

MVLWB

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MACKENZIE VALLEY LAND AND WATER BOARD

January, February, March 2009

Nahendeh Gondi News of Our Land



Message from the Executive Director

Wanda Anderson



ED Wanda Anderson at the MVLWB display booth.

MVLWB file photo

Welcome to the spring edition of Nahendi Ghondi. The warm weather and extended hours of sunlight have finally arrived!

Understanding the NWT's regulatory regime can be challenging, so in the next few paragraphs I'll provide an overview of the structure of the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board (MVLWB).

The MVLWB is made up of three regional land and water boards or panels: the Gwich'in Land and Water Board (GLWB), the Sahtu Land and Water Board (SLWB), and the Wek'eezhii Land and Water Board (WLWB).

Both the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Settlement Agreement (1992) and the Sahtu Dene and Metis Comprehensive Land Claim Settlement Agreement (1993) call for the establishment of a land and water board for their respective settlement regions. The GLWB, the SLWB, and the MVLWB were consequently established through the enactment of the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act in 1998 to regulate the use of land and waters and the deposit of waste in the Mackenzie Valley. With the signing of the Tlicho Land Claims and Self-Government Agreement, the WLWB was created to perform the same functions as the other boards for its region.

Each board issues land use permits and water licences for their respective areas. They work with each other but are independent agencies. Each has its own board of directors.

The MVLWB has 20 directors—five from each of the regional boards and five who are not part of any regional panel.

The MVLWB issues permits and licences under certain circumstances. If an application crosses regional boundaries, the Chair convenes a transboundary panel to handle it. For applications in an area with no settled land claims, the Chair convenes

a section 103 panel to review the project; this will continue until the balance of the land claims are settled in the Mackenzie Valley.

The MVLWB also ensures consistency in the application of regulatory legislation amongst the regional boards.

This edition of the newsletter begins a series about the regional boards by featuring an interview with Leonard De Bastien. Leonard is a Geographic Information System Technician with the Gwich'in Land and Water Board

Wanda Anderson
MVLWB Executive Director

In This Issue

Nahendeh Gondi (Our Land) is the newsletter of the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board (MVLWB). In this edition, you'll find an article about a vital part of our application review process – the Closure and Reclamation Plan.

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Putting the Gwich'in on the Map

An Interview with Leonard De Bastien of the Gwich'in Land and Water Board



NG – Nahendeh Gondi

LD – Leonard De Bastien

NG: Tell us about your life.

LD: I was born and raised in Inuvik and left for about ten years. I lived in the Yukon, BC, and Alberta from 1985 to 1995. In those days in Inuvik, we had the government side and the army side and on the west was the native side of town. A lot of the hard core west-enders won't move out of that area.

NG: Have you had much experience on the land?

LD: There was not too much of that in my childhood but a lot in my later years. Hunting is the main part of my activity on the land, and I do a fair amount of camping.

NG: You are a GeoScience Information System Technician. What got you started in the field of map making?

LD: In 1993 and 1994 I did tree plotting in Pelly Crossing. We were mapping an area for a chipper system that they wanted to use for electricity. We did a lot of hiking into the hills where we measured trees and tree plots. I did some mapping with the computer program called PAMAP. It was through a company that was owned by the Council for Yukon First Nations and that is where my interest in mapping began. Later on, when things were slow and they were coming to the end of the work, I applied for a project in Inuvik with Gwich'in Geographics. I got the job and I moved up here

in 1995. That's when I really got into mapping.

NG: Your time at Pelly Crossing must have been in the days before computers.

LD: The technology was really new and at first I didn't even know how to turn on a computer. I started working with Windows DOS format and it went from Windows 95 to 98 to 2000 and up to XP. It was in Inuvik that I learned to run Macs and how to do support on them.

NG: What sort of training and education did you receive?

LD: Most of it was on-the-job training. I learned just by watching how people did things. It was the same with technical support on the computers—I learned from what other people showed me.

NG: How was the Gwich'in Land and Water Board (GLWB) created?

LD: Land claims were negotiated up to 1992 and signed off by Robert Alexie [current Executive Director of the GLWB], Willard Hagen [current Chair of the MVLWB], and others. It gave us certain rights and obliged the federal government to let the native organizations and the local people have a say in what happens in the Gwich'in Settlement Area. The GLWB is one of the avenues through which everyone has a say.

NG: Has this changed the way land use decisions are made?

LD: Most definitely. A lot of people—such as the band

organizations and the Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC)—make comments on projects. The GLWB is an avenue for companies that want to work within the private lands that the GTC controls.

NG: What is the relationship between the GLWB and the Gwich'in Tribal Council?

LD: We have a very good relationship with the GTC. We deal with their land administration people who tell us what they would like to see in our permits. In the past, they often wanted conditions that we couldn't handle because there was no way of measuring or enforcing them. Gradually the GTC learned what they could negotiate with the proponents.

NG: What projects have you and the GLWB handled over the years?

LD: We have dealt with some oil and gas activity and a lot of dispositions for the hauling and storage of gravel. For the natural gas pipeline that now runs into Inuvik, people needed to test soil samples along the pipeline route and at the location of the workers' camp. Much of the activity involved prospecting to see how viable the area might be for their project.

NG: How does your work help the GLWB?

LD: People send us maps and we look at the areas where they want to work. Then we produce maps for the GLWB and for anybody

who wants to look at the projects. We send maps if they require them. Everything is available for the public to view on our website at www.GLWB.com.

NG: What is it about the Gwich'in Settlement Area and the Gwich'in people that is unique?

LD: Every place has something different and everybody wants something different. The Gwich'in people are very active in business and they want to see a lot of production and they like to see things happen.



Gwich'in Settlement Region

Activity Review

January – March 2009

New Applications Received

- The Board received 9 applications and issued 13 land use permits. One water licence received ministerial approval.

Land Use Permit and Water Licence Activities

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Applications Received	11	9	8	9	37
LUPs Issued	1	8	3	13	25
WL's Issued	1		1		2
Amendments (renewals, extensions, storage authorizations)	4	11	9	9	33
Referrals to Environmental Assessment		6			6
Closures	9	13	11	4	37
Report and Plan Approvals by Board	2	6	1	3	12



NEW LAND USE PERMITS

1	MV2008X0030	Department of National Defense	Advanced winter warfare training
2	MV2008F0024	NWT Power Corp.	Winter Roads - Bluefish hydro
3	MV2008C0029	ATW Resources Inc.	Diamond Exploration - Mackay Lake
4	MV2008Q0034	John Bjornson Construction Ltd.	Quarrying near Pine Point
5	MV2009X0002	Deton Cho Corp.	Drill Training Program near Yellowknife
6	MV2008F0027	NWT Power Corp.	Winter Road - Taltson Hydro
7	MV2008Q0035	Rowe's Construction	Quarrying - Hwy 1 km 191
8	MV2008J0031	Walt Humphries	Exploration camp - Banting Lake
9	MV2008Q0025	Rowe's Construction	Quarrying - Hay River
10	MV2008Q0026	West Coast Energy Inc.	Quarrying - SW of Fisherman Lake
11	MV2009X0005	GNWT - ENR Forest Management Division	Fire risk research NE of Ft. Providence
12	MV2009Q0003	Berton Construction & Rentals	Quarrying - Fort Smith
13	MV2009Q0004	Borderline Enterprise	Quarrying - Fort Smith

EXTENSIONS / RENEWALS

14	MV2002L2-0019	North American Tungsten	CanTung Mine - renewal approved by Minister January 2009
15	MV2004F0022	Devon Canada Corporation	Extension - Barge landing and access road
16	MV2005W0033	Edwin Lindberg	Extension - Woodcutting - Lindberg Landing
17	MV2004Q0009	Fort Smith Construction NT Ltd.	Extension - Quarrying - Fort Smith
18	MV2003C0050	5073 N.W.T. Limited (Seabridge Gold Corp.)	Extension - Mineral Exploration - Mackay Lake
19	MV2004C0003	Peregrine Diamonds Ltd.	Assignment and Extension - Mineral Exploration
20	MV2004C0001	Peregrine Holding Ltd.	Extension - Mineral Exploration - Dunsmuir Lake
21	MV2004C0002	Peregrine Diamonds Ltd.	Extension - Mineral Exploration - IM Claims

About the Gwich'in

Contributed by William Firth, Gwich'in Language Manager,
Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute



Photo – Robert Alexie

Gwich'in means 'people who live', which is why you often see a place name preceding this word. For example, Tet'lit Gwich'in and Ehdiitat Gwitchin refer to residents of Fort McPherson and Aklavik respectively.

The first contact that Gwich'in had with non-natives was in the mid-1700th century when a Gwich'in discovered a chip of wood on the Mackenzie River that had come from construction being done upriver by early explorers - presumably the Northwest Company.

Many of the people who primarily lived on the land all year migrated to the communities by the end of the 1970s as the economy had changed and many of their children were attending school. The number of Gwich'in living within the Gwich'in Settlement Region totals more than 2,500.

The Gwich'in people are part of the Athabaskan language group. Many of the Gwich'in people live primarily in Alaska, with three dialectal groups living in the northern Yukon and northwestern Northwest Territories. Many elders still speak

Greetings and Farewell

1

Angela Plautz

Angela has been with the MVLWB since 2004 and returned from maternity leave in January 2009. She has taken on a new role as Regulatory Manager. The Regulatory Manager's duties include overseeing the regulatory review process, monitoring regulatory compliance, and helping with the communications strategy for the MVLWB. She looks forward to working with the section 103 and regional panels

2

Adrian Paradis

We say goodbye to Senior Regulatory Officer Adrian Paradis. Adrian has been with the Board since October 2001 and was our Senior Regulatory Officer when he left in February 2009. Adrian now works for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans as a Fisheries Management Biologist.



“ *The wolf is like a caretaker of the land - keeping it clean and patrolling its territory.* ”

Robert Alexie, Executive Director, GLWB



Web site Update

We've added a new link to our website <http://nwtboardforum.com>

The link takes you to the NWT Board Forum web site — a source for general information about the resource management system in the Northwest Territories. It is a great tool for anyone who wants to learn about how the regulatory system works. From this web site, the public and developers can access the web sites and contact information for the individual resource management boards across the NWT.

The NWT Board Forum seeks to improve and maintain effective lines of communication between its members, resolve common issues, and share expertise. Members include northern land and water, environmental assessment, land use planning and resource management boards, as well as the National Energy Board, the Government of the Northwest Territories and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

The objective of the NWT Board Forum is to give industry, government, and other organizations a structured forum for engagement, with the intent of providing an integrated and coordinated resource management system for the Northwest Territories.



GWICH'IN
LAND AND WATER BOARD

their traditional language both in their homes and at community functions. The Gwich'in language is taught in the school system to students between 4–18 years of age.

The Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim was settled in 1992 with the signing ceremony taking place on April 22, 1992. Since this time, the Gwich'in have set aside this day as a Civic Holiday within the Gwich'in Settlement Region (GSR) for all Gwich'in beneficiaries.

Many people still practice their culture of hunting and fishing throughout the year. Their main source of subsistence food comes from the land, rivers, and lakes. This includes animals such as caribou, moose, fish, waterfowl, and various small animals. Some trappers continue to trap on a part-time basis throughout the year.

During the summer months, people continue to pick various plants and berries found either along the highway or along waterways. These are either used for food or as a medicine at times when sickness is present.



Photo – Robert Alexie

IT'S WHAT WE DO:

Informative articles about the MVLWB.

The Closure and Reclamation Plan

Ensuring Accountability - Protecting the Future

Before a proponent can receive a water licence or a land use permit, the company must submit a cleanup and restoration plan (CRP). The CRP addresses what will happen at the end of a project and it's the goal of the CRP is to reduce or eliminate harm to the environment and people after the end of the project. The CRP also anticipates unexpected and/or temporary closure of the operation.

The CRP used to be called the abandonment and restoration plan. The previous title was misleading because it inferred that companies were simply turning their backs on unsightly and dangerous work sites. In the past, sometimes developers did leave disused sites littered with machinery, vehicles, 205-L drums, buildings, and toxic landfills—ugly messes that could contaminate the water, soil, and air and scar the landscape long into the future. Those days are gone; now the CRP shows how the developer will restore the land as close as possible to its original condition.

Not only do CRPs protect the environment, they save tax payers from financing site cleanup. Boards require a security deposit from the developer plus a binding commitment that they will pay for any environmental damage beyond the amount of the security.

Those who write the terms and conditions for permits and licences study applications and determine appropriate closure and reclamation measures. For instance, if a project disturbs the land, the contractor must save the organic soil stripped from the excavation area and return it before the expiry date of the Permit. Contractors may also



Excavator preparing site for the installation of a shaft cap, part of Con Mine C and R Plan, 2007.

MVLWB file photo

have to backfill sumps, restore natural drainage, and re-contour waste rock so it blends with the shape of the land.

Not all reclamation work waits until the end of a project; 'progressive reclamation' is a condition built into permits and licences. It calls for reclamation activities to take place during the life of the project.

For mining developments, operators adhere to Indian and Northern Affairs Canada's Mine Site Reclamation Policy for the Northwest Territories. The policy is based on the Whitehorse Mining Initiative definition of 'reclamation' which is:

"returning mine sites and affected areas to viable and, wherever practicable, self-sustaining ecosystems that are compatible with a healthy environment and with human activities."

Typical issues that a mine site CRP addresses are waste water, contaminated soils, buildings, and mobile equipment.

For more information and to view CRPs on our Public Registry, phone 669-0506 or email permits@mvlwb.com.

Getting the Word Out

Who We Are

The Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act established the Gwich'in Land and Water Board, Sahtu Land and Water Board, the Wek'eezhi Land and Water Board, and the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board (MVLWB).

Four members and a chairperson sit on the regional boards; each is a member of the MVLWB.

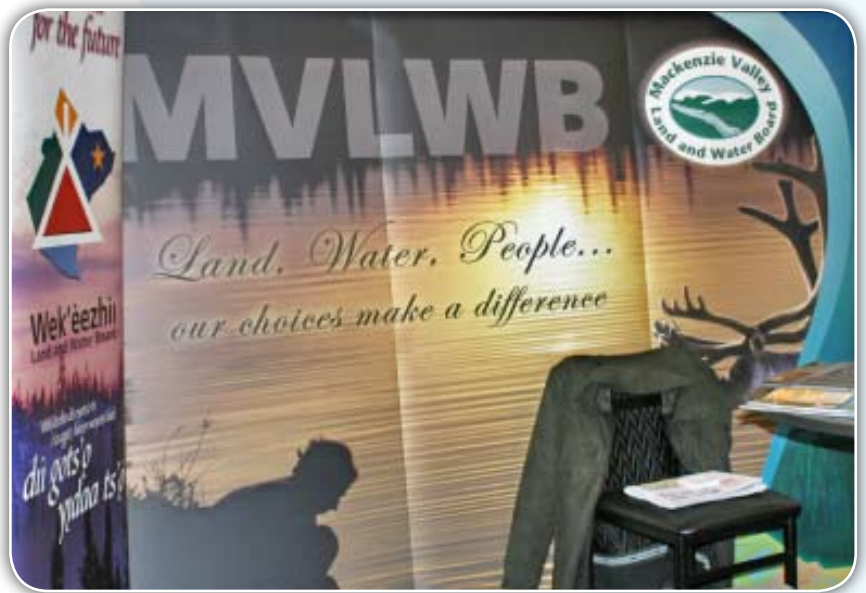
A chairperson is the chief executive officer of the MVLWB or regional board as the case may be. The Executive Director (ED) manages the day-to-day affairs of the Board or a regional board.

Information Material Available to the Public

- Land Use Permits Explained
- Water Licences Explained
- MVLWB Brochure
- Desktop calendar for 2009
- DVD – twelve-minute overview of the MVLWB
- Annual Activity Report for 2007-2008 fiscal year
- Newsletters



The MVLWB has created Power Point presentations, a DVD, and other material to keep the public informed of its activities and its role in the NWT regulatory regime. The Board also has an information booth for use at conventions and trade shows. Contact us for news of upcoming presentations or for a board representative to talk to your organization.



MVLWB display booth.

MVLWB file photo



Sharing Responsibility –
Working together to make the best decisions for the land, water, and people.

For more information please contact the MVLWB:

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Thank you to the photographers who contributed to this newsletter.