



# Sahtu Land Use Planning Board

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August 3, 2012

**To: Distribution List**

**Re: Preparation for Tri-Partite Meeting and Final Land Use Plan**

Dear Invitees:

In preparation for the Tri-Partite meeting scheduled for September 6-7, 2012 in Yellowknife, the Sahtu Land Use Planning Board would like to provide additional guidance for those preparing comments and clarify expectations on the intended meeting's outcomes.

The Sahtu Land Use Plan has been 15 years in the making. The upcoming Tri-Partite Meeting will be the final meeting hosted by SLUPB in developing the Sahtu Land Use Plan. Since 1997, the SLUPB has obtained input from a far-reaching spectrum of Sahtu stakeholders and prepared 3 separate Draft Plans. Each of the drafts has been through a rigorous public comment period with ample opportunity for SSI, GNWT, AANDC and other interested parties to provide input. The most recent draft was unveiled in July 2010. Since that time the SLUPB has carefully laid out its process to complete the Plan. This included a Public Hearing in May 2011 as well as three public technical workshops over the fall and winter of 2011/12 to collaboratively work through implementation issues. This was a critical period that brought key issues and concerns forward, and all parties had the opportunity to hear and respond to each other's comments.

The Tri-Partite meeting represents an important milestone, moving the SLUPB into a new phase of action. Procedural fairness dictates that at this critical stage the planning process remain open and transparent. The SLUPB has adhered to this principle very carefully throughout plan development. Therefore the board will be focusing the agenda of this meeting on existing issues that have been identified in the process to date. The SLUPB will consider comments and entertain discussions that are consistent with the Plan's vision and that move the SLUPB and the approving Parties closer to consensus on previously identified outstanding issues.

All parties should understand that new issues will not be considered at this meeting or in the Board's final revisions to the plan. The introduction of new issues at this time would require the Board to provide all parties in the planning process the opportunity to respond to those new issues, perpetuating the cycle of Plan development. By closing the door on public comment, the SLUPB is signaling its intent to prepare the Final Draft based on what it has heard to date.

The SLUPB is confident that the outcome of the Tri-Partite meeting will contribute to a Final Draft Plan worthy of approval by SSI, GNWT, and AANDC. The SLUPB must balance the interests of the approving parties, and other participants in the process, and must always keep the interests of the communities, for which planning was established, foremost in mind. However this will only be achieved if the three approving parties attend the meeting in a cooperative spirit of achieving the same mutual intent.

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The Board asks that you respect the comment deadline of August 24<sup>th</sup> so that all parties have the time to review and digest each other's comments and prepare effectively for discussions on equal footing. The Board will set the final agenda for the meeting following receipt and consideration of all Parties' comments, and will distribute the agenda and meeting logistics in the days prior to the meeting.

Planning is a cycle. We can never create a perfect Plan, but we can create a good and effective Plan; one that will become more effective as we learn through experience. The Board is required to carry out a comprehensive review every 5 years, and there is the opportunity to amend the Plan at any time before then if needed. There is flexibility built into the Plan, including the ability to grant exceptions. The Board is certain that the Final Draft Plan can be fairly and reasonably implemented.

The SLUPB is looking forward to a productive meeting which will advance land use planning in the Sahtu region. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me, or Heidi Wiebe (Plan Development Lead) or Scott Paszkiewicz (Land Use Planner/Executive Director) at the numbers and emails listed below.

Mahsi,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather Bourassa".

Heather Bourassa, Chairperson  
Sahtu Land Use Planning Board

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**Distribution List**

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	Marc Lange, Manager, Environment and Conservation Division	Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
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	Willard Hagen, Chairperson	Mackenzie Valley Land & Water Board
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