



MAR 14 2018

MLA DANIEL MCNEELY  
MLA SAHTU**Oral Question 165-18(3)**  
**Land Tenure Engagement Sessions**

This letter is in reference to the Oral Question raised on February 26, 2018 regarding land tenure engagement sessions.

You enquired whether land tenure engagement sessions were planned by the Department of Lands (the Department) for Colville Lake and Deline. At this time there are no scheduled dates for land tenure engagement sessions in Colville Lake and Deline, however it is the Department's intent to visit all communities through its normal course of responsibilities. The session in Tulita, which had to be cancelled due to a storm, has been rescheduled for March 21, 2018.

You asked whether willingness can be confirmed through the Sahtu Bilateral dated June, 2015 for a joint shared collaboration of Land Officers. The Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated (SSI) and Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) Intergovernmental Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Section 6, speaks to "Initial Priority Subjects" for cooperation and discussion between the SSI and GNWT. The Department has taken several steps to place priority on Section 6:

- Section 6(i) (capacity development): the Department has committed to ensuring the Resource Management Officer (RMO) I training program remains a key component of the day to day operations of the Sahtu Regional Office. Although trainees are hired into term positions, RMO I program positions are funded on an indeterminate basis and will continue to help build and maintain capacity in the regions in the future.
- Section 6(iv) (land and resource management): the Department continues to work towards ensuring resource management is fully integrated with Sahtu organizations and residents of the Sahtu Region. The Department works closely and collaboratively with the Sahtu Land and Water Board and the Sahtu Land Use Planning Board to ensure environmental mitigations placed on developers are adequate and complied with.

.../2

The community land tenure engagement sessions are also an effort to ensure the public is aware of the Department's responsibilities and who can be contacted when concerns arise with respect to managing the land. Land Officers play a key role in this, and it is the Department's intention to ensure that Land Officers are in the communities reaching out to Sahtu residents. The Department will continue to collaborate and share knowledge with community governments in a meaningful way.

Lastly, you enquired whether the Department is planning further community engagement on the proposed amendments to the *Northwest Territories Land Act* and the *Commissioner's Land Act*. Between July 20 and September 30, 2017, Departmental representatives held open houses and met with Indigenous governments and organizations in Norman Wells, Inuvik, Fort Simpson, Hay River, Hay River Reserve, Fort Smith, Yellowknife, and N'dilo. I can confirm that no further community engagement sessions are planned by the Department. Indigenous governments and organizations will be formally consulted on the draft Bill prior to its introduction in the Legislative Assembly. Through the legislative process, once Cabinet has authorized a Bill and it has passed Second Reading in the Assembly, Committee has the opportunity to seek the view of the public or specific stakeholders via public or other special meetings.

Thank you.



Louis Sebert  
Minister of Lands

- c. Mr. Gary Bohnet, Principal Secretary
- Mr. Tim Mercer, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly
- Mr. David Hastings, Legislative Coordinator