders to sign indicating agreement with mitigation measures as proposed. Should you wish to discuss the proposed TASR project at any time, you may contact me at (867) 767-9089 ext. 31194 or by email at Michael\_Conway@gov.nt.ca at your earlier convenience.

Sincerely,

Michael Conway  
Regional Superintendent  
North Slave Region

Attachment: Signatory page

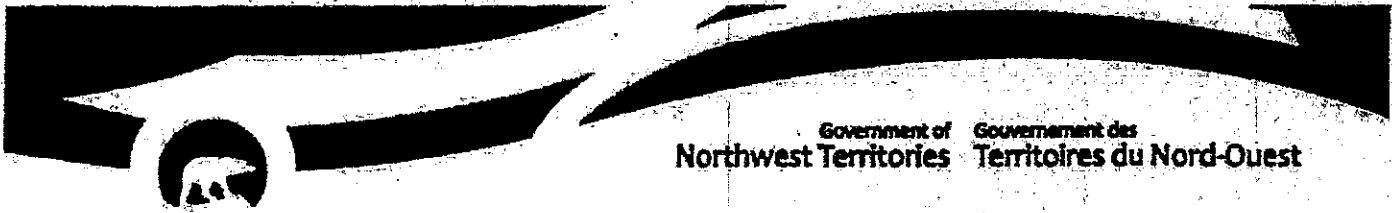
### References

Golder Associates Ltd. 2018. Tłı̄ch̄o All-Weather Road – 2018 Archaeological Field Assessment Permit No. 2014-009. Interim Report on File with Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Center, Yellowknife.

Smethurst, Naomi. Assessment Archaeologist. NWT Cultural Places Program. Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre. Yellowknife, NT. Email correspondence December 3, 2018.

Stantec Consulting Ltd. 2014. Archaeological Impact Assessment Tłı̄ch̄o All-Weather Road. Permit No. 2014-009. Report on File with Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Center, Yellowknife.

Tłı̄ch̄o Government. 2014. Traditional Knowledge Study for the Proposed All-Season Road to Whatl. Tłı̄ch̄o Research and Training Institute. Behchokò, NT.



The Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Infrastructure, with the support of the Tłı̨chǫ Government and Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Center hereby agree that the mitigation measures included in the letter dated December 11, 2018 are appropriate and acceptable to address concerns regarding the potential grave at the James Creek crossing.

Michael Conway

Name

Signature

Date

*[Handwritten signature of Michael Conway]*

2018/12/12

GNWT - Dept. of Infrastructure  
Representing

Name

Signature

Date

Glen Mackay - Territorial Archaeologist

*[Handwritten signature of Glen Mackay]*

2018/12/12

GNWT - ECE - Culture & Heritage Division  
Representing

Name

Signature

Date

Tammy Steinhilber - Deschambeault

*[Handwritten signature of Tammy Steinhilber]*

Dec. 20, 2018

Tłı̨chǫ Government - DCLP  
Representing