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March 17, 2009

The Sahtu Land Use Planning Board
c/o Heidi Wiebe
Plan Development Lead
16 – 515 18th Ave. S.W.
Calgary, AB
T2S 0C6

Dear Board Members;

We write to urge the Sahtu Land Use Planning Board (the "Board") to approve the Great Bear Lake Watershed Management Plan, incorporate it into the draft Sahtu Land Use Plan, consult as needed, finalize the draft Plan, and send it to SSI and the Territorial and Federal Ministers for approval as soon as possible.

If a draft Sahtu Land Use Plan cannot be completed in the near future, we would like to discuss the possibility of the Board's forwarding the Great Bear Lake Watershed portion of the Sahtu Land Use Plan to SSI and the Territorial and Federal Ministers for fast track approval, given the timing issues set out below.

Time is real issue here. The Sahtu Land Use Plan is the heart of the resource management regime negotiated under the Sahtu Dene and Metis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement (the "Agreement"). Those who approved and ratified the Agreement — including our leaders, our people and the Parliament of Canada — surely did so on the assumption that the Sahtu Land Use Plan would be approved and implemented quickly, as part of the resource management regime that was negotiated and approved in the Agreement.

We still have no approved Sahtu Land Use Plan 16 years after the ratification of the Agreement. Yet resource development is allowed to proceed, and rights to our traditional lands are given, without the terms and conditions that would be required by a land use plan, to others. Our traditional lands do not enjoy the protection envisaged by Part 25.2 of the Agreement. We remind the Board that the agreed purpose of land use planning is as set out in 25.2.4 of the Agreement: **"the purpose of land use planning is to protect and promote the existing and future well-being of the residents and communities of the settlement**


area having regard to the interests of all Canadians". That purpose — and the purpose of the larger resource management regime negotiated in the Agreement — is *not* now being achieved. It will not be achieved until the Sahtu Land Use Plan is completed and approved. In effect, the Agreement has not yet been fully implemented.

From 2002 to 2005, Déline worked with the other members of the Great Bear Lake Working Group to develop the Great Bear Lake Watershed Management Plan. That Plan represented the consensus of all members of the Great Bear Lake Working Group, including representatives of the Federal and Territorial Governments. In May 2005, the Great Bear Lake Working Group recommended that Plan to the Board, as it then existed, for incorporation into the draft Sahtu Land Use Plan, and potential fast track approval. In January 2006, at a large community workshop, Deline again presented that Plan to the Board — with unanimous community approval — for incorporation into the draft Sahtu Land Use Plan and approval by the responsible authorities. Yet, with the greatest respect, we're not aware of significant progress on the Sahtu Land Use Plan since that time (almost four years). As set out in the Déline Renewable Resource Council's letter to John T'Seleie of May 29/07, the subsequent draft of the Sahtu Land Use Plan was a confusing amalgamation of different planning approaches that appeared to loose sight of the agreed purpose of land use planning as quoted above. Its partial incorporation of the Great Bear Lake Watershed Management Plan was unsatisfactory.


We would like to sit down with the Board and its staff in the near future to consider the next draft of the Sahtu Land Use Plan. We would also like, at that time, to discuss a work plan to complete the draft Sahtu Land Use Plan and do everything within our collective power to secure the approval of the Plan during your current tenure. We realize that the Great Bear Lake Watershed Management Plan will require minor amendments, given the passage of almost four years since it was recommended to the Board. We suggest discussing any needed amendments to the Management Plan with you when you have incorporated that Plan as drafted into the Sahtu Land Use Plan, and when you are ready to discuss the next draft of the Sahtu Land Use Plan with Déline residents.

We wish you all the best and look forward to hearing from you in the near future. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Raymond Tutcho
Chief, Deline First Nation



Peter Menacho
President, Deline Land Corp.



Russel Kenny
President, Deline Renewable Resources Council

cc: Freda Taniton - Sahtu Secretariat Inc.