



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

3rd Session

Day 17

18th Assembly

HANSARD

Tuesday, February 27, 2018

Pages 3489 – 3546

The Honourable Jackson Lafferty, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

Members of the Legislative Assembly

Speaker
Hon. Jackson Lafferty
(Monfwi)

Hon. Glen Abernethy

(Great Slave)
Government House Leader
Minister of Health and Social Services
Minister Responsible for Seniors
Minister Responsible for Persons with Disabilities
Minister Responsible for the Public Utilities Board

Mr. Tom Beaulieu

(Tu Nedhe-Willideh)

Mr. Frederick Blake

(Mackenzie Delta)

Hon. Caroline Cochrane

(Range Lake)
Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs
Minister Responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission
Minister Responsible for Northwest Territories Housing Corporation
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women
Lead Responsibility for Addressing Homelessness

Ms. Julie Green

(Yellowknife Centre)

Hon. Bob McLeod

(Yellowknife South)
Premier
Minister of Executive and Indigenous Affairs
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations

Hon. Robert McLeod

(Inuvik Twin Lakes)
Deputy Premier
Minister of Finance
Minister of Environment and Natural Resources
Lead Responsibility for Infrastructure

Mr. Daniel McNeely

(Sahtu)

Hon. Alfred Moses

(Inuvik Boot Lake)
Minister of Education, Culture and Employment
Minister Responsible for Youth

Mr. Michael Nadli

(Deh Cho)

Mr. Herbert Nakimayak

(Nunakput)

Mr. Kevin O'Reilly

(Frame Lake)

Hon. Wally Schumann

(Hay River South)
Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment
Minister of Infrastructure

Hon. Louis Sebert

(Thebacha)
Minister of Justice
Minister of Lands
Minister Responsible for the Northwest Territories Power Corporation
Minister Responsible for Public Engagement and Transparency

Mr. R.J. Simpson

(Hay River North)

Mr. Kieron Testart

(Kam Lake)

Mr. Shane Thompson

(Nahendeh)

Mr. Cory Vanthuynne

(Yellowknife North)

Officers

Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. Tim Mercer

Deputy Clerk

Ms. Sarah Kay

Committee Clerks

Ms. Gail Bennett
Ms. Jennifer Franki-Smith (trainee)

Law Clerks

Ms. Sheila MacPherson
Mr. Glen Rutland
Ms. Alyssa Holland

Box 1320
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories
Tel: (867) 767-9010 Fax: (867) 920-4735 Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0784
<http://www.assembly.gov.nt.ca>

Published under the authority of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MINISTERS' STATEMENTS	3489
38-18(3) – Minimum Wage Increase (Moses).....	3489
39-18(3) – Community Government Web-Based Training (Cochrane)	3489
40-18(3) – Minister Late for the House (B. McLeod).....	3490
MEMBERS' STATEMENTS.....	3490
Priorities of Inuit on the Arctic Policy Framework (Nakimayak).....	3490
Road to Resources - Slave Geological Province (Vanhuynne).....	3491
Arctic Winter Games Athlete Selection (Thompson).....	3491
Northwest Territories Energy Strategy (O'Reilly)	3492
K'ambaa Carnival (Nadli).....	3492
Sahtu Gotine Regional Health and Social Services Centre and Canyon Creek Project Progress (McNeely)	3493
Innovation and Knowledge Economy Development Policies and Programs (Testart)	3493
Mackenzie and Peel River Ferry Services Update (Blake)	3494
Indigenous Overrepresentation in Canada's Jails (Beaulieu)	3494
The Future of Hay River (Simpson)	3495
REPORTS OF STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES	3495
RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY	3500
REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON THE REVIEW OF BILLS	3500
ORAL QUESTIONS.....	3506
RETURNS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS	3514
TABLING OF DOCUMENTS	3514
NOTICES OF MOTION.....	3514
10-18(3) – Extended Adjournment of the House to March 6, 2018 (O'Reilly).....	3514
CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS.....	3514
REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE	3545
ORDERS OF THE DAY	3545

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
Tuesday, February 27, 2018
Members Present

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Blake, Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. McNeely, Hon. Alfred Moses, Mr. Nadli, Mr. Nakimayak, Mr. O'Reilly, Hon. Wally Schumann, Hon. Louis Sebert, Mr. Simpson, Mr. Testart, Mr. Thompson, Mr. Vanthuyne

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackson Lafferty): Masi. Good afternoon, Members. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

Ministers' Statements
**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 38-18(3):
MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE**

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Mr. Speaker, on April 1, 2018, the minimum wage in the Northwest Territories will increase from \$12.50 to \$13.46 per hour, the third highest minimum wage in Canada.

To ensure that our minimum wage continues to work for employees and employers, the minimum wage rate is reviewed by a Minimum Wage Committee every two years. The decision to increase the minimum wage to \$13.46 per hour was informed by options and extensive research provided by the Minimum Wage Committee, including current minimum and average hourly wages in other Canadian jurisdictions, as well as social and economic influences specific to the Northwest Territories.

I am confident that this increase will be both good for workers, who will earn a better wage; and good for business, which will be better able to attract workers for minimum wage positions. Most employers in the Northwest Territories already pay more than the minimum wage because higher wages are required to attract and retain employees here.

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment informed employers of the scheduled increase at the beginning of January to provide time for planning and implementation. The department will continue to inform employers, employees, and the public through advertising and reminders of the increase leading up to April 1st.

Mr. Speaker, this government is committed to maintaining fair and competitive wage rates while encouraging economic activity and supporting small

businesses. I believe the increase to the minimum wage strikes that balance. Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Ministers' statements. Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

**MINISTER'S STATEMENT 39-18(3):
COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT WEB-BASED
TRAINING**

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Mr. Speaker, one of our government's mandate commitments is to implement online delivery of a community government training curriculum to build the capacity of community governments. I would like to inform Members about the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs' progress in the development and implementation of web-based training opportunities for community governments.

Web-based training enables community governments to access training at a reduced cost, lessening both travel expenses and time away for staff. The department's new training opportunities aim to meet the diverse needs of community government learners by offering a variety of ways to learn. There remains a core group of courses delivered in the traditional face-to-face learning environment. However, we now have virtual classrooms where instructor-led, full-length courses are offered. As well, we now offer shorter, self-directed online workshops on a variety of topics that meet the training needs of community governments and their elected officials.

Mr. Speaker, we regularly reach out to community government staff in every region to determine if we should offer additional opportunities to update staff knowledge and skills. Based on this input, we design short webinars, which are broadcast, recorded, and saved online for unlimited future access, as well as video conferences broadcast between our distance training facility in Yellowknife and similar facilities in the regions. These webinars allow us to respond to particular issues in a timely manner. For example, we can deliver a webinar on how to complete a report for a specific federal infrastructure program.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to report that the department, through the School of Community Government, now has two web-based training

programs on the topic of community governance; six workshops for municipal councillors; and six more for Indigenous government councillors. In addition, we now offer full-length courses in bylaw enforcement, basic emergency management, and climate change. The climate change course is helping us meet another mandate commitment, which is to assist community governments as they develop innovative strategies to address the effects of climate change.

I would like to share one student success story. It is about a young Inuvialuit man living in Yellowknife, who had career hopes of one day becoming a municipal bylaw officer. He completed the department's online bylaw enforcement training. The certificate he received, together with other qualifications and his interview skills, helped him secure his current employment as a bylaw officer with one of our municipalities.

Mr. Speaker, our virtual classrooms have been busy this winter, with groups of students taking courses in the areas of community government management and recreation programming. Some of those students have successfully completed their courses, and others will be finished shortly. Prior to the end of the fiscal year, the department expects to bring the total number of online training opportunities available to community governments to 23.

I would like to offer another example of the benefit of this new virtual classroom delivery. A community government staff member needed just one more course to complete her ten-course community finance program. Unable to travel to take the course face-to-face, she began the course online. Thanks to additional one-on-one support she received from her online instructor, she was able to complete her course and has now received full certification in the School of Community Government's Finance Program.

Mr. Speaker, the department is also receiving inquiries from other departments and governments about our self-directed online programming. For example, we are working with the Minister for the Status of Women in the redesign of the Campaign School for Women to promote women running for municipal and Aboriginal Governments. As well, the School of Community Government staff will be meeting with their counterparts from Nunavut's Municipal Training Organization in March. The Nunavut officials are travelling here for the second time to explore partnerships with the Northwest Territories in online course delivery and to discuss our best practices.

Mr. Speaker, we are confident that the department's web-based training will make our courses more accessible and help us build capacity

in all of our community governments. These courses and programs also meet the learning needs of individual students and allow them to gain the skills and knowledge to build their future with community governments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. The Honourable Premier.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 40-18(3):
MINISTER LATE FOR THE HOUSE

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I wish to advise Members that the honourable Glen Abernethy will be late arriving in the House today due to a personal matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Nunakput.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
PRIORITIES OF INUIT ON THE ARCTIC POLICY
FRAMEWORK

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in December 2016 the federal government announced that it would be developing a new Arctic Policy Framework (APF) in collaboration with Indigenous, territorial and provincial partners. I would like share some of the work and feedback that Inuit of Canada are proposing in response to a draft Table of Contents shared at a recent meeting.

The APF proposes four themes, Mr. Speaker:

1. Economy and Trade;
2. Defence, Safety, and Security;
3. Environmental and Scientific Cooperation; and
4. Social and Cultural Cooperation.

Mr. Speaker, the Inuit Circumpolar Council of Canada (ICC) recommends a reorientation of these themes, focusing on Inuit self-determination:

1. Changing "economy and trade" to "sustainable economy and trade," emphasizing the fact that, while the GDP in Canada's Arctic is 150 per cent higher than the Canadian average, most of the wealth generated in the region does not stay in the communities;
2. Changing "defence, safety, and security" to "peace, safety, and security," emphasizing a reorientation from defence to peace;
3. Changing "environmental and scientific cooperation" to "healthy environment, healthy

people," focusing on considering environmental health and Inuit well-being as one, and equal consideration of traditional and scientific knowledge; and finally

4. Changing "social and cultural cooperation" to "Inuit-Crown partnership for social, cultural, and global cooperation," emphasizing meaningful Inuit participation in international agreements and bodies.

Mr. Speaker, the inextricable linkages between issues of sovereignty and sovereign rights in the Arctic and the Inuit's self-determination and other rights require states to accept the presence and role of Inuit as partners in the conduct of international relations in the Arctic. The foundation and projection of Arctic sovereignty and sovereign rights all require healthy and sustainable communities in the Arctic.

Mr. Speaker, there is an opportunity for Indigenous groups in the Arctic to get involved in developing of the new Arctic Policy Framework. The work that ICC has done today is a good example and shows how Inuit division of policy takes shape. I encourage other Indigenous groups to participate in meaningful engagement with federal government and other partners on this important framework. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife North.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ROAD TO RESOURCES - SLAVE GEOLOGICAL PROVINCE

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the dream of a "road to resources" in the North first became part of the national conversation about 70 years ago. It was a dream of economic growth, prosperity and wealth, jobs, and comfortable lifestyles for all Canadians.

Back then, Canada was a very different country. Today, Mr. Speaker, we are resolving land rights and building Indigenous partnerships. We know about climate change and the urgency of reducing our carbon emissions. We know it is essential to manage any resource development responsibly and respectfully.

Something that has not changed, Mr. Speaker, is our need for economic growth. Our early economy largely grew from gold mining. In this century, diamonds have been our biggest economic driver. Unlike our gold mines, our diamond mines were developed within an environmental plan, and a restoration strategy built in.

In the 18th Assembly, we have focused significant energy on the need to grow new economic sectors, but in our economic discussions, we always come back to one fact. For the jobs we need now to build the health centres and schools we need now to afford junior kindergarten and social supports and care for elders that we need now, we can rely on one sector: mining.

That's why I'm speaking today about the road to resources, Mr. Speaker. Specifically, the road to the Slave Geological Province. Just outside our backdoor, the Slave Geological Province is formed of Archean age rock. Around the world, this kind of rock is known to host deposits of diamonds, gold, silver, copper, zinc, and many more important minerals.

From our back door, the Slave Geological Province extends up through Nunavut all the way to the Arctic Ocean. This resource-rich area has the potential to create wealth for us and our sister territory and ultimately to grow into a new national corridor of opportunity for this country.

Any development brings risks and challenges, Mr. Speaker, and we must manage them with our best knowledge and proven practices, but the benefits to our communities and to future generations rely on us to take bold steps and build on our opportunities. Mr. Speaker, the dream started 70 years ago. Let's make it a reality today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Nahendeh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON ARCTIC WINTER GAMES ATHLETE SELECTION

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With our Arctic Winter Games less than a month away, athletes and coaches are excited about getting there to represent Team NWT. Unfortunately, today we will not be talking about this.

Mr. Speaker, during the territorial trials four athletes from the Nahendeh region did not get the chance to compete for a spot, due to no fault of their own. On January 19, 2018, I ran into one of these athletes here in Yellowknife and was informed that he would not be in the Arctic Winter Games. When I asked him about the reason, he said he could not get there due to weather.

I have witnessed him training for the past two years, and the other three. He made every possible attempt to try to attend. The chartered flight was supposed to leave Fort Simpson on Thursday, January 19th, but was unable to land due to fog in Fort Simpson. The trials were delayed due to this cancellation. The athletes were informed that the charter would be arranged for the following morning

and that it would be the last chance to get out. Not wanting to be reliant on the weather, he and another athlete drove from Fort Simpson, arriving in Yellowknife at 2:00 a.m. Friday morning. They went to check in for the flight to Inuvik at 9:00 a.m. and were told that there was a delay due to weather. By 9:30, they were informed that the flight for Inuvik was cancelled.

Once this happened, the athlete contacted the organizers to see if there were options. They were willing to compete on all the required trial events by video and willing to go do back-to-back events.

After he was told they would not entertain this idea, the athlete appealed this decision. The athletes had to wait over three weeks to hear the appeal be denied. He was told weather cannot be appealed. I'm wondering why it took so long, and if this was already in their appeal process. The athlete was directed to appeal to the international committee, asking to see if Team NWT could add a fifth athlete to the roster. They denied the request because they would have to add in an additional spot to each contingent.

Mr. Speaker, this athlete started training for these games right after coming so close to breaking a world record. Then this happened. It's not fair. I have received a number of phone calls from across the NWT and face-to-face meetings saying the same thing: not fair, and why wasn't the government prepared for this type of thing?

The department needs to address this so it doesn't happen in the future. I'll have questions for the Minister later on today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Frame Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NORTHWEST TERRITORIES ENERGY STRATEGY

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. One of the commitments made in the mandate of the 18th Assembly was to create a Northwest Territories Energy Strategy because the previous one expired in 2015. A draft NWT Energy Strategy was finally released to the public on September 25, 2017. It would be fair to say that very few of the standing committee's comments were incorporated into the draft.

The strategy proposes a confusing array of energy targets as follows:

- A 25 per cent reduction of GHG emissions from electricity generation;
- A 10 per cent reduction of GHG emissions from road vehicles;

- A 40 per cent increase in renewable energy use for space heating; and
- A 15 per cent increase in residential commercial government building energy efficiency.

No energy targets were specified for the largest energy user industry. There are no visible links to the Climate Change Strategic Framework, or to any potential carbon tax revenues. No roles are contemplated for the NWT Power Corporation. In the future, the Arctic Energy Alliance receives almost no attention. No specific actions are identified in any detail and no funds are identified for implementation.

The draft energy strategy is overwhelmingly focused on electricity generation, which represents about 10 per cent of the energy used in the NWT and our greenhouse gas emissions. It's difficult to understand the complete failure to address energy use in the industrial sector, which is over half of all Northwest Territories energy use and over 40 per cent of our greenhouse gas emissions.

What's missing is an overall direction to move us toward reducing fossil fuel consumption, not vague statements. I had expected to see something like a bold vision of the Northwest Territories where communities and householders are energy self-sufficient. The Northwest Territories Power Corporation, doing itself out of a job, bolstered Arctic Energy Alliance with resources to build community energy plans leading to self-reliance and programs for householders to conserve energy and switch to renewables. Clear energy targets are needed for each sector that should be related to reduced energy demand, fuel switching, improved efficiencies, and improved technologies. These targets should be linked to GHG reductions in the Climate Change Strategic Framework. Carbon tax revenues and potential federal funding also need to be incorporated into the strategy.

Later today, Mr. Speaker, I'll have questions for the Minister of Infrastructure, who also has responsibility for the Energy Strategy. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Deh Cho.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON K'AMBAA CARNIVAL

MR. NADLI: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Since we returned to the House at the beginning of this month, I have often shared stories of the challenges faced by Deh Cho communities calling on the government to fulfill its commitments to Northerners. There are stories of Deh Cho

resiliency, Mr. Speaker, in our communities, innovations, and ambitions. Today, though, I want to celebrate another part of the Deh Cho: our sense of fun, our community spirit, and our celebration of tradition.

That's right: it is K'ambaa Carnival weekend. The K'ambaa Carnival has been held every year since 1984, Mr. Speaker, when Fred Martel Jr. and Diane and Paul Tourangeau organized their first one to celebrate the return of the sun and the season's first days of warming weather.

Since then, the carnival has continued to flourish. People from all over come to join the fun from Hay River, Fort Resolution, Fort Providence, and other Metis communities, even other provinces, including Alberta and Saskatchewan. It's something we all look forward to.

Last year, the K'atlodeeche K'ambaa Carnival committee, mostly women, even won the NWTs Outstanding Volunteer Group award. This year's fun and games will kick off the K'atlodeeche K'ambaa Carnival on March 1st at 5:00 p.m., and yes, Mr. Speaker, I have bought my tickets. Have you? That night, we will see our youth compete in the annual talent show, showing off their skills in jiggling, singing, and fiddling.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure to go over my time if I list all of and every activity planned for the carnival weekend. We can go with the most important: dog races, drum dances, pancake breakfast, hand games, raffles, a poker derby, a youth mini carnival, youth and adult outdoor events, you name it, the K'ambaa Carnival Committee has probably got it on offer. To see it all, you will just have to come out to the Hay River Reserve for yourself.

Please join me, Mr. Speaker, in thanking the volunteer committee and recreation coordinator Sharon Pekok for their hard work making this special event happen. I'll see you this weekend. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Sahtu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
SAHTU GOTINE REGIONAL HEALTH AND
SOCIAL SERVICES CENTRE AND CANYON
CREEK PROJECT PROGRESS

MR. MCNEELY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Several years ago, the Sahtu region's future was poor at best with the low world commodity prices, closure of the Norman Wells oil field. Mr. Speaker, two projects initiated by the Government of Northwest Territories, they were the Sahtu Health and Long Term Care Facility and the 12 kilometer Canyon Creek all-season road.

Mr. Speaker, these two projects greatly contributed to the region's economic downturn on providing employment and opportunities; respectfully, the Tulita Health Centre also.

Mr. Speaker, today is federal budget day, and the Sahtu residents are anxiously waiting on the announcements under the National Trades and Corridor Infrastructure programs on the long awaited Mackenzie Valley highway, connecting the last frontier of the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, connecting the region, the Sahtu region, in my view, is a sound investment. The early NWT mining discoveries were in this region. The region's 26 per cent land quantum to the NWT holds vast, virtually untapped, resources.

Mr. Speaker, it is the Sahtu's respectful position on returning assistance for the two aforementioned projects in its contributing acknowledgment to the NWT GDP by allowing an all-season road connection. Later, Mr. Speaker, I will have questions to the Minister of Infrastructure on the Canyon Creek and the regional health centre project benefits. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Kam Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
INNOVATION AND KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY
DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With the knowledge economy emerging and becoming an ever more vital contributor for continued sustainability of northern economic growth, it would seem like a sector this government would seek to stimulate through strategic investments and development and innovation strategy that rewards private sector investment in innovative solutions. This would also prepare us for the coming reality of carbon pricing and green economy solutions to northern mining and manufacturing. For, in the end, innovators will move to jurisdictions that support innovation. That is why I am quite dismayed to find that our Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment has not commissioned a strategic plan on how to benefit from the emerging knowledge economy.

On March 22nd of last year, the Government of Canada committed in its 2017 budget the next steps for an innovation in jobs skill plan. This is a long-term plan to create jobs and strengthen the middle class by helping Canada's highly skilled work force develop the skills they need to evolve and keep up with the demands of a changing workplace. This was followed by the announcement of \$1.26 billion in the Strategic Innovation Fund on March 30th, which will ensure that Canada remains

a top destination for businesses to invest, grow, and create jobs. This is the kind of investment that we desperately need here at home, Mr. Speaker.

Business innovation funding is available to Canada's aerospace and automotive firms and will expand to support high-growth tech sectors such as clean technology, information, communications, and agri-food.

Mr. Speaker, it's very clear to me that this indicates that not only does the federal government appreciate the need to invest in our innovators, but they are giving a helping hand to provinces and territories by contributing some of this money to our local governments so we can develop innovation on a local level. This government should not only take its note from its federal counterparts, but also attempt to capitalize on that funding to support our local innovators.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday the deputy minister of the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment, and I'll quote what he said here: "Other departments are looking at research facilities, but I don't think, to be honest with you, it's fair to say that we don't actually have a focus now in ITI that is looking specifically at the innovation and knowledge agenda."

Mr. Speaker, let me remind the Members of the other side of the House that the first commitment in its mandate of this government is, and I quote: "Making strategic investments in infrastructure, resource development, work force development and the knowledge economy." Failing to even implement the strategic plan is not what we expected when we all concurred on this document.

Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the Minister on ITI on innovation and knowledge economy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MACKENZIE AND PEEL RIVER FERRY SERVICE UPDATE

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last fall I brought forward concerns for my constituents about the loss of extended ferry service. I warned the Minister that, without those services, the government risked leaving communities in the Delta to face heightened costs of living, restricted travel between communities, heavy commercial traffic, and potential fuel shortages.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I take no joy in the fact that my fears are justified. As I committed to doing last fall, I

monitored ferry use for the rest of the season and kept track of private and commercial traffic as well as community needs. This winter, Fort McPherson, a community of more than 900 people, ran out of gasoline, and Tsiigehtchic ran extremely low on groceries, along with many other communities in the region, including Inuvik. Suffice to say, the communities are disappointed, as I am, Mr. Speaker.

This is simply not the kind of message we want to see from a government that says it wants to help small communities. Our small communities want to know that government hears their concerns and understands their needs, and that the government won't save a few pennies at their expense.

I will have further questions later today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON INDIGENOUS OVERREPRESENTATION IN CANADA'S JAILS

MR. BEAULIEU: Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to speak about the justice system in Canada. Over the past few weeks, we have seen two high-profile court cases in Manitoba and Saskatchewan that have sparked mass outrage and protest within Indigenous communities across the country. The court cases I'm speaking about are that of Colten Boushie and Tina Fontaine, both of whom are young Indigenous youth who were murdered.

Colten Boushie was shot in the back of the head in 2016 and Tina Fontaine was a missing girl whose body was found in the Winnipeg Red River in 2014. The suspects in both cases were non-Indigenous males who were each charged with second-degree murder. In Tina's case, there was insufficient evidence to convict the accused, and for Colten's case, it appears the jury felt his death did not warrant a manslaughter conviction, even though that was an option available.

Mr. Speaker, statistics speak for themselves in Canada: Indigenous people account for 4 per cent of the overall population, yet 25 per cent of the adult in-custody federal offender population is Indigenous. The statistics are even more severe for Indigenous youth, because 37 per cent of all youth in provincial/territorial custody are Indigenous, despite accounting for only 7 per cent of the population; and the numbers in the NWT, Mr. Speaker, are even starker. A vast majority of the inmates in the NWT are Indigenous, even though the Indigenous population makes up around 50 per cent of the population.

Mr. Speaker, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Residential Schools made several calls to action to address areas of justice stating:

"We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to commit to eliminating the overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in custody over the next decade, and to issue detailed annual reports that monitor and evaluate progress in doing so.

We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments and Aboriginal governments to commit to eliminating the overrepresentation of Aboriginal youth in custody over the next decade."

Mr. Speaker, I conclude my statement with a quote from the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples:

"Social and structural change will not take place unless Canadians want it to. Leadership from governments is necessary. People need to see reasons for, and the justice in, the Commissioner's agenda for change. They must urge governments forward when they waver, and they must be ready to accommodate the setbacks and surprises that are inevitable to come with major change." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Hay River North.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON THE FUTURE OF HAY RIVER

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't mean to brag, but the future is bright, and the potential is enormous for the hub of the North. What am I talking about? Just look at some of the investments being made in and around Hay River. Last week, Osisko Metals completed its acquisition of Pine Point Mining. When you consider the strong outlook for zinc, the quality of the deposits, and the fact that Osisko has the expertise, the determination, and most importantly the financial backing to put Pine Point back into production, I expect this mine to become operational in the coming years. That's hundreds of jobs for our region.

The Aurora Wood Pellet mill project is coming to fruition. Land is being cleared, and construction of the \$70,000,000 capital project is scheduled to begin this May. The mill should be completed by next year, creating dozens of jobs across the region.

Cando Rail Services is setting up shop in Hay River. They are going to hire locals to do work that is currently done by CN crews from High Level. That's half a dozen jobs.

Tourism is on the rise, as well, Mr. Speaker. Private operators have been making investments that are beginning to pay off, and are putting the industry in a great position for future growth. The Town of Hay River is also doing its part for tourism. It's now keeping the visitor information centre open year round, and it's hired a full-time tourism and economic development coordinator. I've also heard of some other potential ventures that are very exciting and could be big for the entire region.

The government is also chipping in, Mr. Speaker. This government recently announced the new 48-bed long-term care facility. I hope that will be operational in the coming years. In addition to keeping our elders close to their families, the facility will provide 60 jobs. The GNWT has also put our shipping industry back on solid ground, ensuring 140 seasonable jobs at MTS in addition to the year-round positions.

The new Marine Training Centre that was recently announced not only means new jobs, it also helps ensure that locals can get the training they need to take advantage of those jobs at MTS. The centre also supports the strategy to revitalize the Great Slave Lake commercial fishery. This access to training, combined with a state-of-the-art fish processing plant that this government has committed to build, will help the fishers bring the industry to new heights.

The GNWT's renewed focus on agriculture and manufacturing also bodes well for the region, which is the heart of both industries in the NWT. The future is bright for Hay River, Mr. Speaker. Prosperity is on the horizon, and growth is inevitable. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Members' statements. Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. Member for Nahendeh.

Reports of Standing and Special Committees

COMMITTEE REPORT 4-18(3): REPORT ON ADULT RESIDENTIAL ADDICTIONS TREATMENT FACILITIES TOUR 2017

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your Standing Committee on Social Development is pleased to provide its Report on Adult Residential Addictions Treatment Facilities Tour 2017 and recommended to the House.

Introduction

The Northwest Territories Department of Health and Social Services (HSS) contracts with four adult residential addictions treatment facilities: the Edgewood Treatment Centre in Nanaimo, British

Columbia; Fresh Start Recovery and the Aventa Centre of Excellence for Woman With Addictions in Calgary, Alberta; and Poundmaker's Lodge in St. Albert, Alberta.

From December 3 to December 8, 2017, the Standing Committee on Social Development visited these facilities. The committee also visited Guthrie House in Nanaimo, a residential treatment program in the provincial corrections system. Our goal was to study the residential services offered at each facility to better understand the options available to Northerners and to develop recommendations to enhance territorial addictions treatment.

The committee thanks the Minister of Health and Social Services and his staff for their assistance in coordinating these visits and for joining us in our tour. We also thank the staff of each facility and the residents who shared their experiences.

Although a person's addiction can affect their families and communities, both addiction and the decision to pursue treatment are also deeply personal. There is no one correct path to sobriety, and a person may also pursue treatment, whether counselling, peer support groups, or on-the-land programs at home, or residential programs, at any point in their healing journey. HSS is currently developing an action plan on addictions recovery, work that will also include an inter-departmental working group and public engagement. The committee intends its recommendations to form a critical part of this plan, and we thank the Minister for his willingness to collaborate.

Background

According to the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction, alcohol is the most common drug used by Canadians. In 2015-2016 the Northwest Territories (NWT) had the second-highest per capita level of alcohol consumption in the country: roughly 12 litres per capita in sales per year. These figures excluded alcohol sold through bootlegging. In the same year, NWT residents were hospitalized due to alcohol consumption at a rate of 1,315 per 100,000. The lowest rate was just 172 per 100,000 in New Brunswick.

In the NWT, particular populations also face increased risk. According to a 2012 HSS report, residents of smaller NWT communities were more at risk to experience harm from drinking alcohol when compared to residents of regional centres and Yellowknife. Small community residents and Indigenous residents were also more at risk to experience harm from somebody else's drinking.

Illegal drug use is also a problem, and substance use and addictions negatively impact Northerners involved with the criminal justice system. In 2016,

Vice Canada reported on the impacts of trauma and addictions on territorial crime, highlighting the ongoing impact of intergenerational trauma and the anecdotal reports of the RCMP officers identifying alcohol as a common factor in calls to the police. In the same year, the Chief Coroner reported that in the previous five years, an average of one person per year died as a result of fentanyl use, with 27 deaths overall linked to narcotics use. During the recent trial of the leader of a drug sales operation, the Crown prosecutor said the ringleader was selling between six and eight kilograms of cocaine each month in Yellowknife, as well as other drugs.

Together, alcohol and drugs are also closely linked to territorial mental health hospitalizations, making up 68 per cent of admissions and 49 per cent of system costs between 2008-2009 and 2010-2011. HSS reports that annually in the same period, an average of "429 NWT patients were hospitalized 615 times with one or more alcohol or drug related issues, resulting in 3,250 bed days at an estimated cost of \$7.5 million to the territorial health system."

Against this backdrop, it is not surprising that Northerners urge the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) to improve addictions and mental health services, to decolonize healthcare and address needs for culturally relevant programming, and to integrate the developing field of trauma-informed care into territorial treatment models.

The committee hears these concerns. We make our report today to share our knowledge with the public and to make recommendations intended to improve communication, so that Northerners have the information they need on addictions treatment. We also seek to build upon the treatment options HSS has developed to date so that Northerners have access to the care they need.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I would like to turn it over to the honourable Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, since 2013-2014, 712 Northerners have been approved for residential placements in southern facilities, with 467 completions, 152 early or self-led discharges, and 102 self-cancellations. Note that these figures likely reflect multiple sessions for the same individuals.

Most recently, roughly three quarters of Northerners who started residential addictions treatment in 2016 completed a full session. When we set out on our tour, point-in-time data indicated that 38 adult Northerners were in residential treatment. This

group ranged in age from 24 to 60 years and was almost evenly split between women and men.

Aventa Centre of Excellence for Women With Addictions

Calgary's Aventa Centre of Excellence for Women with Addictions provides trauma-focused women-only services, prioritizing services for pregnant women. The 64-bed facility delivers a 60-day main program, as well as two supplementary 90-day programs and open-ended aftercare, including monthly gatherings and telephone support as needed. Religious and cultural needs, including those rooted in Indigenous spirituality, are accommodated. Aventa is abstinence-based, overseen by a psychologist-led support team, and focused on trauma-informed care. Notably, the committee learned that nearly three quarters of Aventa supports residents in developing individual discharge plans, including program work to help residents build "sober days," and offers a hard-copy assistance guide, toll-free support by phone, a follow-up survey, and community-building through an alumni newsletter and monthly meetings.

The committee was impressed by the supports offered to residents from the Northwest Territories, including the ability to undertake admissions interviews and follow-up support by telephone, staff participation in our government's Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training, and subscriptions to territorial newspapers. Our discussions at Aventa also identified areas for improvement in aftercare, particularly transition processes for residents intending to return to the territory after completion.

Fresh Start Recovery

Calgary's Fresh Start Recovery provides men-only services through an abstinence-based program grounded in a 12-step model. The 50-bed facility delivers a 16-week program, with detox available on-site and psychologist, nurse practitioner, and dental services available on-site as needed. As at Aventa, religious and cultural needs, including those rooted in Indigenous spirituality, are accommodated, and programming focuses on trauma-informed care. However, while Aventa delivers a more clinical program, Fresh Start draws more on the peer-support traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous. For aftercare, Fresh Start supports residents in developing discharge plans, including treatment plans and peer support, and will aid interested residents in securing transitional housing within the province. However, staff also noted challenges in this area.

The committee was particularly interested in supplementary programming provided at Fresh Start, particularly the delivery of a five-week family healing program. Fresh Start has also developed

condensed and Skype-based versions of alternative delivery. The committee was also supportive of the Minister's suggestion of training territorial healthcare providers to deliver this type of programming in our communities.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to turn the reading over to the honourable Member for Mackenzie Delta.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

MR. BLAKE:

Edgewood Treatment Centre

Nanaimo's Edgewood is an 80-bed co-ed facility, although women and men room separately. It offers both inpatient and outpatient programs, including on-site detox and medical staff. Its programming is also based on a 12-step model and residents are able to leave the facility to attend AA, NA, or other similar meetings. Significantly, Edgewood also offers specialized care for opiate addictions, as well as gambling and sexual addiction. Prior to program completion, residents may undertake home trips as trial runs for their sober return home. For after-care, Edgewood offers telephone support and online aftercare facilitated by clinicians, as well as monthly alumni gatherings. Residents may also be recommended for outpatient or open-ended extended care programs, typically ranging between one and three months. Staff also encourages residents to participate in AA or other 12-step programs after their stay.

Like Fresh Start, Edgewood also offers a specialized family support program. The six-day Insight program sees residents' families stay on-site, separate from residents, and undertake study, discussion, and counselling specific to their needs. The committee learned that Edgewood is experienced in travelling to small provincial communities to train local healthcare providers in delivering Insight and that the facility is also developing a version tailored to video conferencing. Members see potential options for NWT families in both.

Poundmaker's Lodge

Poundmaker's Lodge in St. Albert programs two programs in its co-ed, 60-bed facility. The first is a 42-day program for individuals aged 18 years or older. The second is a 90-day program for Alberta youth aged 18 to 24 years. Northerners may access the 42-day program, while NWT women may also access after-care through the facility's Iskwew Healing Lodge Program, an eight-week transitional program built on the Aboriginal Therapeutic Community Model. Poundmaker's Lodge combines FNMI (First Nations, Metis, and Inuit) concepts with

the abstinence-based 12-step model seen at other facilities. Unique services include meetings with Indigenous elders, opportunities to participate in sweat lodges and smudging, a focus on Indigenous spiritualities, and an annual round dance.

The committee was particularly interested in the facility's partnerships with northern governments. For example, Poundmaker's Lodge previously collaborated with the Salt River First Nation and the GNWT to facilitate a short, mobile treatment program in Fort Smith. Members heard that this program provided participating Northerners with a way to explore and test treatment, and that it ultimately encouraged some to pursue full residential treatment.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll pass it on to our colleague, Mr. Nadli. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to my colleague, as well.

Guthrie House

Guthrie House is a residential treatment program known as a "therapeutic community". It operates within the British Columbia corrections system and is administered by the provincial Department of Justice. It is not a treatment facility under contract with Health and Social Services.

Nevertheless, the committee's visit to Guthrie House was informative. The men-only treatment program offers continuous intake, but caps enrolment at roughly 50 residents. To participate, inmates must either self-identify or be recommended, and must meet established criteria, including having a minimum of four months remaining on their sentences, being in open or medium custody, and participating in an entry interview. Although Guthrie House is on the site of the Nanaimo Correctional Centre, residents are housed separately from inmates. The program is abstinence-based and day-to-day operations are managed almost entirely by residents who advance in responsibilities and duties as they progress through the program. The committee learned that those men who completed Guthrie House programming reoffended at a rate roughly 45 per cent less than those who remained in the traditional corrections setting.

Both staff and residents emphasized the importance of peer support and peer accountability, both in the program and in aftercare, as well as resident-led programming and the availability of housing upon release. To address this, Guthrie House also contracts an aftercare worker through the local branch of the John Howard Society. This aftercare worker collaborates with residents,

corrections staff, local governments, and community organizations to ensure that residents are not released into homelessness. The committee was also struck by all staff's dedication to this challenging yet vital work, as well as the residents' openness in sharing their stories.

Challenges and Opportunities

The committee has heard from many residents that the government must build a treatment centre in the Northwest Territories, rather than continue to send Northerners to southern facilities. Indeed, some Members have previously put forward the same proposal.

However, the current use of southern residential placements provides three critical benefits. First, it provides residents with the opportunity to leave the site of their addiction, a need often brought to our attention during our tour. Second, it provides residents with a wide range of immediately available options for treatment: individuals may choose the facility that best suits their needs and preferences for gender-based services, cultural and spiritual services, peer or clinical support, and more. Third, it provides the greatest value for money. Drawing on our research, our engagement with our constituents and with the Minister, and our work during this tour, the committee believes that southern residential placements will continue to serve the Northwest Territories well, provided that the Department of Health and Social Services and its partners strengthen complementary services at home.

While our tour demonstrated for us the effectiveness of southern residential placements, we also identified the need for significant improvements in public communications, aftercare, family supports, and trauma-informed practices. Notably, these themes previously arose in recommendations made in Healing Voices, the 2013 report of the Minister's Forum on Addictions and Community Wellness. These past recommendations included "develop a communications strategy aimed at informing the public about territorial treatment options and how to access them," "provide inclusive treatment options that include families," and "offer affordable housing for low-income individuals and families to provide them with stability and security."

The committee recognizes that this work is not simple. Altogether, Healing Voices made 67 recommendations, and it is clear that the Minister of Health and Social Services and his colleagues in the social envelope departments have made significant advances. We again thank the Minister for joining us in this tour and for his willingness to collaborate, most recently demonstrated in his commitment to Members to explore alternatives to

the 12-step model as well as new pharmaceutical options for dampening cravings.

Now we must work together to continue our progress.

Mr. Speaker, I now turn my reading portion back to the Chair, Mr. Shane Thompson. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Member for Nahendeh.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, honourable Member from the Deh Cho, and thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Recommendation 1

The Standing Committee on Social Development recommends that the Department of Health and Social Services enhance its public communications on addictions treatment.

The committee suggests that this might be accomplished through communications initiatives. They would include plain-language documents describing an individual's path through each contracted facility; profiles or testimonials of participating Northerners, with any necessary concessions to privacy and confidentiality; and the plain-language profiles of each contracted facility, highlighting the benefits that make it attractive as a service provider. Collaborative initiatives like the recent partnership with Poundmaker's Lodge and the Salt River First Nation also provide opportunities for Northerners to engage directly with contracted facilities while within their home communities.

Recommendation 2

The Standing Committee on Social Development recommends that the Department of Health and Social Services enhance community-based aftercare services by encouraging the development of a peer support network, scheduling regular access to counselling and addictions facilities through existing health centre resources (e.g. TeleHealth), and engaging with southern facilities to train territorial healthcare providers in the delivery of family support programming.

At each facility the committee visited, both staff and residents stressed both the importance and the challenge of aftercare. We heard that, even when residents live in the city in which these treatment facility operates, aftercare is difficult, requiring a healthy community network of healthcare support, sobriety advocates, community-based AA or other peer support programming, and facility-led follow-up, both individual (i.e. telephone calls, surveys, or counsellor follow-up) and group-focused (i.e. monthly meetings or celebrations).

Here in the Northwest Territories, we must strengthen connections of aftercare between departments to southern residential treatment and returns to home communities. For example, HSS should make space at health centres available for local sobriety advocates to lead peer support meetings, connecting with the newly sober and the long-term sober. HSS could also work with contracted facilities to develop telephone and/or online aftercare options specific to Northerners. As mentioned earlier in this report, both the Minister and facility staff proposed programming, or training to deliver programming, to support families of Northerners in treatment. The committee supports this proposal.

Recommendation 3

The Standing Committee on Social Development recommends that the Department of Health and Social Services partner with its fellow social envelope departments, community governments, and community organizations to develop a pilot program centred on ensuring that Northerners completing residential treatment are not discharged into homelessness, but instead connected with housing opportunities.

The committee repeatedly heard both facility staff and residents emphasize the importance of safe, secure, and sober housing, and the threats to mental and physical wellbeing posed by homelessness or the return to the site of one's addiction due to a lack of housing options. Guthrie House demonstrates that securing housing for residents upon discharge is difficult, but not impossible. A targeted, collaborative pilot project could connect Northerners in need with housing options, whether in transitional, market, or public housing, and whether in the Northwest Territories or in partnership with contracted facilities that offer housing options, such as Fresh Start and Edgewood.

Recommendation 4

The Standing Committee on Social Development recommends that the Government provide a comprehensive response to this report within 120 days.

Conclusion

This concludes the committee's Report on Adult Residential Addictions Treatment Facilities Tour 2017. All committee reports are available online at the Legislative Assembly website at www.assembly.gov.nt.ca.

MOTION TO RECEIVE
COMMITTEE REPORT 4-18(3) AND MOVE INTO
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, CARRIED

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh, that the Committee Report 4-18(3), Report on Adult Residential Addictions Treatment Facilities Tour 2017, be received by the Assembly and moved into Committee of the Whole for consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed?

---Carried

The committee report is now before the standing committee. Member for Inuvik Boot Lake.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I see unanimous consent to move to item number 6 on the orders of the day, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. SPEAKER: Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, you may continue.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is great to see the youth again attending the Legislative Assembly session and proceedings. I believe the students are from William MacDonald School, as well as we have some students from Quebec who are here on an exchange, so welcome to Yellowknife. Welcome to the Northwest Territories. I appreciate that you made the opportunity to come visit and check out the Legislative Assembly.

Also, I would like to recognize our Grand Chief for the Gwich'in tribal council, who is Bobbie Jo Greenland. Denny Rodgers is also here with us, and chair of IVC, Dang Gruben and James Thorbourne. Thanks, and I hope you enjoy the proceedings. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think my colleague from Boot Lake recognized the visitors in the gallery already, but two of them are actually constituents of Inuvik Twin Lakes. First of all, I need to recognize the president of the Gwich'in tribal council, and more importantly, my sister-in-law, Bobbie Jo Greenland Morgan. The two important delegates from Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Denny Rodgers and Mr. Patrick Gruben, as well as James Thorbourne. I'm not sure what side of town you live on, but Twin Lakes is fine. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in gallery. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I'd like to welcome the students from William MacDonald School, which is in the Frame Lake riding, and their guests, the students from Quebec. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in gallery. Member for Kam Lake.

MR. TESTART: Merci, Monsieur le President. [English translation not provided.]

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the Grand Chief of the Gwich'in tribal council president, Bobbie Jo Greenland Morgan; also, chair of the Indian Inuvialuit Development Corporation, Patrick Dang Gruben, a.k.a Dang; also, Denny Rodgers, and James Thorbourne. They both represent the two land claim groups in my riding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Nunakput.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm just going to reiterate what some of my colleagues said. I'd like to welcome Patrick Dang Gruben; the chair of Inuvialuit Development Corporation, Denny Rodgers; and as well as from IVC and the Grand Chief of the Gwich'in tribal council president, Bobbie Jo Greenland Morgan, and James Thorbourne. It's good to see Indigenous governments partnering together, and the Gwich'in and the Inuvialuit are definitely leading and showing a good example of that. Kudos to Bobbie Jo and Dang for partnering on projects in the territory. As well as, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to also recognize Lillian Elias, who is an Inuvialuit Interpreter here. Welcome to everybody. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. I'd also like to welcome all the students who are here with us, for being patient with us. We have a long day ahead of us, but thanks for being here in our Chamber, and also the guests who are here with us. Masi. Item 4, reports of standing and special committees. Member for Kam Lake.

Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills

COMMITTEE REPORT 5:18(3):
REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF BILL 1: WESTERN
CANADA LOTTERY ACT

MR. TESTART: Merci, Monsieur le President. Your Standing Committee on Government Operations is pleased to provide its Report on the Review of Bill 1: Western Canada Lottery Act, and commends it to this House.

Introduction

The Standing Committee on Government Operations is pleased to report on its review of Bill 1: Western Canada Lottery Act.

Bill 1, sponsored by the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA), repeals the existing Western Canada Lottery Act (WCLA) and replaces it with a new act to establish a Northwest Territories Lottery Commission, under the direction of the Minister, with the authority to enter into agreements with the Western Canada Lottery Corporation (WCLC), and the Government of Nunavut and retailers.

The act also establishes a Northwest Territories Physical Activity, Sport and Recreation Fund ("the fund"), pursuant to Part 7 of the Financial Administration Act (FAA). This special purpose fund, which will form an account within the Consolidated Revenue Fund, will receive proceeds from the operation of lotteries by the WCLC. The commission will be responsible for the conduct, management and operation of lotteries, while the Minister will administer the fund and distribute proceeds for purposes related to the promotion and delivery of physical activity sport and recreation programs.

Bill 1 received Second Reading in the Legislative Assembly on October 20th, 2017, and was referred to the Standing Committee on Government Operations for review.

Background

Currently, the Western Canada Lottery Act (WCLA) authorizes the Minister to enter into agreements with any corporation established to conduct the Western Canada Lottery, for the purpose of undertaking, organizing, conducting or managing the Western Canada Lottery in the Northwest Territories.

The Western Canada Lottery Corporation (WCLC) is a Canadian non-profit organization, founded in 1974 and headquartered in Winnipeg, Manitoba, that operates lottery and gaming-related activities for its members; the governments of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Yukon, the Northwest Territories, and Nunavut participate as associate members.

The WCLC works in conjunction with the following marketing organizations: Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission; Saskatchewan Lotteries;

Manitoba Lotteries Corporation; Lotteries Yukon; and the Sport North Federation, which signed a licensing agreement with the WCLA in 1979. In 2009, the Northwest Territories Sport and Recreation Council (SRC) became the designated licence holder.

In 2011, the Canada Revenue Agency advised the licensee that conduct of the lottery was a for-profit activity and, therefore, income was taxable under the federal Income Tax Act. In November of 2014, the Canada Revenue Agency provided this interpretation to the Department of Finance.

In December 2014, MACA reviewed options with the Departments of Finance, Justice and Human Resources for shielding lottery proceeds from taxation. This bill represents the culmination of that process.

The Public Review of Bill 1

The Standing Committee on Government Operations held a public hearing on Bill 1, in Yellowknife, on February 7, 2018.

The committee chairperson opened the meeting, followed by opening remarks by the honourable Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, who was accompanied by the following officials:

- Ms. Eleanor Young, deputy minister, Municipal and Community Affairs;
- Mr. Ian Rennie, legislative counsel, Department of Justice;
- Mr. Ian Legaree, director of Sport, Recreation and Youth, Municipal and Community Affairs;
- Mr. Gary Schauerte, director of Corporate Affairs, Municipal and Community Affairs;
- Ms. Melissa Kruger, senior policy and legislative advisor, Municipal and Community Affairs; and finally
- Ms. Mira Dunn, ministerial special advisor, Executive and Indigenous Affairs.

The committee takes this opportunity to thank Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs and her officials for their appearance before the committee.

The hearing was extremely well attended, with approximately 30 members of the public in attendance. The standing committee thanks everyone who came to the meeting, especially those who took the time to provide their input through written and/or oral submissions. All written submissions received by the committee are appended to this report.

What We Heard

More funding for the arts

Committee was struck by the conviction with which witnesses spoke of the many positive benefits derived from the participation in artistic endeavours, including the creation of jobs and economic opportunities; the provision of educational and personal growth opportunities; mental health benefits; the contribution of arts to vibrant and attractive communities and to civic engagement; and the impact of art on our northern cultural identity and the creation of cultural legacies.

A few witnesses spoke of the value that would be derived by members of the arts community in Yellowknife, if people who wanted to participate in artistic pursuits had a publicly funded building in which such activities could be housed. They stressed that art supplies and materials can be cost-prohibitive and noted that a public arts facility would make art a more viable option for the less privileged members of our community, especially youth. They spoke of the benefits enjoyed by sports enthusiasts who have both the Yellowknife Multiplex and the Fieldhouse in which they can engage in sport and recreation activities. They asked only that Yellowknife artists be given the opportunity to enjoy similar benefits.

Speakers stressed the importance and necessity of territorial government funding to a thriving arts community in the Northwest Territories. Many wanted to see greater funding for the arts from the GNWT, and expressed the hope that Bill 1 would provide an opportunity to direct additional funding to the arts through the proceeds derived from the Western Canada Lottery program. Some witnesses also noted that they would like to see the arts benefit from multi-year funding arrangements, similar to those enjoyed by territorial sports organizations, which would allow them to stabilize their programming and enable them to spend less time preparing annual funding requests to be submitted to the NWT Arts Council.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to turn the report to my colleague, the honourable Member from Sahtu.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Member for Sahtu.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you.

The definition of "recreation"

In both written and oral submissions, witnesses raised their concern that "recreation" is not defined in the bill. When questioned about this, Minister Cochrane indicated that MACA is looking to the members of the Northwest Territories sport and recreation organizations to define what "recreation"

encompasses in an upcoming engagement exercise. When questioned about the possibility of including representatives of the arts community in this discussion, Minister Cochrane replied that she was not willing to entertain this request.

Witnesses expressed their profound disappointment at this response by the Minister. "This move," in the words of one witness "seems blatantly biased in the favour of the established and well-supported sports groups, which benefit directly from their secured and relatively stable funding, and close ties to the GNWT."

With respect to the issue of the definition of recreation, one written submission pointed out a definition would provide some clarity for sports organizations as to their ability to access this funding, and it would also help to clarify which types of sports-related activities are eligible for funding.

No erosion of sports funding

A number of witnesses indicated their preference that the Western Canada Lottery proceeds continue to be used solely for the continued funding for sports and recreation pursuits. They stressed the degree to which the sporting activities already rely on the tireless efforts of volunteers. They also expressed concern about their ability to continue to deliver the existing range of sport and recreation activities, presently offered across the Northwest Territories in the event that funding is reduced by being split between the arts and sports and recreation activities.

Mutual support from both communities

Committee feels compelled to acknowledge the overwhelming support that advocates for both the sport and recreation and arts communities expressed for one another. Regret was expressed by witnesses that the circumstances of Bill 1 appeared to split these two communities against one another. Committee agrees that this is unfortunate and should not be of the case. Overall, committee observed that representatives of each community had respect and admiration for the goals and aspirations of the other, and that both acknowledged vital benefits that sport and recreation and the arts provide to the people of the Northwest Territories.

At this point, I will pass it on to the honourable Member for Deh Cho, Mr. Nadli. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Issues with specific provisions of the bill

While there was limited discussion in the public hearing about the merits or drawbacks of particular provisions of the bill, specific issues were raised in the written submissions received by the committee. These include:

The need for greater transparency

A concern was raised that the bill does not contain any provisions requiring public disclosure about how the proceeds of the lottery will be disbursed to sport organizations.

Multisport games funding

Concerns were raised about the inclusion of multisport games funding under subsection 6(1) of the bill. In written submissions, witnesses sought clarification about how this funding would impact existing multisport games funding provided by MACA. They also expressed concern that the hosting of multisport games, which is an expensive undertaking, should not come from lottery funding to the detriment of sport and recreation partners that already rely on lottery funding.

Ministerial authority to accumulate a surplus or deficit in the Physical Activity, Sport and Recreation Fund

Subsection 6(2) of the bill waives the applicability of section 101 of the Financial Administration Act. This has the effect of enabling the Minister to accumulate a surplus or deficit in the Physical Activity, Sport and Recreation Fund. Concern was expressed that, if this is permitted, MACA will be able to overspend the fund on an ongoing basis, with the end result being that the fund will never be in a position such that it can be used for new initiatives.

Shielding lottery proceeds from taxation

One of the primary purposes for Bill 1 was to bring the administration of the Western Canada Lottery program under the auspices of the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, to protect lottery proceeds from potential federal taxation.

There was acknowledgement by some witnesses of the wisdom of this course of action. No one expressed any reservations about this objective.

What We Did

More funding for the arts – outside the scope of the bill

From written submissions received in advance of the hearing, committee was aware that there would be strong representation from members of the arts community who wanted to see some of the proceeds of the Western Canada Lottery directed to performing and visual arts endeavours.

For the record, when contemplating changes to a bill that has been referred by the Legislative Assembly to a standing committee for consideration, the committee must operate in accordance with procedural rules regarding the admissibility of any proposed changes. These rules may include, among others, consideration of the principle and scope of the bill, the relevance and/or consistency of proposed amendments, and the prerogative of the Executive branch of government to bring forward legislation that would impose costs on the public treasury.

In preparation for the public hearing, the committee engaged the Legislative Assembly's law clerk to consider if an amendment to Bill 1 to permit the proceeds of the Western Canada Lottery to be directed to the arts would be in accordance with the relevant rules of parliamentary procedures. Based on the advice received, the committee chair determined that such an amendment would be outside the scope of the bill and, therefore, beyond the authority of the committee to propose.

The committee chair made this clear in his opening remarks, to ensure that members of the public did not leave the public hearing with an expectation that the standing committee would be in a position to propose an amendment to the bill to permit lottery funding to be directed to the arts.

It is clear from the passion with which presenters spoke that greater funding for the arts is important to people of the Northwest Territories. This was also evidenced by the February 21, 2018 presentation of a petition in the Legislative Assembly by the Member for Yellowknife North, Mr. Cory Vanthuyne, on behalf of 314 signatories, requesting that the Government of the Northwest Territories amend the Lottery Act to allow for lottery money to be disbursed to artistic endeavours.

The committee regrets that Bill 1 did not provide this opportunity in the way that members of the public hoped it would. However, the committee is pleased to note that, in response to a request made by this committee during the review of the 2018-2019 Business Plans, the Minister of Finance has made a commitment to increase funding for the NWT Arts Council by \$200,000 in the 2018-2019 fiscal year.

Mr. Speaker, I now pass over next section to my honourable colleague, Mr. R.J. Simpson.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Member for Hay River North.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The definition of "recreation"

The committee shares the disappointment expressed by witnesses that Minister Cochrane demonstrated such unequivocal opposition to allowing representatives of the arts community to engage in this exercise. The committee holds the view that there is little harm in mutually respectful dialogue and that the input of representatives outside of the sport organizations may bring fresh views as to what the notion of recreation encompasses.

The committee considered the merits of including a definition of recreation in the bill, but considered that, given the long shelf life of legislation, this might have the inadvertent outcome of preventing the future funding of recreation activities not yet considered or imagined.

The committee notes that "A Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015 – Pathways to Wellbeing" offers the following nationally accepted definition of recreation:

Recreation is the experience that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community wellbeing.

Noting that establishing a clear definition of "recreation" would help people identify their eligibility for accessing lottery funding, the committee makes the following recommendation:

Recommendation 1

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs develop a funding policy which provides clear guidance as to funding eligibility requirements to guide the disbursement of lottery funding under the new Western Canada Lottery Act.

No erosion of sports funding – multisport games funding

Committee understands that the delivery of sport and recreation programming in the Northwest Territories depends on the commitment of volunteers and upon the funding provided by the GNWT and by non-government organizations and private businesses that sponsor sport and recreation activities.

For this reason, the committee is concerned that the inclusion of multisport games funding, under subclause 6(1)(e) of the bill, will result in the reduction of multisport game funding currently provided by the department's budget appropriation as voted in the Legislative Assembly. The committee's concern is borne out by the 2018-2019 Main Estimates for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, which show a reduction in

the department's appropriation for multisport funding from \$650,000 in 2016-2017 to \$250,000 in 2018-2019.

The committee feels strongly that the bill should be amended by deleting subclause 6(1)(e), thereby deleting multisport games as being automatically eligible for funding from Western Canada Lottery proceeds. To this end, the committee proposed a motion to amend the bill to delete subclause 6(1)(e) of the bill.

The purpose of the proposed amendment is to signal that multisport activities will be funded, first and foremost, from the department's budget. This would not prevent the Minister from exercising the authority to supplement such funding with disbursements from the fund in appropriate circumstances.

The need for greater transparency – annual reporting on the fund

During the public hearing, the committee heard, from representatives of the sport and recreation community and others, that they wish to see more detailed reporting on the administration of the Physical Activity, Sport and Recreation Fund. The committee agrees that transparency and accountability are important, so that the public may see how lottery proceeds are disbursed from the fund.

In response to questions raised by the committee during the public hearing on Bill 1, the committee was advised of the department's view that the Financial Administration Act (FAA) together with the GNWT's Planning and Accountability Framework provide the requirement for sufficient public reporting on the proposed fund. The committee is not satisfied with this response.

Part 7 of the FAA governs special purpose funds. While section 104 requires year-end reporting for revolving funds, there is no similar requirement for year-end reporting for special purpose funds which, like the proposed Physical Activity, Sport and Recreation Fund, are not revolving funds.

The GNWT's Planning and Accountability Framework imposes certain accountabilities on Category A public agencies, such as the Liquor Commission, the Human Rights Commission, and the Legal Aid Commission. Bill 1 does not propose to amend the FAA to include the proposed Northwest Territories Lottery Commission in Schedule A; therefore, the committee surmises that it cannot rely on this part of the Planning and Accountability Framework to ensure adequate public reporting on the proposed fund.

While the Planning and Accountability Framework does impose certain accountability obligations on

government departments (Category D), the required reporting (i.e., business plans, operating budget, and annual report) is at a high level. The committee seeks a greater level of detail than is required under the framework.

Accordingly, the committee proposed a motion to add subclause 5(5) to the bill. This proposed amendment requires the Minister to table a report in the Legislative Assembly on an annual basis, within 90 days following the end of each fiscal year, with the following details:

- The total amount paid into the fund in the preceding fiscal year;
- The recipient and amount of each disbursement from the fund;
- A description of the purpose for which each disbursement was made from the fund; and
- The value of the fund at the close of the preceding fiscal year.

Ministerial authority to accumulate a surplus or deficit in the Physical Activity, Sport and Recreation Fund

The committee shares the concern raised in submissions about the Minister's power under subsection 6(2) of Bill 1 to accumulate a deficit or surplus in the Physical Activity, Sport and Recreation Fund and wishes to ensure that reasonable limits are placed on this power.

When considering how best to amend the bill to address this matter, the committee sought and received additional information from Minister Cochrane. This exchange included a proposal from Minister Cochrane, developed in consultation with the Department of Finance, that the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs will make a submission to the Financial Management Board requesting that the FMB establish a limit on any accumulated deficit or surplus in the fund.

The committee agrees with this approach, provided that the limit set by the FMB is made public and shared with the standing committee and reported on annually by the department, in accordance with the amendment proposed with respect to year-end reporting. Accordingly, the committee makes the following recommendation:

Recommendation 2

The Standing Committee on Government Operations recommends that the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs make a submission to the Financial Management Board requesting that the Financial Management Board establish a limit on any accumulated deficit or

surplus in the Physical Activity, Sport and Recreation Fund and, furthermore, that this limit be made public, shared with the Standing Committee, and reported upon annually by the Department in its year-end reporting on the fund.

I would now like to pass the report on to the honourable Member for Nunakput. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Member for Nunakput.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Clause-by-Clause Review of the Bill

The clause-by-clause review of the bill was held on February 26, 2018. At this review, the committee moved the following motions:

Motion 1

That Bill 1 be amended by adding the following after subclause 5(4):

(5) The Minister shall, within 90 days following the end of each fiscal year, table a report of the fund with the Legislative Assembly, which includes

- the total amount paid into the fund in the preceding fiscal year;
- details of each disbursement from the fund, including the recipient, the amount paid and a description of the purpose for the disbursement; and

the value of the fund at the end of the preceding fiscal year.

Minister Cochrane concurred with this motion, and the motion was carried.

Motion 2

That subclause 6(1) of Bill 1 be deleted and replaced by a new subclause 6(1). This has the effect of removing paragraph (e), hence removing multisport funding from the list of items for which the Minister may make disbursements from the fund.

Minister Cochrane concurred with this motion, and the motion was carried.

Motion 3

That Bill 1 be amended by inserting the following heading immediately before clause 8: LIABILITY. This is a routine, non-substantive amendment intended to fix a drafting oversight.

Minister Cochrane concurred with this motion, and the motion was carried.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I would like to pass it on to my colleague from Kam Lake. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Member for Kam Lake.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Conclusion

The Standing Committee on Government Operations' Review of Bill 1 is the result of a collaborative process. The standing committee wishes to thank the Minister for her concurrence with the motions made by the committee to amend the bill. The committee thanks the public for their participation in the review process and everyone involved in the review of this bill for their assistance and input.

Following the clause-by-clause review, a motion was carried to report Bill 1, Western Canada Lottery Act, as amended and reprinted, as ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole.

This concludes the standing committee's review.

MOTION TO RECEIVE COMMITTEE REPORT 5-18(3) AND MOVE INTO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, CARRIED

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River North, that Committee Report 5-18(3), Report on the Review of Bill 1: Western Canada Lottery Act, be received by the Assembly and moved into Committee of the Whole for further consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Report on the Review of Bill 1, Western Canada Lottery Act has now moved to Committee of the Whole.

Reports of standing and special committees. Item 5, returns to oral questions. Item 7, acknowledgements. Colleagues, at this time, I am going to call for a short break. Masi.

---SHORT RECESS

MR. SPEAKER: Members, we left off prior to oral questions. Item 8, oral questions. Member for Nunakput.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 171-18(3): RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIGENOUS GOVERNMENTS WITHIN ARCTIC POLICY FRAMEWORK

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier I spoke about the Arctic Policy Framework. My questions are for the Premier. Mr. Speaker, my first question to the Premier is: I would like to like to know how GNWT priorities align with the Inuit of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The Honourable Premier.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Government of the Northwest Territories has a very strong working relationship with the Inuvialuit government. We have already received submissions and information from the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation related to the Arctic Policy Framework. Many of the priorities of the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation and the Government of the Northwest Territories align, specifically with what the Member shared with us today. The Government of the Northwest Territories shares the Inuit Circumpolar Council's interest in sustainable economic development in northern communities and has worked with Yukon and Nunavut governments to draft the Pan-Territorial Vision for Sustainable Development in order to advocate the importance of this with Canada.

The Government of the Northwest Territories also supports international relationships and activity in the Arctic that protects the Northern people who live there and supports their culture and livelihood. Also, the Government of the Northwest Territories shares the Inuit Circumpolar Council's interest in linking environment and human health. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: It's good to see that the GNWT is working with Indigenous governments. Mr. Speaker, I have spoken about Indigenous governments and their drive to self-determination. I would like to know what the GNWT is doing as a whole to work with Indigenous governments and governments as they build capacity towards self-determination.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Indigenous governments have told the Government of the Northwest Territories that building capacities is a priority and a challenge for them. Through the devolution agreement, the Government of the Northwest Territories has heard and responded to the needs of Indigenous governments by sharing up to 25 per cent of royalty resources with our partners for their capacity. This is unprecedented. There is no other jurisdiction across Canada that has stepped up to the plate and offered this type of capacity to their Indigenous government partners.

We are also working with Indigenous governments in other ways to build their capacity. For example, the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Gwich'in Tribal Council have an MOU providing Gwich'in employees with opportunities working as Government of the Northwest Territories employees to build capacity, and we have also signed it with the federal government.

With regard to self-government, we have developed a framework so that, as these self-government agreements are negotiated, the Government of the Northwest Territories employees who move on to work with the Aboriginal governments through self-government, we have provided for successor rights. We have the NEBS, which is the Northern Employee Benefit Services, which can provide pensions for those employees who go over. Through the self-government negotiations, those specifically capacity-building and training are being negotiated through those agreements, as well.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: I appreciate the response from the Premier. Mr. Speaker, decision-making in the Northwest Territories is best when Indigenous groups are involved, as we are major stakeholders. An example is the Canada/US five-year moratorium on offshore drilling.

Mr. Speaker, with the new agreement with China, there are many unknowns about the country's interest in the Arctic. Mr. Speaker, will the Premier ensure that the GNWT works with Indigenous governments on scientific research as well as Indigenous knowledge to enhance scientific cooperation so that traditional knowledge-holders participate, direct, and implement scientific research activities in the Northwest Territories?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: For clarification, the Government of Canada announced that the Beaufort Sea was indefinitely off-limits to new offshore oil and gas licences, to be tested every five years by a science-based review. We have received very little information on how the science-based review will be undertaken, other than the Prime Minister has written to us and advised that Minister Bennett and Ministers Carr will be leading the review.

Also, we understand that federal officials have been approaching the oil and gas companies that have leases in the Beaufort to ask them what it will take for them to give up their licences. I'm not sure how the science-based review will work, but certainly over the years we worked very closely with the Indigenous governments on scientific research, both traditional and science-based research. We will continue to do so specifically with the Beaufort. It is under federal jurisdiction, although through devolution, an agreement to have co-management of the Beaufort was to be negotiated. Through that

avenue, we will make sure that we work very closely with Indigenous governments on scientific research and traditional knowledge. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

QUESTION 172-18(3):

ARCTIC WINTER GAMES ATHLETE SELECTION

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in my Member's statement, I had some questions for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs. As you have heard, four athletes from Nahendeh didn't get the opportunity to compete for a spot on Team NWT. This is very disappointing, to say the least. Unfortunately, nothing can be done now for these games. However, I hope we can fix it for future games.

Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that each Territorial Sport Organization was required to have an appeal process in place for athlete selection that was approved by the GNWT. Can the Minister confirm if this is correct and if each organization follows this process? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The honourable Member is correct that each Territorial Sport Organization is supposed to have a selection process. Within that, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs, however, does not take part in the selection process. We do know that we are notified whenever an appeal is brought forward. I will make sure that all of the Territorial Sport Organizations do have an appeal process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. THOMPSON: I thank the Minister for that answer and the commitment to make sure that all Territorial Sport Organizations have a process and are following that process.

Mr. Speaker, living in the North, does the Government of the Northwest Territories and especially the department realize that weather can sometimes interfere with the schedule? Therefore, does the department have a contingency plan in place to ensure that athletes are given a fair opportunity to compete for a spot on the team? I.e. using modern technology, other personnel, et cetera, et cetera.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Unfortunately, I, too, felt really not at ease when I heard that the four youth from the MLA's region were not able to attend the games. There were other youth who were affected, as well. Sometimes when there are

tournaments going on or children are out of the province, they often don't get to attend the trials, so it is an issue. With this one, the weather was a problem. We do ask Sport North and the Territorial Sport Organizations to try to accommodate whenever possible. We're reviewing at this point. Because of what happened, we're looking at different options that we can implement in the future so that fewer youth will not be able to attend to trials. We can't guarantee that every youth will make it to the trials, because there are all kinds of different reasons, but we will look at options to ensure that as many as possible can attend the trials. These are important to our youth.

MR. THOMPSON: I thank the Minister for that answer. Unfortunately, I knew this was what I was going to hear. It is very disappointing to hear this, as it seems that we would want to have a process in place, especially since I've seen things happen in the past because of weather. To ensure our athletes are given the opportunity to try out, will the Minister direct her department to work with the organizations who have been given the response to make up the Team NWT and the Territorial Sport Organization to come up with a contingency plan for the future games using technology and other personnel?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Yes, it was kind of dismaying for me to hear that, all of these years that we have been providing the multisport games, this has been an issue, so I have made it a priority that we will look at options, like I had said earlier, that we need to make sure as many children as possible, as many youth as possible, have a chance for these games. These sometimes change people's lives, and so it is critical that we look at this and we make it a priority, so I will make it a priority to make sure that we look at all available options so that more youth can attend the trials, at least, for the games.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I greatly appreciate the Minister for that commitment in trying to work with our poorer athletes. It is greatly appreciated, and I know it is not going to help the athletes who did not make it this year, but I mean it is a positive step moving on. Mr. Speaker, will the Minister direct the department to reimburse the athletes for the registration fee and other transportation costs these athletes incurred but who did not get the chance to compete for a spot on Team NWT?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: The transportation costs, Sport North was already covering these transportation costs to get into the trials. Unfortunately, some of the youth decided to take

alternative transportation to try to make it, and my understanding is that, if they would have stayed in place, they might have actually made the trials because the weather was better in that community the next day. So we will not reimburse the travel expenses, but we will reimburse the registration fees that these youths paid because it is not fair that we charged them registration and they could not attend. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

QUESTION 173-18(3):
REDUCTION OF INDIGENOUS INMATE
POPULATION

MR. BEAULIEU: Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today in my Member's statement I talked about the justice system. I would like to ask the Minister of Justice questions. I would like to ask the Minister, Mr. Speaker, if the Department of Justice is working with other departments to reduce Indigenous inmate population? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Justice.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the department of course recognizes that there is an over-representation of Indigenous people in our facilities, and we are working with other departments to find ways to reduce that over-representation. Now, the current committee of Cabinet structure brings together all social development Ministers and deputies to collaborate and discuss cross-departmental work to provide a collaborative approach on social issues, so we are working with other departments hopefully to reduce this rather shocking figure.

MR. BEAULIEU: I would like to ask the Minister if he would commit to directing the Department of Justice to lead a government working group -- I am not speaking of the Ministers but maybe of a lower level of working group -- to incorporate some changes to reduce the Indigenous inmate population.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: There are currently many interdepartmental working groups that focus on social program issues, such as the integrated case management interdepartmental working group, family violence working group, and therapeutic community steering committee, so there are interdepartmental working groups already working in this area on the federal-provincial-territorial side. We are also working nationally as the federal government rolls out its strategic action plan to reduce the over-representation of Indigenous people. So we are working both within our government and with other governments.

MR. BEAULIEU: The social development committee has been working on this whole Justice file, of course, from the beginning. I would like to ask the Minister if he would work with the Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation so that inmates are not released into homelessness?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, we recognize that the reintegration of inmates back into the communities is an important part of the corrections service, and certainly we can work with Housing. However, as you know, there is a shortage of housing in the Northwest Territories, and, while we work with inmates who are being released as they go back into the communities, we cannot guarantee that they can jump the queue, if I can put it that way. So there is a shortage of housing. We do attempt to assist them.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have spoken to former inmates, some who have long records and long incarceration backgrounds. Particularly two adult former inmates indicate to me that the biggest help that they had while they were incarcerated was working with mental health workers. I would like to ask the Minister if he could commit to looking at increasing the number of mental health workers, I guess, maybe working with the Department of Health or on their own to have mental health workers in the correction facilities to work with the inmates? Thank you.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: There are currently two registered psychologists at the North Slave Correctional Centre and one registered psychologist at the South Mackenzie Correctional Centre. Fort Smith Correctional Centre is currently in the staffing process for a counsellor. Now, the majority of people who are in the facilities are there for less than 90 days and many for less than 30 days. So we will make efforts to ensure that all inmates are aware of the mental health resources that are available to them. So, again, we do have, currently, registered psychologists at two of the institutions, and we are hoping to staff at Fort Smith Correctional Centre. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Sahtu.

QUESTION 174-18(3):
BENEFITS TO THE SAHTU FROM
CONSTRUCTION OF THE SAHTU GOT'INE
REGIONAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
CENTRE

MR. MCNEELY: Mahsi. Mr. Speaker. Following up on my Member's statement to the Minister of Infrastructure, my first question: can the Minister of Infrastructure explain what benefits the Sahtu region has seen from the Sahtu regional health and long-term care facility? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Infrastructure.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Norman Wells health and social services facility has got a substantial completion date in December of 2017, so just right around Christmastime, and it will soon be in operation. The question is what benefits did the Sahtu region get out of this. It was a project that was carried on by a local development corporation and a major contractor, and I can inform this House that, directly through northern and local employment and business of goods and services, \$20 million was spent in the North on this project. This is very impressive because this is a very high-level facility, being a health centre, the amount of work that is required to complete a project like this. At the same time, one thing I want to mention about this project as we go forward with our climate change and carbon pricing and such is the interesting thing about this project is we asked the contractor to build to the national energy code, to exceed it by 25 per cent, and, some of the stuff that they have done on this project, it has actually exceeded it by 33 per cent.

MR. MCNEELY: Thanks to the Minister for that information. That is good to hear, that quite a significant amount was spent locally. My next question is: can the Minister explain what benefits the Sahtu region has seen from the Canyon Creek all-season road second project?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: The Canyon Creek project is a 14 kilometre access road from Norman Wells to the Canyon Creek bridge, as many of us know. We have talked about it in the House many times. Same thing, this is one that we have done with a local group and a local contractor. I was up there early on in the start of this project, and I got to spend some time with some of the students who were doing the simulator training, very similar to what was going on the ITH. I can say that over 70 people are working on this project right now, and 75 per cent of them are Northerners.

MR. MCNEELY: Thanks to the Minister for that information. Leading on to the moving ahead, from these two projects comes experience. Can the Minister explain what benefits these experiences will see for the Department of Infrastructure, the design manager on behalf of our government, to the upcoming new Tulita Health Centre?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: The Tulita Health Centre was approved by Legislative Assembly in the capital in 2018-2019, and on this project, very similar to the Norman Wells facility, there has been a number of people trained there that we will be able to utilize, I believe, when this thing goes out to tender. The experience that was gained on that facility, we will be able to transfer those skills over to the Tulita Centre.

We are doing a functional plan on this thing right now, and programming on it, and the design of the prototype, which should be completed here shortly. When this thing goes out to tender, I expect that the proponent that bids on this is going to include as many northern residents and locally-trained people as they can to work on this thing.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Sahtu.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My last question leads up to some of the learnings that we heard on efficiencies for green energy conservation. My last question is: is the Minister willing to engage with the community of Tulita on their input to the building design, for example, any traditional features that they might want to see? After all, it would be their building for a number of decades. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: As I have said, we are moving forward with this. The next step is the procurement process of this process, and once we select the contractor, our project team will be getting together to redefine the prototype of the building. As part of that process, we will be engaging the community on this and get their input, but the project team will also include regional staff and local staff. They will be engaging the Health and Social Services authority, which will be engaging the community as well; so we will be able to implement some of the specific things that the community probably wants to see in this building. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Member for Frame Lake.

QUESTION 175-18(3):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES ENERGY
STRATEGY

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Earlier today I discussed the draft NWT Energy Strategy. Public comments closed on the draft on January 3, 2018. We do not have a "what we heard" report, and no indication of what the next steps are going to be. Can the Minister of Infrastructure tell us what the next steps are for the NWT Energy Strategy and the target dates for these steps? Masi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Infrastructure.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The government is planning to release the Energy Strategy, the Climate Change Strategic Framework, and the NWT Petroleum Resource Strategy at the end of April in a coordinated, collaborative effort to bring this forward; but at the same time, Members have to realize we are working on finalizing our bilateral agreements with Infrastructure Canada, as well as Environment and Climate Change Canada, which will provide critical resources to move these strategies and action plans along. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks to the Minister for that, and I look forward to the release of the final versions later in April. In my statement, I mentioned the confusing energy targets in the NWT strategy. Some sectorial targets are related to reduced greenhouse gas emissions, while another is based on increasing renewable energy use, another is couched in terms of energy efficiency, and the largest energy use sector industry has no targets whatsoever. Can the Minister explain this patchwork approach to setting energy targets in the draft strategy?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: As the Member has stated in this House, he named off all of the targets that we have, and he is correct. Industry has no target in there. We know that industry needs to do its part on this side of things. The Government of the Northwest Territories is going to support their efforts in an incentive program to help industry reduce their emissions around a carbon pricing that we will be bringing forward.

People have asked us how we get these targets, and what we have done, we went to a federal database on the national inventory report on greenhouse gas emissions, and this is where we got our baselines and what we plan on doing in the next ten years to reduce our targets to help us meet the Pan-Canadian Framework, which we are a signatory to.

MR. O'REILLY: I would like to thank the Minister for that explanation. I suggest that he put it in the final version. It is a good start, but it doesn't really explain this patchwork approach, and I think we need to have a consistent one.

I also mentioned in my statement that the NWT Power Corporation is not even mentioned in the draft strategy. I had expected to see something for the corporation along the lines of the corporation doing itself out of a job by building energy self-reliance. Instead, we have a straitjacket approach to community-owned renewable generation that gives utilities a veto. Can the Minister tell us what

the role is for the NWT Power Corporation in the NWT Energy strategy?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: As the Member knows, NTPC produces most of the electricity in the Northwest Territories. It owns and operates all the hydro facilities in NWT, as well as most of the diesel generations. He is right. It is correct that they are an important factor in how we are going to approach this. They are a critical partner of ours in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, but, at the same time, our action plan is closely aligned with their next 20 years strategic plan on how they are going to operate and their capital requirements doing this.

Our bilateral agreement that we are going to sign with Infrastructure Canada has hundreds of millions of dollars in there right now that are going to help us align with new electricity generation in the NWT and all our communities, and we are best aligned with their strategy now more than ever before.

I have talked in this House about a number of things that we are looking at doing with them, being expanding the transmission lines to the ones that are closest to the hydro communities, to the wind farm in Inuvik, which is a possibility, but all of these things are not possible with the federal dollars to be invested in the Northwest Territories, and we are continually talking with the NTPC on how we can align our efforts in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Thanks to the Minister again. Lots of talk with the NTPC. That's great, but let's put something in writing in the strategy about what the role is going to be for that corporation moving forward.

The relationship between the NWT Energy Strategy, the Climate Change Strategic Framework, and carbon pricing is not set out in the draft Energy Strategy. A reasonable person would expect to see greenhouse gas reductions linked to specific energy conservation, fuel-switching, technology targets, that would be funded by carbon pricing revenues and federal programs. That is when I expect the approach should have been.

Can the Minister clearly explain the relationship between the Energy Strategy, the Climate Change Strategic Framework, and carbon pricing? It's not clear from the draft that is out now for public comment. Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: The Climate Change Strategic Framework will set the overall approach to addressing climate change. It will also guide the broader interests that go beyond just energy. It's

going to do climate research, adaptation, resilience activities. The Energy Strategy, as I said, is the primary tool to look at greenhouse gas reductions and energy use in the NWT as set out by our draft that we will be tabling at some point.

Carbon pricing is something that we have been working on that needs to be implemented and encourages carbon conservation, so less use of fossil fuels and the substitutions of that moving forward and how we reduce greenhouse gas emissions in our territory.

At the same time, we have to factor in minimizing the cost of living, because that is what we heard from residents of the Northwest Territories, and we don't want to cause industry or small companies barriers to be able to do economic development in our territory.

All three of these are working in lockstep together, along, as I said, with the Power Corporation. There are actually four big pieces of documents that are working in sync to meet this objective. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

QUESTION 176-18(3):
SHOULDER SEASON FERRY SERVICES

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in follow-up to my Member's statement, I have a few questions for the Minister of Infrastructure. Mr. Speaker, how has the Department of Infrastructure monitored the impacts of its decision to end shoulder season ferry services on the communities that historically relied on those ferry services? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Infrastructure.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't believe we've done that. The whole intent of the ferry service in the winter that the Member is talking about was to address the situation at the Ikhil Well and we took that out of the budget in the last session, and we believe that the proponent in Inuvik has made this a priority for them to bring propane in to be able to keep the flow of the Ikhil Well and the propane flowing.

MR. BLAKE: The Minister highlighted his department's work on accelerated ice road construction. What is the status of this work in the Mackenzie Delta?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I don't have the exact dates in front of me, but from my recollection from what I read from my briefing note before on the update on this is, when the ferry service pulled out, the one crossing was put in within 10 days of that

date, and the other one was within a month's time. With our new equipment, there was a significant challenge this year, and we have actually done it still in record time because of the warming temperatures.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions, Member for Mackenzie Delta.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister means record time by mid-February. I don't call that record time, but we'll have to discuss that later. Mr. Speaker, when will the department assess and review its decision to end the shoulder season ferry services?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I have no intention to look into the shoulder season around the communities. Our concern when we put it in was around the Inuvik situation, and as far as I've been updated to date, everything is under control. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

QUESTION 177-18(3):
KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY IN THE NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Time and time again, the Members at this side of the House have raised the issue of knowledge economy and our government's investment in it. I'd like to ask the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment exactly what his department is doing on this file? It doesn't seem like much, but perhaps he can set the record straight and allow us to understand how ITI is advancing the knowledge economy in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Mr. Speaker, this question came up yesterday when we were in front of committee. The deputy answered it, but there's a fulsome answer. This was a renewed mandate commitment to this Assembly. The knowledge economy is something new to the Legislative Assembly. There's a brand new FPT table surrounding this with the federal government. The federal government has taken a new approach to this on innovation. They've announced their clusters across the country, what they've committed to doing. We've had engagement with them on how we can try to include ourselves in some of these clusters, but as a territorial government, the knowledge economy is something new that we're trying to approach.

I think a lot of people have a misunderstanding of what knowledge economy means. We need to be able to pull data together, information that is actually a commodity, at the end of the day, that is useful, that you can tangibly, possibly sell to somebody. Our department has taken this, and we've looked at a few initiatives that we want to use around a knowledge economy. One is agriculture; one is a Northwest Territories geological survey; and the other one is the REDI initiative that we implemented last year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TESTART: I won't remind the Minister of his deputy's remarks yesterday, but again, we're hearing that not much is going on, and it's not that new. That table, perhaps the current incarnation of that table is new, but the federal budget commitment has been there for a while, and so has the money. The Minister spoke about clusters. What is the path forward for the NWT? Should we be looking to forming partnerships with the other northern territories to build up an innovation cluster for ourselves, or should we be looking to partner with Alberta? What's the path forward on knowledge clusters?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: We have a world-class facility in Inuvik, which is one option. There are all types of knowledge economy that we can pull together. It could be something based around climate change, research, adaptation, these sorts of things, but I think, as a government as a whole, this has ended up in ITI's lap. We need to take a whole government approach and have possibly even a working group to consider how we want to approach this, because it's a very complicated deal. Do we want to target the cluster situation? Do we want to look at pulling everything within the Northwest Territories together to do it, or do we bring in the three territories across the North to have an approach to this? These are the discussions that we have to have, and maybe the Member has some thoughts on that, that he can provide me with, some thoughts on what he thinks we should do.

MR. TESTART: Mr. Speaker, I'll ask the questions here, if the Minister doesn't mind. The other area here is innovation, of course. How is ITI rewarding innovators in our economy? What programs and support do they have in place to reward private sector actors who are innovating their own businesses, including the mines? How are we rewarding innovation at all levels of our economy?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I don't think the knowledge economy is about rewarding people. The knowledge economy is about bringing new methodologies to the table, new ideas, how to do business better, how to make things better for climate change adaptation. How do we increase the fibre connectivity of the North to Southerners,

satellite facilities, these sorts of things. I don't think there's a reward base. Private business rewards itself with innovation that makes it more cost effective. Innovation brings more investment dollars from outside the country. That's the type of rewards that private businesses bring. It's not the government's job to reward people for innovation.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

MR. TESTART: Mr. Speaker, if we want innovators to come and invest in the Northwest Territories, we should be offering incentives for innovation such as a tax credit that would allow a research and development tax credit, a subsidy, a program that rewards that level of investment when they invest back in their business to do those things. It is our government's job to support that, and there is federal money available to do it, so will the Minister commit to developing an innovation strategy that will address some of these key points that I've raised today? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Incentives is one thing; tax breaks is another thing. Those aren't rewards. Those are things that are put in place to bring industry to the Northwest Territories, and we will continue to look at that. I will talk to my department and our officials to see what our plans are moving forward with the knowledge economy. I would probably suggest to the Member that I will have the deputy talking to the deputies' working group and see how we're going to pull things together, and I will update the Member when I get this information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

QUESTION 178-18(3):

TRAVEL TO ARCTIC WINTER GAMES TRIALS

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to follow up with the Minister. In her last answer, she said that these athletes actually did the transportation to go to Yellowknife, and if they had stayed in Fort Simpson, they would have been able to catch the charter. Can the Minister please elaborate and explain to us what she meant by that answer? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe there were a couple of youth who, because they were weathered in, took the chance and they actually drove to Yellowknife to see if they could get a flight, which they couldn't get as well. It was, I believe, weathered in.

My understanding was that, the next day, the weather cleared in Simpson. I may be wrong, but that is my understanding, that the weather cleared and that they might have been able to get to the event if they had stayed. That may be incorrect, but what is important to note is that Sport North did pay for flight arrangements for all of the youth. In trying to be fair, I cannot accommodate youth who take it upon themselves to find alternative travel arrangements. That would be hard to determine, and then it would be looking at which youth qualified, and which youth should not. In trying to be fair to all, Sport North did provide the transportation, and I'm guessing that Sport North also may have lost out unless they had the additional insurance for them, so I can't ask them to reimburse for flights that didn't happen.

MR. THOMPSON: I guess I should explain the scenario here. These athletes here were fogged in, so they jumped in a vehicle so they could try to catch the charter going into Yellowknife, or from Yellowknife to Inuvik. That was the charter that was not successful. Will the Minister get the department to look at reimbursing them for their gas for their trip?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: As I said before, the Sport North Association paid for transportation costs to get all the youth there. Based on that, then, I cannot ask them to refund for youth who took alternative methods. I will look into it, though, and make sure that Sport North only had the charter from Yellowknife and that there was no other option, understanding that, of course, the charter, if there was one from Simpson, was weathered in. If there was a charter arranged to get the youth from Simpson, then I will not reimburse that. If there was an expectation that the youth would have to find their way to jump on a charter and that was detailed and explained to them, then we will look at reimbursing them.

MR. THOMPSON: I don't think Sport North got the money. I think the government gave Sport North the money to do these games, so that's why I'm asking the Minister to look at using this money that the government has given Sport North to reimburse these athletes who now have not had the opportunity to participate and try out for the NWT Games. Will the Minister get them to look at it and reimburse them again?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: The MLA is correct. The Government of the Northwest Territories provided Sport North with the funding to provide transportation for the youth. As stated earlier, I will check into Sport North and, if they did have a charter, so transportation arranged from the community of Fort Simpson, and the youth did not get a chance to do that, then I will not reimburse them out of pocket because that was part of the

deal. If they were asked to make their way to Yellowknife to get onto a plane and they were not reimbursed for that, then I will look into that and provide reimbursement for that cost if that was a requirement to get there.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Item 9, written questions. Item 10, returns to written questions. Mr. Clerk.

Returns to Written Questions

RETURN TO WRITTEN QUESTION 3-18(3):
GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES PARTICIPATION IN THE
ASSOCIATION FOR MINERAL EXPLORATION
ROUNDUP IN JANUARY 2018

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Speaker, I have a provisional return to Written Question 3-18(3) asked by the Member for Frame Lake on February 7, 2018 to the Premier regarding Government of the Northwest Territories Participation in the Association for Mineral Exploration Roundup in January 2018.

A full cost accounting and analysis are under way. Given the level of detail asked for and the need to consult with NWT Aboriginal governments and other key stakeholders as part of the analysis and accounting process, a response will be provided before the end of the fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Returns to written questions. Item 11, replies to Commissioner's opening address. Item 12, petitions. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Minister of Infrastructure.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 99-18(3):
ANNUAL REPORT TRANSPORTATION OF
DANGEROUS GOODS ACT DEPARTMENT OF
INFRASTRUCTURE 2017

TABLED DOCUMENT 100-18(3):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER TO ORAL QUESTION 117-
18(3): IMMIGRATION RECRUITMENT

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following two documents entitled "Annual Report Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act Department of Infrastructure 2017;" and "Follow-up Letter to Oral Question 117-18(3): Immigration Recruitment." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. Member for Frame Lake.

Notices of Motion

MOTION 10-18(3):
EXTENDED ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE TO
MARCH 6, 2018

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I give notice that on Thursday, March 1, 2018, I will move the following motion: I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Great Slave, that, notwithstanding Rule 4, when this House adjourns on March 1, 2018, it shall be adjourned until Tuesday, March 6, 2018;

And further, that any time prior to March 6, 2018, if the Speaker is satisfied, after consultation with the Executive Council and Members of the Legislative Assembly, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, the Speaker may give notice and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice and shall transact its business as it has been duly adjourned to that time. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Minister's Statement 1-18(3), North Slave Correctional Complex Inmate Concerns; Minister's Statement 19-18(3), Aurora College Foundational Review Process; Minister's Statement 32-18(3), Update on the Northwest Territories Disability Framework and Action Plan; and Tabled Document 63-18(3), Main Estimates 2018-2019. By the authority given to me as Speaker by Motion 7-18(3), I hereby authorize the House to sit beyond the daily hour of adjournment to consider the business before the House, with the Member for Hay River North in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): I now call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of committee? Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, committee would like to consider Tabled Document 63-18(3), Main Estimates 2018-2019, with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. We will commence our consideration of the document. Well, you know what, committee, how about this? We will take a five-minute break and then we'll get right into it. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): I will call the committee back to order. Committee, we have agreed to consider Tabled Document 63-18(3), Main Estimates 2018-2019, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, which begins on page 61 of the document. I will turn to the Minister responsible, for any opening comments. Do you have opening comments, Minister McLeod? If so, please proceed.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I am pleased to present the 2018-2019 Main Estimates for the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Overall, the department's estimates propose a decrease of \$2.498 million or 2.5 per cent of the 2017-2018 Main Estimates, and the net reduction of one position.

Highlights of the proposed estimates include:

- New funding of \$482,000 to improve existing climate change resilience and adaptation capacity, \$475,000 to assist with the implementation of the agriculture strategy through related animal health initiatives and a review of waste resource practices, \$440,000 to support the establishment and monitoring of candidate protected areas, \$412,000 to develop a NWT-wide country food strategy and associated programming, and \$310,000 to support the continued well-being of the Bathurst caribou herd;
- Forced growth in this year's estimates is \$72,000 to increase the contracts to community organizations for the provision of forest fire personnel;
- Expanding the department's capacity by \$103,000 and half a position to provide French-language communications and services; and
- The department's continued support toward a fiscally responsible budget by reducing \$1.3 million in recognized efficiencies in preparation for wildland fires, \$468,000 to continue the implementation of reductions approved in the 2017-2018 budget, and \$250,000 to recognize the reduced operational requirement for equipment at the Taiga Environmental Lab.

These estimates continue to support the priorities of the 18th Legislative Assembly in the areas of:

- Collaborating and fostering government-to-

government relationships with Indigenous governments in the program areas of wildlife, forestry, water, conservation, and environment;

- Improving food security by encouraging local food production, traditional harvesting, and effective co-management of caribou herds and other wildlife species;
- Investing in forestry, agriculture, and traditional harvesting and sustainable on-the-land livelihoods for residents of the NWT;
- Improving coordination and effectiveness in resource management systems, recognizing traditional knowledge, land claims agreements, and devolution;
- Implementing a strategy to mitigate and adapt to climate change in collaboration with other governments and organizations; and
- Continuing with the department's legislative initiatives to amend the Environmental Protection Act, the Environmental Rights Act, the Forest Management and Protection Act, the Waters Act, and to create new legislation for protected areas.

That concludes my opening remarks, and I look forward to answering questions from Members. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. I understand that you have witnesses you wish to bring into the Chamber. Sergeant-at-Arms, would you please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Minister, you may take your seat at the witness table. Minister, would you please introduce your witnesses for the record.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, to my right, I have Dr. Joe Dragon, who is the deputy minister of Environment and Natural Resources. To my left, I have Ms. Susan Craig, who is our director of corporate services. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Committee, we previously agreed to forego opening comments. Does committee again agree that we forego opening comments for the department?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. The departmental total can be found on page 65, but as usual, we will defer consideration of the total department until after we consider each activity. The department consists of six activities, with five additional information items found at the end of the section.

The first activity, conservation, assessment, and monitoring, is found on page 69. This activity is \$7,926,000. Does committee have comments or questions? Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I want to start by asking some questions about conservation planning. When can we expect that there is going to be a public announcement about Thaidene Nene being formally established? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, we are still in the negotiating phase. We have a few more items to discuss. My understanding is they are working on those as we speak, and we should be in a position to come with an announcement as soon as they iron out these last few details. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Is one of these details the land transfer arrangement that has to be made with the federal government? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, my understanding is the land transfer agreement just has to be finalized, and again, my understanding is that we are very close to finalizing that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. In the Minister's opening remarks, and it is found in the budget address as well, there is \$440,000 of new funding for conservation area planning. Is any of that for Thaidene Nene? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, it is. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Can the Minister tell us how much is for Thaidene Nene? This is going to be the biggest park that our government has ever established. National parks of a similar scale cost millions of dollars annually to manage. What portion of the \$440,000 is

anticipated for Thaidene Nene, and is it enough? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, my understanding is that the \$290,000 is increased funding to the funding that is already there. As far as the funding that is already there, I don't have that information at my fingertips, but I will undertake to gather that information and share it with committee. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. \$290,000. I don't know what the square kilometres for our portion of that network of area are, but that does not sound like a lot of money to start coordinated management planning and so on. I know Parks Canada spends significantly more for similar areas or national parks in the NWT. I am just going to leave that with the Minister, but when can he provide committee with a costed plan moving forward for the management of the territorial portion of Thaidene Nene? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I will commit to provide committee with a briefing as we get closer and closer to the establishment of the park, and as well, we will have some numbers as to the cost to operate it. As we get closer to concluding our negotiations, I will keep committee informed and then provide them with a briefing before we finalize it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Yes, thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, I appreciate that, and I want to encourage the Minister to have a costed cash flow moving forward for our contribution toward the management of this area. I don't think \$290,000 is going to cut it, but I am happy to see what he is going to come forward with.

I wonder, though, too: can the Minister tell us whether we have any staff who are being trained for the management of this new area? Are there secondments going on with Parks Canada? What are we doing to get ready to assume management responsibility for this new area? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, first I will just speak to the funding of the \$290,000. I said before it was to increase the funding for monitoring of the Canada protected areas, and \$290,000 was specifically earmarked for Thaidene Nene, and that was to conclude the planning and decision-making.

Again, as we get close to finalizing it, we have been working on some preliminary numbers as to what it might cost us. I will finalize those numbers. I will share them with committee. As far as billing or capacity, we will work with ITI and see what is needed to enhance our capacity to monitor and look after the park. We will be putting that information together, and I will be glad to sit down with committee and share that as we get closer to finalizing it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. It looks like there is going to have to be a supplementary appropriation for this. I probably don't need to impress upon the Minister or his staff the significance of taking on a large area like this and managing it properly as a protected area equivalent to a national park. That does require a significant investment of funds from our government.

There are also significant benefits that are going to come, and I look forward to having more of a discussion with him moving forward, but if we are going to really take this on, we have to do it right. We have to find the money to do it, and it has to be a serious commitment. There will be benefits for people in Yellowknife, and for Lutsel'e on the other side of the lake as well, but I just don't really get a sense that we are approaching this with the seriousness that it needs; but I'll stop there.

I want to move on to Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program. It looks like there are reductions of that in the order of \$190,000, and that money is being shifted to corporate management, which I think is the next item, for legislative proposals, and some money is being taken out for another activity that I just cannot remember off the top of my head. Why is there money being shifted out of the Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Dr. Dragon.

DR. DRAGON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. What we looked at doing there was an internal transfer to corporate management. This would be to increase the capacity to support the overall department's programs in that area. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Yes, that's what I was worried about. Look, the Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program is established under federal legislation, the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act. It's part 6. It's the audit function and state of the environment function for the MVRMA. If there is money to be taken out to support legislative initiatives, where is the legislation to actually set up the Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program to a greater extent than what is already in Part 6 of the MVRMA?

If we're using this as a pot to shuffle off money for other departmental activities, in my view, that's wrong. This Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program, we got money out of the federal government as part of devolution to carry out this responsibility and implement it. If we're now using that money to fund other work internally that ENR should have been doing or that FMB should be coming up with more money, that's just not right.

Again, why are we taking money out of the Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program, which is set up under Part 6 of the MVRMA, to do audit and state of the environment reporting to support other internal activities of the department? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, before I hand it off to Dr. Dragon, the Member's first comment before, and I failed to reply to it, on the Thaidene Nene. Obviously, our desire is to do this right, and we're going to make sure we do it right. The federal government is going to make some investments, so we'll have the resources to make sure we have the ability and the capacity to monitor this part.

As far as shuffling money off, we don't do that. We don't shuffle money off, but I'll get Dr. Dragon to respond to why the money was being moved from CIMP over. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Dr. Dragon.

DR. DRAGON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In looking at efficiencies within this area, we had a person who could provide those services to the department and we thought it best that we were able to put that person in the position to provide that service for all the departments. With the Lands lawyer, we look at on oversight role for departments and services. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Dr. Dragon. The time has expired. However, no one else is on the list. I'll open it up to a second round of comments. First, I have Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to clarify some of the issues raised by my honourable friend, the Member from Frame Lake, on this Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program. Although there is a decrease indicated on page 69, if you turn to page 70, it would appear that the contribution to the Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program is actually increasing by just under \$300,000, and conservation planning is likewise increased. Could the Minister just speak to the issue of the program detail decreasing but the overall contribution increasing? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Craig.

MS. CRAIG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Within the Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program, we've had some vacancies, so we had a bit of salary surplus which is being transferred to corporate management temporarily. Indeed, the Member is correct in that the grants and contributions have increased. They historically have been oversubscribed, so we moved some money from operations and maintenance into grants and contributions so that that money would be available to go out to the recipients. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Craig. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for the clarification. What is this? The money in the grant, what is it used for by grant recipients? I'm just wondering if we can get just a brief summary of where this money goes and how it benefits the public policy objective of conservation efforts by this government. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister McLeod

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, we have a comprehensive list here. There is a number of items where it lists where the money goes. What I can commit to doing is getting a copy of this list to Members. That way, they'll have a fairly good idea as to where the money goes. It's a fairly long list, but we're looking at fish and water and caribou. It's pretty well where the money is going. There is a number of items on here. If committee wishes, I can provide the list. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Might as well. If the Minister can provide that list, that would be helpful. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Minister McLeod

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, if the list won't do, then I can sit here and read it out and take up some of committee's time.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: My apologies if there's any confusion, Mr. Chair. I think the list is acceptable to me. I'm not sure about the other committee Members. They may have questions for the Minister, but I think being clear about where this money is going, but look, I think one of the best ways we can use these conservation funds is to get them in the hands of people who are doing that work. It seems like the government is doing that, and I appreciate that, notwithstanding concerns about the overall management of the Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program, but it does look like there's more money getting out to do conservation efforts and that is something I support. Again, I'll thank our witnesses today for clarifying the discrepancy between the program's details and the contributions. With that, nothing further. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Mr. Nakimayak.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm on page 70 on conservation planning. I'd just like to wonder, Mr. Chair, the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk highway opened recently and in this summer I'm sure there's going to be some sort of an impact on the fishing along the highway, as well as Husky Lakes. I'm just wondering if the Minister and his colleagues can update us on any talks with fisheries, joint management with the Inuvialuit, the land administration, or the federal government, any types of conservation along the highway and Husky Lakes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Nakimayak. Dr. Dragon.

DR. DRAGON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we've been well aware of that in the department on the impact that the new highway would have on resources. We've been working with both the Inuvialuit and the Gwich'in and talking about our enforcement in those areas. In addition, we've also had conversations with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans on how we could increase enforcement pressures as of the result on more visitors to that area. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Dr. Dragon. Mr. Nakimayak.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: I appreciate the response, Mr. Chair. That's all I have for this section. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you. Any further questions on this activity? Seeing none, we will go to page 69 and read conservation, assessments and monitoring, operations expenditures summary, \$7,926,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Agreed. Okay, we shall move on to the next activity, corporate management, beginning on page 73. Please, Members, refer to which page you're directing your questions to. Questions? Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Since the decision was made to dispense with opening comments, I have a few opening comments on this particular activity item because this is sort of the corporate heart of the department and where policy, planning, legislation, communications, and so on, take place.

First off, I want to recognize that there are lots of great staff within the department, very hardworking, and many that I worked with before I became an MLA. I know that they continue to do a great job, but the problem is they don't get the resources that are necessary to do the job the way that it should be done.

This is only one of three departments that is getting cut in the 2018-2019 budget. The reductions are over \$3 million, and most are being reallocated internally for other initiatives, the sort of switching that I talked about earlier.

You can see this on page 73. Look at the compensation and benefits over time. From 2016-2017 to where we are now, that is a 14 per cent reduction in compensation and benefits within the department. This is a department that is bleeding, and they cannot get the job done.

Now, to prove that, I want to ask the Minister: there are 27 mandate commitments that this department has. How many of those have actually been completed? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the Member is absolutely correct. We have a lot of good people who work over at the department. I think, as far as the funding goes, they obviously feel they are able to do the job with the resources that they have. If they needed to seek more resources, then they would go to FMB. I think

they will continue to do the work with the resources they have.

ENR has been very good at, as we get into the information items later, getting a lot of external funding as well. In fact, I think we have brought on one person to do the work going after external funding. We have been very successful. I think we have almost \$6.7 million in external funding from those that like to fund research projects; so we have been successful in that.

As far as the mandate items, we do not have that information at our fingertips, and I apologize for that in advance. I will work with our deputy and our officials to make sure we get that information and share it with the Members, but my apologies for that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I did the homework for the Minister over the lunch hour. Out of the 27 commitments when you look at the mandate tracker on the executive website, only one has been completed; one out of 27 items. This is a department that cannot get the job done. They are behind in legislation, important wildlife planning, climate change initiatives. I am sorry to say this, but the department is way behind on everything, and it is because of the cuts that continue to be made to this department.

Last year, and again this year, there are cuts of \$371,000 to the corporate management function. You have lost four positions in communications, policy, and legislation. That is why things are not getting done.

Legislation is behind schedule. We are behind schedule in terms of getting caribou recovery strategies together. Our climate change work is lagging. It is because the department does not have the capacity to get the work done, and I think there are probably even more cuts coming.

I guess I would like to hear from the Minister how he is going to work to try to get this department back on track again. Can he go to his colleague, the Minister of Finance, to get more money to get the job done? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I could sit here all day and disagree with the Member, and he will disagree with everything I say, but I totally disagree with him, and I take offence to the fact that he says that this department cannot get the work done. That, to me, is not thinking very highly of the capacity of the

people that we have there. They obviously feel that they are able to get the work done.

He has mentioned a couple of things, and I appreciate him doing my homework for me. I thank him for that, but the work on the Climate Change Strategic Framework, we are nearing completion on that work, and some things have changed that had us have to go back and look at the work we have done. We have to align it with a couple of the other strategies that are out.

I would be happy to share that information with the Member. I don't think I have briefed him on it yet, but there are some changes that have been made that have had us go back and look at the work that we are doing. It is unfortunate, because our folks put a lot of work into the Climate Change Strategic Framework based on the numbers that we were given. Some things have changed, and I need to have a conversation with the Member about that.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, I don't want to turn this into a big debate. I started off my remarks complimenting the hard-working staff in this department; there are just not enough of them to get the job done. That is my point here. I haven't really received much to make me any more confident that anything is going to change in 2018-2019 with this department. Look, I support the work that they are trying to do. They just don't have enough money to get it done.

I don't have any further questions for the Minister on this part, other than to try to encourage him to get his department more resources to actually get the job done, and please stop the cuts to the department. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I was reflecting on the business plan review that the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Environment conducted of the department's business plans, and subsequently, that has fed into this budget review process. One thing that was very clear is that the department is significantly delayed in pursuing its legislative agenda. They are not alone in this. We have not seen a considerable amount of legislation.

Now, I, for one, think that the government, when it is proposing reductions or changes the budget, they are considered in those reductions. I don't always support them, but I believe them when they say we are going to make cuts, and they are not going to affect operations. However, time and time again we have seen this department emerge with business

plans that have not been accomplishing a whole lot, and again, we hear that reductions in the appropriations are not the cause of that.

What is the hold-up, in particular with the devolution legislation? This is a long time coming that we have needed this legislation, and we have not made significant progress on it, not at all. What is the department's legislative timelines for its legislative agenda moving forward? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, we have a number of pieces of legislation that are coming forward. I think we have amendments to four pieces of existing legislation, and we have one new legislation. We have done a lot of work on these. I think work is proceeding towards the goal of having all five pieces of legislation coming into force on July 1, 2019.

I think I have made a commitment in previous discussions with committee on updating them, and I think we had one update. We are looking at doing all of the amendments, and the LPs are approved. I know five pieces of legislation is a lot to pile on committee in the last two years of the Assembly. We are all going to be busy for the next two years. We do plan on having these legislations coming into force of July 1, 2019. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think that is good work, and I look forward to doing it. I just hope that we don't see any further delays with these important pieces of legislation. They are important for the development of the territorial economy, and also in ensuring that we are protecting our environment and managing our environmental liabilities.

The climate change audit that was done by the Auditor General of Canada, who is also the Auditor General of Record for the Northwest Territories, was quite critical of the department's leadership role in climate change as the lead department in government. I think it is appropriate to raise those concerns in this corporate management area.

I know that there is a Climate Change Strategic Framework that the department has developed, but one thing that that document does not contain, and one thing that the department did not commit to, or did not address in the audit review, was how its working relationship with other departments of government. How does the department plan to address its working relationship with all departments of government, in particular on climate change? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Yes, go ahead, Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, we are working closely with the other departments on our Climate Change Strategic Framework. We want to make sure that all these strategies we are set to release are coordinated, so we work closely with them.

On the leadership, I mean, the Auditor General I think admitted themselves that some of the things that they looked at were done before they realized some of the work that we were doing. Good on them for admitting that.

We're looking at developing a GNWT direct level coordination leadership group. We're also looking at forming a climate change council with GNWT, an external membership, to inform on implementation and then receive input from Indigenous governments and organization, industry, communities, NGOs, and the public. It's a similar approach that was taken in the Water Strategy. We do coordinate with the other departments and make sure that we're all singing from the same song sheet and trying to achieve the same goal and make sure that the work that we are doing is coordinated. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Is the department considering any memoranda of understanding with other GNWT departments in order to create the authority it needs to form a leadership role over climate change activities in this government? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, we don't have MOUs with other departments. We have a very coordinated approach. There is a committee that is set up, direct level committee, I believe. It would be different if you were working with external stakeholders like Aboriginal governments, where you do sometimes enter into MOUs, but within the government itself, between departments, I'm not sure if it's common practice to have MOUs between departments. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The department has had its strategies and frameworks implemented before, such as the greenhouse gas emissions strategy, which is one of the areas the Auditor General addressed, and that was one of the big issues. The framework was in place. There was

buy-in across government, but nothing actually happened at the end of the day. I know that in some cases around information sharing, MOUs are entered into between GNWT departments. Is this an approach that the Minister will consider moving forward? It is something that the Auditor General recognized that was lacking, the authorities in place. A strategy or framework is not an authority that gives the department the real ability to take position in that leadership role. Is this something that the Minister will look at? I'm happy to work with him on this. The standing committee, I'm sure, will be happy to address this. It is something the Auditor General has repeatedly mentioned, and it is still unaddressed. Is this an area the Minister can commit to looking into? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister McLeod?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the simple answer to the Member's question is: I will go back and we'll explore it, and have a conversation, and see if it's something that we need to do, or if just a coordinated approach will work. Again, once we gather some information, if it's the wish of committee, we'd be more than happy to update them. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. There's time for one more question. Mr. Testart?

MR. TESTART: Thank you for your indulgence, Mr. Chair, and also for the Minister indulging this line of questioning, which is very much a policy area. It is important to remember that, although he is in the chair right now, he is not always in the chair. It's the officials' level that does a lot of this work, and that's why instruments like MOUs are valuable, because it's not always Cabinet that makes these decisions. I have no further questions on this activity. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Any further questions? Mr. Nakimayak.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Back on page 74 as well, too, I see country foods has \$100,000. Could the department give an update on the strategy, on the framework for that? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Nakimayak. Minister McLeod. Dr. Dragon.

DR. DRAGON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The country foods strategy and program development, we are currently working with communities to support on-the-land activities related to hunting, trapping, fishing, hunting, and gathering. We propose to develop a program consisting of the development of a sustainable, collaborative country foods programming that supports communities along with

a community driven pilot initiatives to build capacity to deliver locally appropriate programs, and finally to develop a collaborative research and monitoring initiative related to characterization, stewardship, management, and sustainability of country food systems. What we're looking at doing is having 11 regional engagement sessions with a number of Indigenous governments. After that process, we will develop a "what we heard" document as a basis for drafting the strategy and further public engagement. We're expecting the strategy to be complete by March 2019. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Dr. Dragon. Mr. Nakimayak.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's actually really good to hear. I think, as we move forward with our budgets, we look at conservation. Mr. Chair, I believe that the harvesters and the people who are out on the land are the best conservationists, period. I think those are the people we need to engage with, furthermore, and actually learn from them, build Indigenous traditional knowledge, and have them collaborate. Also, I'm just wondering, more of a comment: I think it's about time that government, it's not just the territory but all across Canada, look at the lead the Northwest Territories for joint committees to conserve, manage, and take authority for the caribou, for all the land-bearing species, and all the mammals that, I guess, are living resources, is how we call it. I just want to know what the department has to say on traditional knowledge as well, too, while we're on this page. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Nakimayak. Minister McLeod. Dr. Dragon.

DR. DRAGON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. One of the initiatives that we've been really looking at and focusing our attention on lately has been the guardianship programs, where we're out with Indigenous governments and looking at having local community members. Not only have we encouraged this with our Water Strategy, where we've had local water monitors who have been out. We're looking at further capacity of doing those types of programs across the Northwest Territories. The comment regarding traditional knowledge, I believe we're doing a real focus of that in the department. We've recently changed the science agenda to the knowledge agenda, which incorporates the use of traditional knowledge. I see this as a huge opportunity that we need to continue, although I know that, at different times as we go across in different regions, having the conversations with community people, is we find that they want to participate. It's finding in the right time and the right opportunity for them to participate in activities. In certain cases, here in the North Slave region, we'll have community members who

will actually go on patrols and provide that type of guidance and learning opportunities for our officers. That's worked really, really well.

Overall, I think, again, as we look at the Climate Change Strategic Framework, a big part of that is traditional knowledge and how we incorporate that. I see that as being a big focus of where we're going in the department. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Dr. Dragon. Mr. Nakimayak.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the response. I know sometimes traditional knowledge or Indigenous knowledge is easy to promote and work with here in Canada. It's outside that other countries don't really see so much the value, but I appreciate the department for putting topics like this and lines like this in the budget. I think we need to continue to work with this for it to grow and integrate as we learn together. That's all I have to say. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Nakimayak. Any further questions? Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm going to ask in this area under corporate management. It's relative to, I guess, knowledge agenda. We do identify it in the Environment activity, but it's more of a line item that relates to funding to support the Carbon Flex Monitoring Network. I've come to, as we all have, understand that the Knowledge Agenda is going to be led by this department. It's a mix of a bunch of things. The honourable Member from Nunakput just spoke a little bit on some of what traditional knowledge means and how that relates to the Knowledge Agenda. We've questioned the Department of Lands and ITI about the knowledge economy. We speak strongly as a government about wanting to support our own made-in-the-North innovation and technology.

I'm just wondering if the Minister or the department can give some explanation around what the real understanding is of our government in trying to create a vision, I suppose, for what it is that we envision as the Knowledge Agenda; and as the lead department, what undertakings or initiatives are we going to take to start to create a clear vision so people can understand where in fact it is that we're going in this new realm that we're undertaking. We heard from other departments that, you know, in all fairness, they're struggling to kind of understand where it is that we're going to go and that we've got a lot of work to do in this, but this is the department that's being tasked with the lead on this. If we can get some insight from the Minister with regard to what he envisions that we're actually going to do to promote this agenda and this

important mandate item, that would be appreciated. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Dr. Joe Dragon.

DR. DRAGON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. With the Knowledge Agenda, as I mentioned earlier, I'm taking it from a science to a Knowledge Agenda. What we've really tried to do there is encourage the use of traditional knowledge.

In the scientific community, and one that went through the science of going to university, traditional knowledge is not in their experiments. It's not in their theory as they go through school and as you get a doctorate and you're studying. I think one of the things that we need to do is try to ask: how do we incorporate that traditional knowledge at the front-end versus the back-end of the conversation?

Recently, what I did was I invited the president of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the acronym is SSHRC, and that deals with social sciences, and brought him up with the opportunity to see of how we're going to try to incorporate more traditional knowledge in the science and letting him be aware that when these granting councils are giving millions and millions in dollars to researchers to come up in the North, what are some priorities of the North?

We had a really good visit in November. The President of the NSERC, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, whose name is Dr. Pinto, is going to be arriving in the end of March. That's on the applied sciences. What we're trying to do is bring those two granting councils, that give away millions of dollars to researchers, to align that to a conversation of how we do things in the North and ensuring that we have traditional knowledge. That's one of the first questions. As well, making sure that their engagement with Indigenous groups and different regions across the North is doing research that they want to do.

That's really where I see the Knowledge Agenda going. I see it as an opportunity for us to actually make a difference in this conversation, but again, I see it as a challenge. I don't see it as something that's going to happen overnight because we have researchers who come up into the North from a real, varied number of university institutions, but they've been doing their research in a certain way. With the Knowledge Agenda, we're looking at trying to change that way of thinking and making sure that traditional knowledge and local knowledge is included in that type of research. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Dr. Dragon. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for some of the additional detail. It sounds like those are great undertakings and great initiatives to start rolling out work on the Knowledge Agenda.

It almost seems like it's also a little bit ahead of itself in terms of we're still trying to understand as a government, and I guess the public is trying to understand: what is our vision? Is the department going to work on any framework of any kind that's going to really outline what it is that our government's doing in promoting the Knowledge Agenda? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Dr. Dragon.

DR. DRAGON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, if we look at a vision, one of the things that I think what we have to look at is four pillars. The management of information, I think, is paramount. We'd look at building a repository so that we have these information sources from traditional, local, and scientific knowledge that we can refer to as we retain all this information.

We also have to look at our natural environment. Looking at the availability of information on weather, on permafrost, on aquatic ecosystems, forest and tundra and systems, all our species at risk, as well as our country food sources.

The third pillar would be looking at human health, public safety, culture, and heritage. They're looking at how we look at mapping vulnerable communities and seeing whether or not those have areas that we need to look in.

Finally, we would look at the goal of infrastructure and looking at how we obtain accurate climate data and information from the different areas. How do we make sure that it's based on the infrastructure design and look at climate projections, whether or not we can include that? Now that's more on the climate change side, but those give you kind of the pillars and the vision of what we're looking at in terms of the overall Knowledge Agenda. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Dr. Dragon. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm just on my last point. You know, it sounds like we have some initiatives in the works. I appreciate the insight on the four pillars. I'm very excited to, already excited, believe it or not, to see what's going to come forward from the department in the next year's business plans, because I'd really like to see some advancement in this area.

If I could almost suggest a fifth pillar, it would be an economic development component. There's a lot of opportunity out there to build around centres of excellence and northern design and innovation incubators. Arctic Inspiration Prize is always looking for new initiatives and projects to fund. We want to take advantage of those kinds of organizations and develop this knowledge economy and prove to the world that we have resources that are available for sale as it relates to information technology. We are not just a resource-driven jurisdiction. I guess, Mr. Chair, that is all I have in this activity. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Any further questions on this activity? If not, we will go back to page 73 and call this summary. Environment and Natural Resources, corporate management, operations expenditure summary, \$13,928,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Agreed. Thank you. We shall move on to page 78, starting on 78 and ending on 81. Questions to this activity? Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I have a question for the contaminated site remediation section. I notice the budget here of \$319,000. I am wondering: how come there is so little money in that budget when there are so many sites? I recognize that the sites are split between the federal government and the GNWT at the time that the devolution agreement was signed, but I just can't imagine what you can do with that much money, or that little money, I should say, maybe. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Ms. Craig.

MS. CRAIG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The budget that is presented here in the amount of \$319,000 is our operational budget for oversight and policy related to contaminated sites. The actual budget for cleaning up contaminated sites that we acquired as part of devolution is held in an environmental liabilities fund by the Department of Finance. It's not shown in our appropriation; it would be shown as an info item in the Department of Finance's budget. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Craig. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have any further questions at this point.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Any further questions? Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I would like to start with page 78, the \$200,000 that is shown under waste reduction. I believe that is for the agricultural strategy, but can someone confirm what that funding is for? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the Member is correct. It is for the agricultural strategy implementation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Could the Minister provide some detail, then, on what that work is going to be? Part of the issue here is there is this agricultural strategy implementation funding that is sprinkled across a whole bunch of departments, and I am not sure how it is being coordinated. What is this funding going to accomplish? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, we work in partnership with ITI, and Health and Social Services, and Lands, but our \$200,000 appropriation is for development of best practices, policies, and regulations to support animal health; gap analysis in review of current waste resource practices and needs of the NWT; complete compiled list of current farming organizations and survey their work management practice; contracted veterinarian services, animal health monitoring, animal care and welfare outreach policy and program work; and review, analysis, and development of a framework to manage agricultural waste. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Thanks to the Minister for that detail. I want to move back up to the contaminated sites and remediation line item, \$319,000, and I believe one of our witnesses talked about how that is really for oversight and administration.

ENR is the GNWT partner on the Giant Mine remediation, and I know we are not responsible for paying for that, but the Giant Mine remediation is going to be the largest project ever undertaken in Yellowknife. I don't know what the cost figures are, because the federal government has not released anything recent, but it is going to be well over a billion dollars.

What is ENR doing, maybe working with ITI, to make sure that people here in the Northwest Territories are going to benefit from that remediation effort? Is there anything that ENR is doing on that front? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Dr. Dragon.

DR. DRAGON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In terms of benefitting and working with the department of ITI, what we've looked at is having our staff have regular meetings with the Department of ITI to understand what are the potential opportunities, and that includes not only local employment, but the conversation that has happened over the last few months is looking at having local employment and providing opportunities.

We have also been working with ECE on looking at developing opportunities for local northern businesses that could be available that would be able to train Northerners to be able to participate in that operation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Dr. Dragon. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I am pleased to hear that. I would like to get some more details at some point.

Under the devolution agreement, there are more than 700 contaminated sites that are identified. This is a project that is probably going to start in the next two or three years. Well, I shouldn't say that, but this is an opportunity for us to build capacity locally, to do a lot of the other work that is going to come from the 700 contaminated sites, and start to build the kind of knowledge economy that my colleague from Yellowknife North talked about as well, where we have some expertise in knowledge of environmental remediation. I know that there's another big project at Norman Wells that is going to require a lot of remediation as well.

Can the Minister commit to give us, not now, but in writing or through a presentation, a little bit more about what our government is doing to help build capacity around the issue of environmental remediation and how that is linked to the knowledge economy? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will commit to the Member and committee that we will pull some information together. I believe the contract for the management of that has been awarded, so we will work closely with them and see what opportunities we can take advantage of for

some of the people in the Northwest Territories and the businesses to be a part of that project.

We will pull some information together, and then, at the wish of committee, we will come and make that presentation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, the company that got the contract is Parsons, which is an American company, unfortunately, but they have done work here before. In any event, I am not sure what their Aboriginal or northern hiring or contracting commitments were with the federal government who did the tendering process, but that would be interesting information to get.

I want to move on to the contaminated sites and remediation. I know one of the witnesses talked about how the money to actually do that work is in the Environment Fund, so can I just get a bit more of an explanation, then? So does ENR actually contract or carry out the remediation work or manage it in some way, or what is their role in these contaminated sites and remediation? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, my understanding is that ENR does contract out the work to do the remediation on these on behalf of the Government of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Okay, thanks, Mr. Chair. I might have some other questions, but I do not think I am going to have enough time to get to that in this round, so I want to ask about the Climate Change Strategic Framework. We are supposed to be getting an action plan soon for that. Is there any money in this budget to carry out the action plan? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Dr. Dragon.

DR. DRAGON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, so, with the Climate Change Strategic Framework, we are looking at releasing that at the end of April. In doing so, the next step of that is to develop an action plan that will be clear on the deliverables for the Climate Change Strategic Framework. As we roll that out with community consultation across the Northwest Territories and stakeholders, we will have a better idea of what it is going to cost to implement that action plan, and that is when we will be coming

forward with those costs. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Dr. Dragon. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, and I recognize this is an area where the federal government should be providing some assistance, as well. Am I hearing, then, that the department is going to be bringing forward a supplementary appropriation to do this work? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, that partially depends on what the federal government does as far as funding goes and then the release of our strategy. If we can have the numbers in place for the next business planning process, we will go through that. If there is a need for appropriation before that time, then standard practice is that the department goes to the FMB to request supplementary appropriation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Any further questions? Seeing none, I shall call this activity on page 78. Environment and Natural Resources, environment, operations expenditure summary, \$4,290,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Agreed. Before pursuing on to the other half, the chair recognizes that supper is here, so we will take a break for supper at the call of the chair. Dr. Dragon and Ms. Craig, you are invited to join us.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): We can call committee back to order and begin with the next activity, starting on page 82 and ending in 84. Forest management. Questions to this activity? Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, a couple of years ago, I think it was 2014-2015, those were those two back-to-back years where we had considerable forest fires. They were big fire years and they happened to take place the same time that we were having low water years. Unfortunately, over those couple of years, we did lose some assets. I know that we had some reviews take place, and I'm just wondering if the department or the Minister can confirm with us what the department is doing now as it relates to some of the recommendations that stem from those inspection or review reports, and are we putting

appropriate funding and resources towards those recommendations to make sure that we're limiting the loss of assets in the future? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister McLeod?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the report that was done a few years ago, there were recommendations that were made. We've integrated a lot of those recommendations into how we do business as we go forward. We've been able to do that with the existing funding, and if there's a need to acquire additional funding to help us implement some of those, then ENR will come forward with the proper appropriation. I'm thinking ENR has done a good job in integrating those recommendations into the existing budget on how we deal with those as we go forward. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I respect that we had some inspections take place and we did these reviews, and they resulted in reports that we're now learning from and initiating. Did we at the end of the day reach out as a department, not through any inspectors, but as a department, did we reach out to any of the asset holders and gain any insight from them what they might have to offer as it relates to the experience that they had in losing their assets? If we have, is there anything that we had learned from talking to or listening to those stakeholders? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Dr. Dragon.

DR. DRAGON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, following those incidents, we did have some public engagements where we talked to different folks who had suffered losses. In all those cases, we tried to follow up and ensure what we can learn from the situation. As we know, those fires during the 2014-2015, there were numerous fires. In terms of our ability and capacity to fight all the fires, we couldn't, but it was really done as an exercise where we were looking at based on where we had crews and equipment, the fires that we could fight; but yes, we did have public engagement sessions with various stakeholders. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Dr. Dragon. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that, and I also appreciate that we're going to put the proper resources towards hopefully preventing some loss of assets in the future. I know to some degree it's maybe impossible. With that

said, let's move on to talk about our new water bomber fleet. Is there anything that the department can do to kind of inform us of how well the new water bomber fleet is working? I appreciate that we didn't have as big a season, thankfully. That's something to be thankful for, that we didn't have as big a fire season last year. How is the water bomber fleet working out? Are we sending our water bombers to other jurisdictions when they're in need of help, and have we sold off our old water bombers? What's the status on our water bomber situation for our government? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the new firefighting fleet that we have is getting rave reviews. They're very, very efficient, and they've done everything we expected them to do, which is good. The Member is absolutely correct. We're fortunate this year, we haven't had an opportunity to see how they really work but that's a good thing. The maintenance cost on these are practically nil for the next few years. As far as the old water bomber fleet, those have all been sold and the money is in the bank. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Well, this is all good news. During our years that we don't have as much firefighting to contain, do we ever send our water bomber fleet to other jurisdictions, or do we typically not do that? That's just a curiosity question. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and that is my final question. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, well, first of all, we look after our own territory, but if it is not a busy fire season and if we have the resources, the answer is yes, we will look at letting other jurisdictions use them. I am assuming we get paid for that, but I will confirm. We do get paid for that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just under "wildfire risk management plans," the number seems kind of low. I know more responsibility has been put on the community governments to do the planning. I am not sure if the plan was to make community governments use their capital plan planning dollars for firebreaks, but, you know, \$75,000 seems kind of low for the number of communities that need to either redo or actually

have a first firebreak put in place. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, this is just our contribution through ENR to help do some of the FireSmarting. There are other pots of funding that they are able to access to complete the work, I believe through MACA. They get some funding through MACA, and then I believe through the small community employment fund that there are some opportunities there that have been identified by some of the smaller communities as a good way that they could use that fund. This is just ENR's contribution to the FireSmarting program. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Maybe you could correct me if I am wrong, but, in the past, wasn't ENR pretty much taking care of the whole cost of firebreaks? This might have been 15 or 20 years ago, but I know, when Tsiigehtchic did it, at the time, I believe ENR pretty much took care of the total cost. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would have to do some research into that, but, as the Member pointed out, in 2007 a new deal came in where a lot of the capital money went to the communities, and that may have replaced some of the money that ENR was contributing towards this. I am sure, if we did not have the new deal, then you would see the appropriation for ENR probably still at historical levels. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Maybe just on that note, are there communities that are making use of this \$75,000? Because I know Tsiigehtchic and Fort McPherson would like to redo their firebreaks, and I am sure you will be seeing a proposal in the next month or so here. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Blake. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, my understanding of this is that this is application-based, and it has been fully subscribed to the last few years. So, if the Member's communities come forward with a proposal, then I am sure it is one that we will look

at, and, if there is funding available, we will put some funding toward it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Blake. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On page 83, under "grants," we see "fire damage compensation." I am just wondering, in the 2017-2018 fiscal year, how much of this money was spent? I am just wondering about the overall level of subscription. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In 2017-2018, there was \$30,000 spent of this money. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: My apologies, Mr. Chair. Can the Minister repeat the response? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, in 2017, there was approximately \$30,000 of the \$100,000 that was allocated. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So, the actuals in 2016-2017 were only \$10,000. What was the difference between the estimates and the actuals in 2016-2017? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. The difference would have been \$90,000 because the budget allocation is \$100,000. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So I am just wondering about the department's logic behind it. I mean it seems like this is a very large appropriation based on the amount of people who are actually benefitting from the grant. Is there a reason that the appropriation is \$100,000 when it seems like, for the two years that are indicated in these documents, we have \$10,000 and then \$30,000? How would the Minister characterize the planning that goes behind the \$100,000 figure? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, my understanding is that this is just a holding number for the purposes of the budget. There are some years, say 2014-2015, bad fire seasons we had, for example. It is my understanding that there were a few hundred thousand dollars that were paid out, and that came forward in the form of a supplementary appropriation at that time. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Okay, so, if the money is not spent, this is returned to general revenues, or is this diverted internally to other activities in the department? How is the lapsed funding typically used by the department? Is it just lapsed funding that goes away, or is it spent on other activities? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the money stays within the department, actually within that division, and is used for other purposes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Okay, thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for the clarification on that. The next question is about forestry resources, so just a general question: have we completed forestry inventories for all of our available forestry product stock in the Northwest Territories for the purposes of industrial and economic harvesting? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, yes, we have completed our forest inventory. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Do we evaluate our inventories based on their -- I am not sure the technical language, but as carbon sinks? Have we recognized the benefits of reducing carbon admissions that our forestry assets represent, and do we take that into consideration when we are managing our inventories? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I am not sure whether we do that or not, but I will work with our division and get the information and share it with committee, so the quick answer is I am really not sure. I do not have the information at my fingertips, but we will work on getting that information. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. In the forestry management agreements that we currently have in place for industrial purposes, is there a climate change or environmental lens applied to those agreements before they are signed or as they are signed, as they are developed? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. We appreciate the suggestion from the Member. I am not quite sure if the agreements we have in place actually have those, but, I mean, I think it is a good suggestion. We will go back, have a look at those agreements and see if they have those, and if they do not, then we will look at maybe as we go forward trying to incorporate them into any further agreements, or see if there is opportunity to incorporate them into the existing agreements. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I apologize; I know the Member for Mackenzie Delta asked some questions about the wildfire risk management plans, but I will ask a similar question as I did about the fire damage compensation. Is this money, the \$75,000 that has been allocated, does this get out the door every year? Or is this, again, a holding pattern type of thing? Well, let's clarify. So in the 2017-2018 fiscal year, how much of the \$75,000 was utilized by communities for the developmental of wildfire risk management plans? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. My understanding is all of this money gets out the door, and when we do this year's actuals, then we will be able to give you an accurate figure; but my understanding is all this money is allocated. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The money made available, is it oversubscribed? Are more

communities asking for assistance in their wildfire risk plans than the funding currently provides? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, my understanding is that we get enough applications that this program is fully utilized, and so all of the money goes out the door as far as the number of applications we get and the dollar figure that is attached to them. I do not really have that at my fingertips. I will check with the department, though, because that is an interesting question. I will check with the department to see what actual dollar value the requests come in at and whether it is close to the \$75,000 or over. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Testart. No. Next, we have Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In regard to contract services, I am assuming that is for the fire fighters and stuff like that. Can the Minister tell me how many fire crews are in my region and in which communities? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, in Fort Simpson, I believe there are 13 positions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I guess I should have been a little more specific. I mean, I represent six communities, so I am trying to see. I know Fort Simpson is there, but what about Fort Liard, Samba K'e, Jean Marie, Nahanni Butte, and Wrigley? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the 13 positions are in Fort Simpson. My understanding is in the other communities, the work is done by existing fire crews that we have on staff, but there are 13 positions in Fort Simpson in the Deh Cho region. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you. I appreciate the Minister's answer there. I guess I am looking at the crews and how many crews are out there, because

I know, in some of the smaller communities, we do not have crews there. I think I have asked this question before to the Minister: Jean Marie and Nahanni Butte, I do not know if they have crews in there, so I am wondering if the department would be looking at putting crews there? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, my understanding is, in some of the smaller communities, we do send crews in as needed. As far as the community itself having their own crew, we have no contracts in place with any of the smaller communities to have a dedicated crew in that community. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. McLeod. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I know Samba K'e has a crew. They have a crew there. They actually are contracted out there. There is a crew there, but what I am looking for is some of the other communities. Would the department look at potentially putting some crews there so that, depending on the fitness level and all of that, the requirements, would they be willing to look at expanding, putting crews in these smaller communities? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Dr. Dragon.

DR. DRAGON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I know from time to time we have looked at putting crews into the smaller communities, depending on fire activity. We also train in those communities, depending, so that we have emergency firefighters. In certain instances where we have tried to do this in other communities, we have not been able to get up to the appropriate number of crew members, so our crews, what we changed in previous years from a five-man crew to a four-man crew, but it really depends on seasonal activity in those areas of whether or not it dictates to have a crew situated. In years where we have increased fire activity, we could look at providing an opportunity there if we are able to fully position those staff. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Dr. Dragon. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, and I appreciate the Minister and deputy minister's answer. I guess what I am looking for, then, maybe is: can the Minister provide me with a list of the breakdowns of how many times they have had crews in there or needed crews in the communities, and potentially look at speaking with the communities to come up with

some -- even if it is emergency training and getting them prepared, plus the employment, but we have an issue of fires in our region, and it seems to be scary at some times of the year, especially with the smaller communities, because I know Jean Marie, the fire was right across the river, and it was pretty prevalent there. Can the Minister provide me with a break-down of the last couple of years of what we've been able to provide, if it's training or stuff like that, bringing crews in to those smaller communities? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, we can provide some information to the Member as he requested. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, and I appreciate the Minister and the department for being able to provide that. Does the department have a training plan that they look at training non-certified firefighters for each region? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, Mr. Chair; the answer is yes. We do have a training plan and we have the appropriate resources to carry out that plan. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Any further questions, committee? Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I have a couple of questions or lines of questioning here. The first one is: in the business plan, there are some reductions shown for a program, management and pre-suppression, reduce number of helicopters for pre-suppression. There's a reduction of \$155,000 and then eliminate one helicopter contract for \$469,000. Can someone explain what these reductions are all about and how that's going to affect our capacity to do pre-suppression work? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, we feel that it doesn't affect our capacity to deliver on our programs. On the \$469,000, the re-election to eliminate one helicopter contract was based on historical fire behaviour, and the department proposed to reduce the rotary wing contract in one of the regions.

The \$155,000 was decreasing the number of helicopters in pre-suppression to rotary wing contracts, which was to reduce the hours from 250 to 150. In addition, for the two contracts, it would reduce hours from 250 to 200. Should any additional rotary wing aircraft be required, they will be contracted on an as-and-when-needed basis. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If we have to go and contract additional time on an as-required basis, presumably that would be a higher per-hour rate. Is that true? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: No, it's not true, Mr. Chair. My understanding is it's the same rate.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Maybe can the Minister elaborate a little bit more on the rationale for these cuts? I just want to understand. These are long-standing contracts. The time was never used before, so that's why the cuts are being made or what is the rationale? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Dr. Dragon.

DR. DRAGON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. With the reduction of the one helicopter for \$469,000, again, based on historical fire behaviour, we felt like that we didn't need that helicopter support in that region.

With the one that's for the \$155,000, what we noticed was that we had the hours and they're actually being used more in the suppression area. That's why we've looked at moving that reduction so that if it happens, typically it's happening in the suppression area and not in the pre-suppression area. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Dr. Dragon. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I guess we'd just have to see how this rolls out. On the same page in the business plan, there's this ominous line that reads, "ENR to return to Financial Management Board with alternate reductions of \$500,000 in each of 2018-2019 and 2019-2020." That seems to have been deferred back by a year. Can someone tell me what that is all about? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Ms. Craig.

MS. CRAIG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. When we were developing our reduction options, we had anticipated that the operating costs for the 802s would be significantly less than the operating costs that we had for the 215s. Unfortunately, that did not materialize, so we went to the Financial Management Board to let them know that we would not be able to implement the savings that we had originally suggested in that area.

The decision was that in 2018-2019, we would not recognize any savings, but we would return to the 2019-2020 business planning process with other reduction options. We have yet to identify those options, but we will be looking within the department, not just within forest management to make those reductions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Craig. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, that's what I was most worried about. These reductions are not necessarily going to be confined to forest management. They might be made elsewhere within the department. Is that what I heard? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: We will look at forest management, but the Member is correct. They will look throughout the department. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, I'm quite concerned about further reductions in other parts of the department. I don't want to have to go back and re-live what happened with our discussion in corporate management and how I don't believe the department has the capacity to carry out what it's trying to do.

Look, does the Minister of Finance, as well? Is this something that he can take to the Financial Management Board and get them to just leave this extra \$1 million reduction for ENR so that they can get the work done that's required? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I appreciate the Member not wanting to rehash the discussion we had under corporate management. As we start developing the next business plans, we'll come forward with some options we'll have prepared before committee.

Committee will obviously make their concerns known, but we'll work on trying to come up with a solution that should work for all. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the Minister's commitment, but so far, the solutions haven't worked with the fiscal strategy of Cabinet to reduce this department because it hasn't been able to accomplish everything that it wanted.

I want to ask, though: when was the last time that there was a good review done of a fire suppression in particular? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Member and I will continue to disagree on the capacity issues. We feel that our folks feel that they're able to do the work they do with the appropriation they have, and if there's a need for further appropriation, then they would approach FMB. I have a lot of confidence in our people.

To the Member's question, 2016-2017, my understanding was the last time the fire suppression appropriation was reviewed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am talking about, I guess, a review of the effectiveness; not just the expenditures, but a value-for-money audit or something along those lines of our fire suppression program, whether there might be other ways to do it more effectively. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, again, my understanding is that 2011 is the last time that there was a review done of the value for money and effectiveness, and my understanding, again, is, this upcoming year, they are looking at possibly doing another review of the overall fire suppression. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. The time has expired. Any further questions, committee? Seeing none, I will call the page. Forest management, operations expenditure summary, \$36,971,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Agreed. Thank you. That brings us next to page 86, water resources, operations expenditure summary, \$11,454,000. Committee, that is from page 85 to 88. Any questions? Comments? Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I really just have one line of questioning, and it is with regard to our transboundary agreements. I would just like to know from the department: how is the management going with regard to our more recent transboundary agreements that we have established, and where are we with regard to the continuing negotiations with the outstanding transboundary agreements that we are negotiating? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Dr. Dragon.

DR. DRAGON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As we look at the different negotiations that are currently going on, I will just go through each jurisdiction.

With Alberta, we have been working with Alberta to implement the Alberta-NWT Transboundary Water Management Agreement. The first comprehensive annual report of the inaugural implementation year, 2015-2016, was released in November of 2017 with the Minister and the Minister in Alberta at CCME in Vancouver. Work on the 2016 annual report is well under way.

With British Columbia, ENR anticipates an inaugural BC-NWT Bilateral Management Committee meeting will be held in the winter of 2018, following the appointment of the BC representatives to the committee. This meeting will discuss implementation priorities and associated work planning.

In the Yukon, active negotiations to update the existing 2002 Yukon-NWT Transboundary Agreement began in the fall of 2017 and will continue into 2018. With Saskatchewan, ENR anticipates ongoing discussions towards the establishing of a Saskatchewan-NWT agreement, and this will resume in the winter of 2018 with the negotiation of a Transboundary Agreement.

The last, the Nunavut-NWT Transboundary Water Agreement will occur once Nunavut has completed their territorial water strategy. That is the last one, Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Dragon. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the detail that the deputy minister has provided. No further questions. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Any further questions, committee? Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just in regard to the cross-water boundary things here, can the Minister update us on what is happening with Site C? I have been hearing a lot of concerns with this on how it is going to actually affect our communities down river, and I have been given a whole bunch of information here. What has the department been able to deal with regarding that issue? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, we do not have that level of information at our fingertips, but we will endeavour to gather the information, come back and share it with the Member, and share it with committee when we have the appropriate resources to do so. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the Minister for that commitment. I guess I should just give the Minister a head's up. I am actually going to do a Member's statement on it next week. I will give you some time on that one, but I will ask some questions on that.

In regard to the water inspectors, is this the area where I should be asking a question about that position? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, he can. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In regard to these positions, has the department looked at the potential of moving that position into the Lands area and have them tag team? It is my understanding that a lot of the inspectors of Lands actually cross over and do water for the department as well. They do, actually, the mines and that. Has the department looked at putting that position into Lands so that they can actually work together? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Dr. Dragon.

DR. DRAGON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have worked with Lands and, I think, pretty effectively in

being able to provide resources to each other. In certain cases, the Lands inspectors are cross-appointed, but mainly dealing with mine sites.

When we look at undertaking any of the actual water type of enforcement issues, when we deal with type A, type B licences, and so on and so forth, then it becomes an opportunity where, if we were to combine them, I am not necessarily sure that is an effective distribution of resources. I think Lands has a very specific role in which they do their job and the officers.

In ENR, what we looked at doing is we cross-appoint mostly all of our officers depending on the region. We have environmental protection officers. We have, you know, looking at wildlife officers, forestry officers, and, in some cases, fisheries enforcement as well.

Having them so that we're having officers there or here, I am not sure if we are getting to that efficiency beyond collaboration and coordination of activities. In cases where we are going to mine sites, we do plan trips together where the Lands are doing their job and we are doing our job, and it has been working very effectively. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Dr. Dragon. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you to the deputy minister for that answer. From my understanding in talking to people, it is a little bit different. I am hearing a different story. There are some concerns in this area. I understand the cross-training, but I think putting these two positions in the same building and same department would be more efficient.

I guess, if we are not going to allocate moving positions around, is the department willing to work with the Department of Lands and maybe house the water officers with the Lands officers in the same building so that they can work together and work on files that way? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, in talking to people, or if we have Members who are talking to people, then, you know, I would appreciate if the Members would come and have a conversation with me to see if we can take care of that. Our Lands and ENR folks, they work very well together, but putting them in the same building, I am not sure if that will create efficiencies; but if there is a particular issue that the Member would like to raise, I would more than happy to have a conversation with the Member. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, and I will actually thank the Minister for that, and I will take him up on it. I am not talking about staff. I am talking about people out in the industry and stuff like that, and that is what the people have come to me and said, that it makes more sense. Like I said, I thank the Minister for that, and I will follow up later on with this. That will be my last question. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson, more of a comment, but I will get the Minister to reply if he would like.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. No, Mr. Chair, I take the Member's point, and I will be glad to have a conversation with him, and we will have a discussion on the issue that was brought to his attention. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Any further questions, committee? Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Sure, yes, there is shown in the business plan a \$50,000 reduction to the water regulatory budget, and I think it shows up on page 86, as well. Can someone tell me what that reduction is all about? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the \$50,000 the Member refers to is to reduce the contract service budget within the water regulatory section, and the water guidance documents will be further reduced because my understanding is that most of this work has already been done. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. So what is the total contracting budget, then, for water regulatory? If it is reduced by \$50,000, what is left? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, there is \$481,000 left in the budget. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: I guess this is a reduction of over 10 per cent. So, it is coming at an interesting time,

where there is some significant closure planning underway for Snap Lake. Diavik is redoing its closure plan. There is stuff happening with the Jay expansion; there are a lot of management plans and things that need to be reviewed in that regard. So it is not like it is not a busy time or anything, so what is the rationale? \$50,000 seems to be a rather with round number. What is the rationale here for the cut? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, we are well aware of all the work that needs to be done. The department feels like that work can be done within the existing \$481,000 budget. The \$50,000 I spoke of earlier, before, was to reduce contract services within the water regulatory section. The department obviously feels like they have the capacity to do the work that is required within the \$481,000. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Yes, I remain concerned about this. A \$50,000 cut just seems to be a convenient number for the fiscal reduction targets, so we will just leave it at that, but, once again, I do not see any real rationale for this cut because I do not think there is a reduced level of work or activity.

I want to follow up on some remarks made by my colleague the MLA from Nahendeh about moving the water inspectors to Lands. I know I had questions for the Minister of Lands about this. To me, it would make much or sense to have the Lands inspectors moved into ENR. ENR does the wildlife inspections. You do other environmental inspections. You do water work, as well. I think all of those environmental-related inspection activities should be housed within this department. Is that conversation or that discussion happening between the two departments? Can the Minister let me know what's happening, if anything? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Dr. Dragon.

DR. DRAGON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, that conversation has been happening. As I mentioned earlier, in opportunities where we have had in the regions where, unfortunately, we have not had the capacity, Lands officers have been able to provide some support. Again, the Lands officers are typically funded for positions that are on those mines specifically for lands and water. So we have been talking about ways in which we can gain efficiencies. However, mainly the efficiencies have been realized through collaboration and coordination and where we will go onto sites

together and we will plan flights together, and so on and so forth. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Dr. Dragon. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Before anybody tries to say that I do not think people are doing their job, that is not the case. These folks have to work very hard. The Minister knows that. He is even laughing when I am saying this because he is probably going to come back on me about it. Those guys have very difficult jobs because they have to deal with members of the public, members of industry, who do not always understand what they are trying to do. I guess, is it fair to say that the water inspectors have a different kind of training and perhaps even a higher level of training and responsibilities under the water licences than, say, the Lands inspectors do for the lands department? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Dr. Dragon.

DR. DRAGON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. ENR water resources are regionally based positions, and they inspect water licences at mines, metal mines, oil and gas sites, hydroelectric facilities, municipalities, and camps and lodges. They are specialized staff and in situations where our water officers -- typically they have to have university degrees -- based on when they are looking at, they are inspecting provisions for effluent discharge, monitoring, and waste containment, to provide a few examples. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Dr. Dragon. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: [Microphone turned off] I think the deputy minister has confirmed my point there, that the water resource management officers do have a higher level of training than the Lands guys. That is not to say that the Lands guys are not important. They do their own thing. In any event, can I get a commitment out of the Minister that he will look at this issue of where the inspectors are parked and do their jobs, and they do it well, about maybe getting some efficiencies by reorganizing some of that and bringing the Lands folks into ENR? Can the Minister commit to come to committee with some ideas and options on this? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, as the deputy said before in response to your earlier questions, we haven't had the conversations at an officials' level. We haven't had it at a political yet. If they're looking at some different options, I'm sure they will bring them

forward. The Member's quick question was: will I commit to bring this information to committee if they request it? I would be glad to do that. Let's gather some information, and then we will present to committee, and then we'll see the kind of feedback we get from committee. There's an opportunity that we still have a number of business plans coming up in the fall, so there will be opportunities there. I will provide some information. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Any further questions, committee? Seeing none, I will call the page. Water resources, operations expenditure summary, \$11,450,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you. That takes us next to wildlife. Operations expenditure summary. \$14,389,000. Committee, that's from pages 89 to 92. Any questions? Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is an area I need to learn a little bit more about, and I recognize that the department is doing significant work as it relates to monitoring our caribou in the territory, and also recognizing the significance and the importance of our caribou herds and making sure they are protected. Also, as a government, we're making a commitment to some significant infrastructure as it relates to roadways that we're proposing. I spoke today in the House about the road into the Slave Geological Province. Of course, caribou migratory patterns and calving grounds are a significant concern when it comes to these types of discussions. Maybe if the department can explain to us a little bit about the work that they're doing with regard to caribou monitoring, but especially as it relates to these proposed infrastructure projects that we are proposing? Are we working with our other departments with regard to what effects a road might have on our caribou herds and our caribou calving grounds? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Dr. Dragon.

DR. DRAGON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This coming summer is going to be a big season for the monitoring of herds. We're going to have surveys in just about every herd across the Northwest Territories. It's our annual every two or three years of monitoring where the herds are at. After this, the information will have to be synthesized, and then we'll have reports on kind of where the population is at this point; but for the majority of the herds, two out of the 10 herds, two out of 10 were done in July 2017. The rest are going to be done in July 2018, so this summer. That's dealing with the monitoring.

In terms of interdepartmental discussions, I think we've had a healthy discussion on development. I think, when we look at the economic opportunities that have to occur in the North, we also have to understand that we have to look at the conservation of our keystone species as well. I think that's been a healthy conversation at the officials' level and also with our co-management partners. Anything that we are going to be doing when we look at all these herds and how they have trans-boundary issues of going from whether or not they're in Nunavut or here in the Northwest Territories or in the Yukon, we have to make sure that we're working with our co-management partners and our inter-jurisdictional partners. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Dragon. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for the insight and the reply. I'm trying to determine maybe also a little bit more on how it is that we would come to a decision with regard to whether it's a go or no go to a project like a road to resources when it comes to the impacts that it may or may not have on wildlife, and in particular, in this instance, our caribou herds. Can the department explain a little bit more about wildlife, caribou monitoring, what is required in monitoring caribou as it relates to putting a roadway, specifically a road like the road to resources, sorry, the Slave route geological road. I drive Highway 3 all the time going south, and we all are very well aware of the bison that live along the roadway. The Porcupine caribou is a thriving herd. They're having to cross the Dempster on a regular basis. I'm trying to understand: is this an undertaking that can really kind of have drastic effects on our caribou? What are we doing to really know whether we can or cannot go forward with an investment such as this? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Dr. Dragon.

DR. DRAGON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Looking at the development, I think when we see an activity that's going to be occurring in a specific habitat for caribou, one of the things that's very important that we have is our monitoring data of collars to make sure that we know where the different ranges are. That really varies from year to year. We've invested quite heavily in collar data. We provide that data to Nunavut, as well, as a shared jurisdiction. Looking at migrational routes, the other thing that we have to look at is vegetation, and seeing whether or not we have the appropriate vegetational markers along the migrational routes so that caribou, as they follow these migrational routes, we know that they're going to be going back to very specific areas.

The other thing that we've done recently is we've done on-the-land monitoring. There was a program done with the Tlicho Boots on the Ground where we had community members go out and actually visually inspect caribou that were on the land, and try to provide more of a traditional knowledge to the conversation, because one of the things that we see with data is that they do change their patterns. By having the collar data and looking at vegetation, we need to keep in consideration those aspects when we think about development.

Finally, what I would say is that, when we look at the development, we really need to look at when and where. What we're looking at as a department, we're seeing if there are any current studies that are happening in other areas where development has taken place, and whether or not we can learn from those. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Dragon. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is all good information. That is sort of where my underlying concern is, too. We are making every effort as a government to try to finalize a route for this road going into this Slave geological area and, of course, those ever-changing migratory patterns of caribou and other wildlife, most certainly. I'm trying to get an understanding of when we determine, how we determine what the actual route is going to end up being when the patterns in which wildlife behave are changing rapidly, especially with climate change now. It's changed the traditional behaviours, or the migratory patterns of these animals. I guess it's just a comment. I don't know if the department has anything more to add to that just to try to help build some certainty. This remains, of course, still an underlying concern. This is, in my view, a significant piece of infrastructure that I feel needs to go forward, but I also recognize the incredible importance of our caribou herds and all of our wildlife and the impacts that it has on, and in particular, on Indigenous people. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, we all share the Member's concern with the state of the caribou herd in the Northwest Territories. Again, this is another area where traditional knowledge would play an important factor, because who knows the caribou better than the people who have been living off them for hundreds of years?

There had been an opportunity there, and I think it's one of the reasons that as we do caribou surveys and Deputy Dragon spoke to before, the Boots on

the Ground program. Again, that's taking advantage and using a lot of traditional knowledge, and good caribou management practices, too, once you do have the infrastructure in place.

You mentioned the Porcupine caribou herd and how that herd is one of the only ones that have been able to thrive. They have a good Porcupine Caribou Management Board, and then there's a lot of respect for the caribou, as well. There are opportunities where the caribou are close to the highway, but they have a great caribou management, and as well there's a lot we can learn from that, and traditional knowledge.

Once they determine the route to road is going to go, I'm sure they work with all the appropriate parties to see how best they can do without having too much of an effect on wildlife. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Vanthuyne. Oh, sorry. Time's up. Next, we have Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mine is more of an observation contribution or notice here. Having considered some of the previous studies that I was involved in and seeing industry on monitoring and mitigating the impacts of wildlife habitat and the community as a stakeholders to this government contributing their efforts through self-management initiatives, in the community of Deline several years ago leadership got together and had a public meeting and set an understanding to the people that there would be no harvesting until further notice.

The whole community got together and really accepted that. I was really surprised at the extent they would go in preserving their herd and working with the department at the region office in Norman Wells to participate in the caribou survey.

Some of the applications that I've seen with industry, the industry had wildlife habitation movement monitored by in-field cameras. That data was collected and shared with the region's Renewable Resources Councils. It gives me confidence that large impacts would be analyzed prior to everybody's approval and prior to the initiating of the project itself. These studies and these movements on habitat would be included in the application.

The recent application we've just seen is the Canyon Creek all-weather road. The volumes of data that was collected right from vegetation to wildlife species of different sources. I kind of take that into account when we move forward to discuss, let's take, for example, the Whati. I'm quite certain there would be a lot of supporting data to the

habitat of the chosen waterway for that particular infrastructure. I just share that with committee. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to thank the Member for sharing that information. Again, it just points to the importance of the fact that the Aboriginal governments, and I'm going to use this opportunity again to commend the Tlicho Government for taking a leadership role in the preservation of the caribou herd that they've hunted for hundreds of years. They work closely with ENR on a mobile zone. This is how it's going to work. They have a lot of respect for the caribou and they've taken some steps as a government to limit the number of caribou. As you get into some of these projects or proposed projects, obviously there's an environmental assessment that they have to go through and then they will gather all that information to help with their decision making or their final decisions. All of this is taken into account.

Again, I appreciate the Member sharing his experience and the information that he was able to gather during his time with this House. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: No further questions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Next on the list, we have Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Let's start with boreal caribou. In the business plan, it says that the National Recovery Strategy is legally required and has to have at least a minimum of 65 per cent of undisturbed habitat. The next sentence says that currently approximately 66 per cent of the Northwest Territories range is undisturbed. We have a 1 per cent margin for the boreal caribou habitat remaining undisturbed to meet the National Recovery Strategy requirements.

Boreal caribou are important. We have this 1 per cent disturbance sort of limit that's out there. In the budget, though, boreal caribou monitoring is going to be cut by \$150,000. Can someone tell me how much money remains for boreal caribou monitoring after this cut? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the Member is correct. There is a legal requirement for 65 per cent, and we're at 66 per

cent, but that number changes as we get some new previously burnt areas coming back on stream. I have to add our 1 per cent is actually quite large compared to the other jurisdictions, but his point is well taken.

The \$150,000, we're just trying to get the number here as to what's left in the budget, but I can inform this House that we are working with Environment and Climate Change Canada for funding under the Federal Species at Risk Act. These funds will be used to complete the Range Planning Framework. We haven't got an exact dollar figure yet, but my early understanding is going to be significantly more than \$150,000. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. While the Minister and his staff are digging out the number, I guess I'll turn to: there is out now for public discussion a framework for boreal caribou range planning. A big part of this document really revolves around what's called adaptive management. It's basically a tiered approach to management and looking at disturbance levels and starting to do things with regard to regional range plans.

A big part of this document is really about monitoring. We have our government's own document talking about the need for more monitoring, but we're cutting the monitoring by \$150,000. Can someone try to explain this again for me, because I just don't understand why we're making a cut to this funding when our own documents are calling for more monitoring of boreal caribou? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, because the federal government declared this a species at risk, I mean, they are going to fund the monitoring of the caribou, and my understanding is it is going to be significantly more than the \$150,000 that is being reduced. We will have the necessary appropriation to do all of the monitoring on the boreal caribou, and I will turn it over to Dr. Dragon to add on to some of the Member's other points that he raised. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Dr. Dragon.

DR. DRAGON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, in looking at our monitoring approach for boreal caribou, we realize that we are going to need significant funding in order to be able to do this. Our recent conversations that we have had over the past, I would say, six to seven months with

Environment and Climate Change Canada was looking at, we will see the numbers in the budget that came out today, but there is going to be some significant money that is going to be available for that research. The Northwest Territories is one of the largest jurisdictions for boreal caribou. We have come up with a very strategic approach to the adapted management and the tiered approach within the boreal caribou range. We think that, based on our conversations that we have had with Environment and Climate Change Canada, we should have significant money that is going to be coming through that arrangement. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Dr. Dragon. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Okay. We have some hints that there might be some federal money coming, so that gives us reason to cut back our contribution to boreal caribou monitoring? That just doesn't make any sense to me. I am going to leave this one for now. I do not think this is a good cut. I think it is another one that is being made for Cabinet's fiscal reduction strategy that is not evidence-based. I do not know why the department is doing this. It does not make any sense whatsoever. I want to move on, though, to barren-ground caribou, and there is a line item in the business plan that reads: "Continued well-being of the Bathurst caribou herd related to the Jay Pipe Project," and it's \$310,000. The Minister talked about it in his opening remarks as well. Why is GNWT paying this money, and not Dominion Diamond? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I am going to respond to the Member's first point about the boreal caribou and the \$150,000 reduction, and then I am going to go to Dr. Dragon to add to the Member's second part. Again, it is not a hint that we are going to get money from the federal government. We are certain we are going to get money from the federal government, and when we do get that money, I will be happy to sit down with committee and share that amount with them. We are very confident in this, and I do not think it ruined this just because it is a reduction. I mean, some of the savings realized here are able to be used in other areas of Environment and Natural Resources. We would not do this if it was just a hint, Mr. Chair. We are confident that we are going to get money, and it is going to be significantly more than \$150,000. I will be more than happy to share that amount with the Member when we get the amount, and then I am going to ask Dr. Dragon to add on to the Member's

comments about the Bathurst caribou herd. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: I thought I was going to hear from the deputy minister, but the clock is going to run out on me here, Mr. Chair, and I guess I need to go on the record. The Minister of Infrastructure has said twice in this House that environmental considerations have played no role whatsoever in the routing of the Slave Geological Province road to date, so I want to confirm with the Minister: have his staff been involved with the Department of Infrastructure in looking at the routing of the proposed road? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: All right. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, well, first of all, I am not sure if I have heard the Minister of Infrastructure say that environmental conditions will play no part in the route to the road. I would have to confirm that. I mean, I will look it up. I will just type it into one of the websites, and I am sure that information will come up. I am going to get Dr. Dragon to talk about the work that he has done with the officials at the officials' level. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Minister McLeod, Dr. Dragon.

DR. DRAGON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. At the officials' level, we have started discussions on what are going to be the impacts of a proposed road that would go through caribou habitat. We continue to have those discussions, and once we get more of a formalized approach, as the Minister had mentioned earlier, and going through the EA process, a lot of that research and the feedback from Indigenous groups and organizations as well stakeholders will come through that process. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Dr. Dragon. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that. We still do not have a Bathurst caribou range plan, and not one square centimetre of habitat has been set aside or protected in any way for this herd. So far the harvesters have, and the Minister talked about this, made extraordinary efforts, and they have restricted their harvesting now for the last three or four winters. The harvesters are doing their part. Our government is not doing our part on protecting the habitat. When are we going to see a completed range plan that's going to start to look at habitat protection, more than just caribou protection measures on harvesting, but caribou protection

measures to restrict industrial activities that are going to get in the way of caribou when they are moving around? When are we going to start to look at habitat protection for the Bathurst caribou herd? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I will go to Dr. Dragon.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Dr. Dragon.

DR. DRAGON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Right now with the Bathurst herd, looking at our opportunities to work with our co-management partners on the harvesting restrictions has worked well. I can tell you that our enforcement in the mobile zone and looking at adherence to that mobile zone has been very, very positive. In terms of working through a full-blown plan, we are still in the midst of that plan. We have been doing multiple plans, coming to the government with the opportunities to see how we are managing the herds. I will just have to come back with a date of when we plan to actually produce that range plan. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Dr. Dragon. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On page 90, I see field operations, and it has gone down. I guess the Minister is going to like my question; it is going to be about moose in my riding and that. My concern is that, in my riding, we do not see a lot of wildlife officers out there during the weekend and so, with this cut, will we be able to see an increase in people out monitoring hunting on the roadside? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, we get our folks out monitoring all the time, and then we have also made known, I have heard this concern when I was in a meeting with some of the Member's constituents in Nahendeh, and we also said that, if they have any indication of any suspicious activity or not adhering to the Wildlife Act, then to report it; but we try to get our folks out as much as we can, and get them out patrolling and so they are out there being seen. It was a concern that was raised and we are hoping to take steps to try and address it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for that. I know we are going

through a study right now about moose and that. Has the department looked at potential further studies this fiscal year coming up on the moose, or is it just being implemented this year and that's it? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, we initially did one survey in November. There was another one done in February. We are still analyzing the results, and in my commitment to the leadership of the Nahendeh when I was touring with the Member, we did commit to come back to them. I believe they are having a summit, maybe in the fall. I cannot remember the exact date, but they are having a summit with a lot of communities coming in, and we said we should have our information all analyzed. We will present it to them at that time.

In the meantime, if we do get the analysis done sooner, then I will have a conversation with the Member and he will be able to share some of the findings with his constituents. I have made a commitment to have our focus at the meeting that is coming up with a lot of the representation from around Nahendeh. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, the Minister was very clear in his commitment to the communities, and they heard that. I guess what I was looking for is: is this a yearly study that we look at, or is it over a two-year period or a three-year period? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. It is every two years that we will be doing the work. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I appreciate that answer. It does help when we are presenting things there. I guess the next question in regard to this is the hunting on the corridor. I found it very interesting, as I had the opportunity to travel with the Minister and his staff, some of the things that we actually don't do or allow people to do, like hunting with lights and stuff like that.

Has the Minister and the department looked at potentially addressing this issue in the upcoming year? It seems to be not really hunting, I guess, you would call it. There have been some concerns, and

I think during the oral questions he talked about addressing hunting on the side there. Would the department be looking at making more regulations to that so that they are actually off the roadside, that it is actually 50 metres off, and they have to hunt in the trees and stuff like that? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, that is a concern that we did hear when we were in the Nahendeh, and the Member and I actually had an exchange on the hunting off the side of the road. Again, I said you cannot legislate common sense, and I stand by that.

The other one we heard when we were in the Nahendeh is actually what the Member has mentioned, hunting with lights. We are going to go back and have a look at that, because I take the leadership's point when they were saying that we have some people out there hunting with lights. They are not making clean shots. They are making a mess, and a lot of times, they are losing the animal, and that is disrespectful, in my opinion.

We are going to go back. We are going to have a look at it. If there is an opportunity to maybe make that not allowable, then it is something we will have to explore. I agree with the leadership in the Nahendeh that that is a sloppy way to hunt. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, and I appreciate the Minister and his department looking at that.

Maybe the deputy minister or the Minister can correct me, but presently, in some of the other provinces or jurisdictions, they actually have a rule or a law against that. Is that actually out there? Thank you. I will leave you with that one there. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, and that's what I said. We will go back and do some research on this. Whether it is allowed in some of the provinces or not does not really matter to us, because we have to make one that is actually something that we made up here and we implement. If it is a concern that we hear from up here, then it is time that we acted on it regardless of what other jurisdictions are doing. We've just got to worry about what we're doing. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is just a little bit of a comment. I appreciate the Minister following through on that.

I actually have to give credit to the Minister and his department and their survey. I had a number of local Aboriginal people, or local hunters, I guess you would call them, who have been employed by the department, and they have said nothing but positive things. They appreciate the department actually utilizing traditional knowledge in the areas. I have to give credit where credit is due, and I would like to thank the Minister and his department for that. That will be it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister McLeod, any comments?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: No. I appreciate the Member's comments. We appreciate the comments from his community. Again, that's one of the advantages of using traditional knowledge, because who knows the land better than they do, right? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Committee, any further comments to the page under wildlife? If not, I will read the page. Wildlife, operations expenditure summary, \$14,389,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, committee. Next, we have information items from page 93 to page 102. Any questions? Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. It's on page 96, the Inuvialuit Water Board. I think I know the answer, but why is the Government of the Northwest Territories paying the operating expenses for this board and not the other land and water boards? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Ms. Craig.

MS. CRAIG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This board operates a little differently because it was established under the Waters Act, and we are required through that act to provide the funding to the Inuvialuit Water Board. As well, the employees are to be employees of the public service. This was carried over from devolution from Indian and Northern Affairs, where they were within corporate management, and that is where they remain within ENR. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Craig. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, that is what I thought I was going to hear.

We received funding under the devolution agreement, then, from the federal government to actually help us pay for this. This was part of the devolution agreement, so we are using the funds that we got to help pay for the board. Is that correct? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, that's correct.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. The employees, are they employees of the Water Board or of ENR? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. As Ms. Craig pointed out, they are employees of the public service, so ENR. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I can see where this could lead to some potential difficulties. If our government comes before the Inuvialuit Water Board seeking a water licence at some point, it puts those staff in a really difficult situation. Has there been any discussion with the Water Board in terms of transferring the staff to the administration of the board itself as is the case for the other land and water boards? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Ms. Craig.

MS. CRAIG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The employees are within corporate management to remove that perceived or real conflict of interest within the water resources divisions or the water resource officers in the regions. That keeps them separate from the operational side.

They report to corporate management for all administration, human resources, and financial matters. They report to the chair of the Water Board for the business of the board. The department does not get involved in the business of the board. As for transferring them to their own entities, such as other boards, as the Member knows, we are currently looking at the Waters Act through our legislative initiatives. It is one topic that was discussed. At this point in time, due to economies

of scale, really, the Inuvialuit Water Board is not interested in creating their own entity where they would have to get their own payroll system; they'd have to have their own overhead, and they're currently in GNWT leased space. If they had an increased cost, which we estimate they would, they would simply come back to the GNWT for additional resources. As the Member said, we received money through devolution for the funding of the board, but if there are increased costs, those would be costs to the GNWT. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Craig. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: I think I understand some of that. I'm not sure I necessarily agree with it all, but is there an MOU or some formal agreement between GNWT and the Water Board over reporting of the staff and who is responsible for what? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Ms. Craig.

MS. CRAIG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have an annual contribution agreement with the Inuvialuit Water Board, which is the mechanism for flowing their funding to them. They are members of the public service; therefore they are on our system where there's an annual performance appraisals and goals and objectives are recorded and documented in performance management. Evaluations are done on an annual basis. The board has a set of operating procedures as well that are reviewed both by the board and by corporate management so that all considerations under the Financial Administrations Act and our Procurement Shared Services, as well as the business of the board, are all encompassed in those operating procedures. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Craig. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Has the department thought about whether there's any value in having an MOU that sets out rules and responsibilities with regards to the staffing arrangements? Has there been any consideration of an MOU or some kind of an agreement that would set out roles and responsibilities more clearly than an annual contribution agreement? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Ms. Craig.

MS. CRAIG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We do not have a formal memorandum of understanding with the board. However, there are operating procedures that have been approved by both the board and the GNWT. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Craig. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Well, I may be the only one in the room who thinks that there may be some value to this, but I'm going to leave this alone. It's a very particular sort of arrangement. I'm not suggesting that there's anything untoward about any of this. I've worked with some of those staff in the past. They work hard. They do their jobs, but it does put them perhaps in an awkward situation when they're GNWT employees and they have to report to the board, especially if our government comes forward looking for a water licence at some point before the Water Board. I think that's going to put them in an even more difficult position.

I've made my comment and my suggestion. I don't think I'm getting a very good reception, but I'll just leave it at that. I'll probably raise it again next year. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Any further questions from committee? Are we agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Agreed. Thank you. That brings us back to page 65. Environment and Natural Resources, 2018-2017 Main Estimates, total department, \$88,954,000. Questions? Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Before we do the final approval, I just have a couple of more questions as it relates to page 66, which is the revenue summary on the next page.

I'd like to ask a little bit about licences. A number of tour operators, of course, have a number of visitors or tourists that they'd like to take out for fishing, and a lot of the times, it's just day fishing. The question is: is the department working on, or is there an opportunity to formulate, a day licence rather than right now I believe our fishing licences are for the year? I can't quote for sure what the cost is, but I'm thinking it's something like \$30 or \$35, if I recall correctly.

For a number of folks, that just seems a little too expensive for one day. Is there an opportunity for us to be able to come up with a day fishing licence that is at a much more affordable rate for tourists? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I actually had that discussion with the Minister of DFO. My understanding, as Ms. Craig pointed out, is that they are having a meeting with them this

week, because we had heard about it the week before we went down on a trip to Ottawa. I think the Minister of ITI and the Premier have heard about it as well. We actually raised it. Of all the conversations I've had and the conversation with Minister Morneau last year, we raised the fact about the one-day fishing licence and we were kind of hoping he'd put it in his budget address last year. We are working with it and it is an issue that we've heard. We are working on it.

Once Ms. Craig has her meeting with the appropriate folks, then I'm sure we'll have more information to share with the Member and with committee. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. While I appreciate that the department is working on this, maybe just for clarification, or maybe just for my own ignorance: why does the DFO have jurisdiction over this? I mean, since devolution, wouldn't in-land waters be our jurisdiction? Why wouldn't licensing be within our department's responsibilities? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, Fisheries has stayed with the feds. It's being devolved to the territories. We're in the early stages of discussions with the feds on that, but the Fisheries part did stay with the feds. That's the reason that we had to try to go through DFO to get the one-day fishing licence. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Just for clarification, Mr. Chair, are we expecting that Fisheries is being transferred eventually over to us? Just a point of clarification. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, we would want it to come over. We're in the early stages of a discussion with them. I'm sure one of the topics of discussion will be: we want the money to come over with it. We're in the early stages of the discussions and, if we have any information to share, I will be happy to put in in the form of a letter or an email to committee and just say this is where we are at. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and just a last question. Back to the fishing licences, then: if I can get a commitment from the Minister to get back to me with regard to maybe some detail, more information on what work the department is doing and that, just so that I can get back to tour operators and inform them, potentially, of a timeline as to when we might be able to expect a day-long fishing licence? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Dr. Dragon.

DR. DRAGON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Over the past year, I think I have had three conversations with the DFO deputy minister on this. One of the issues with this fishing licence is that it is tied to the User Fees Act in federal legislation. The deputy minister has had a conversation with Treasury Board Secretariat as of two weeks ago, where she thought she was able to get some traction in order for us to change. Unfortunately, I cannot give you a timeline when we are going to be able to come back on when we can change it. I can let you know that it is on my agenda every time I speak with her, because I think we need to have that ability to change regulations that happen in the North. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Dr. Dragon. Any further questions, committee? Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Okay, thanks, Mr. Chair. So I think this is the section of the department where water use fees would be found. These would be fees that are paid under water licences. Is that correct, Mr. Chair? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: That is correct.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Can someone with the department tell me what the water use fees were, what those revenues were for last year, and what they are anticipated to be for this year? Actually, I think it is found on page 66. It is just up there, isn't it, so that is the \$80,000? Is that what that is? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Ms. Craig.

MS. CRAIG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The budget for water use fees is on page 66. It is \$80,000 per year. That is the budget. In 2016-2017, we collected \$47,000. The amount that we will collect in 2017-2018 is dependent on exactly how much water is used by the licence holders. We really will

not know the total amount until the end of the fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Craig. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. So, the water use fees, is that something that we would be looking at revising in the review of the Waters Act? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Ms. Craig.

MS. CRAIG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I understand that the water use fees are set in regulations, and they are applied by the land and water boards. As the Assembly knows, we are putting through a review of our Waters Act this year in this Assembly. The next step would be looking at the regulations, so there might be the opportunity at that time to increase the water use fees. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Craig. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, the reason why I ask this is I am just looking at the water regulations now on my computer here, and the highest rate seems to be about \$2 per 100 cubic metres of water. That seems to be a pretty low rate. You know, people pay more than \$2 for a bottle of water at the grocery store. So has the department done any work to look at comparable rates that are charged by other jurisdictions in Canada for water use? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. I am sure we have done some work. I am not exact. I will confirm that, as to looking at comparable water rates, and we will see. We will do some research. I will commit to the Member that we will do some research and see what our rates are compared to the other jurisdictions, and then we will plan a course of action from there. I will commit to getting that information. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, I appreciate that the Minister is going to do that work, and I know that he is really keen to look at new sources of revenue. Certainly, this is one, and this, these rates, have not been touched in decades. I can tell the Minister that. I think, quite frankly, we are giving our water away. These rates, as I understand it, are comparatively low compared to most other jurisdictions in Canada, and this needs to be changed. This is one of the reasons we got

devolution, was to try to make sure that we get a fair return for the use of our resources, and I do not think these sort of rates for use of water are what they should be. So I leave that with the Minister. I will look forward to getting his information, but this, to me, seems like an easy one to do compared to a land transfer tax. I will leave it at that. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, as I said, we will go back, have a look at the information, and see where it goes. I mean the Member is right. A Minister is always looking for -- Minister, this whole Assembly should be looking at other sources of revenue, and this may be one of them. We will do our due diligence, and then we will come up with a plan from there, but then I need to know that, once we decide to do that, that I have got the support of committee and not have people running in 10 different directions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Next, we have Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I was just wondering, my honourable friend brought up questions around the fishing licences, so the fees generated on those licences, are they paid to the federal government or do we draw some of that revenue into our government? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister McLeod.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: We get the fees, Mr. Chair, but, unfortunately, because of the user pay act, we have no say in what they are. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister McLeod. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Okay. That is an odd arrangement, but I will leave that the Minister to resolve, and I look forward to him reporting back to the House on progress made. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Testart, more of a comment. Any further questions, committee? Seeing none, I will call the page again. Environment and Natural Resources, 2018-2019 Main Estimates, total department, \$88,954,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Agreed. Thank you, committee. Does committee that the consideration

of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources is completed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Agreed. Thank you. Thank you, Minister, and thank you to your witnesses for appearing before us. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses from the Chamber. What is the wish of committee? Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that the chair of Committee of the Whole leave the chair to report progress. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Testart. A motion is on the floor to report. The motion is in order and is non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed?

---Carried

I will now rise and report progress. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: May I have the report, Member for Mackenzie Delta?

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. BLAKE: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 63-18(3), Main Estimates 2018-2019, and would like to report progress, and, Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Do I have a seconder? Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed?

---Carried

Masi. Item 22, third reading of bills. Item 23. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Mr. Speaker, the orders of the day for Wednesday, February 28, 2018, at 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements

7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Commissioner's Opening Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Minister's Statement 1-18(3), North Slave Correctional Complex Inmate Concerns
 - Minister's Statement 19-18(3), Aurora College Foundational Review Process
 - Minister's Statement 32-18(3), Update on the Northwest Territories Disability Framework and Action Plan
 - Tabled Document 63-18(3), Main Estimates 2018-2019
21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Masi, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Wednesday, February 28, 2018, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

