



June 20, 2014

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, Minister Bernard Valcourt
Government of Nunavut, Environment, Minister Jonny Mike
Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, President Cathy Towtongie

Delivered By Electronic Mail

Re: June 2014 Draft Nunavut Land Use Planning

The Nunavut Planning Commission is proud to make publically available an updated version of the Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan to be considered at the November 2014 public hearing. The Commission held over 60 public workshops and countless meetings on the 2011/2012 draft plan.

As we undertook the revisions we were reminded that the Independent Third Party Review Report cautions us all that we “need to be more realistic about what can be achieved in this first iteration of the Nunavut land use plan.”

The Commission has carefully considered all available information and has revised the Plan to reflect the input that has been provided. Examination of the submissions in the context of available data and knowledge required us to consider how to promote opportunities to have a healthy investment climate and plentiful country food.

Managing land use in the habitat of iconic Arctic species of wildlife such as: caribou; polar bear, migratory birds, walrus and areas important for all sea mammals was important. Harmonizing competing interests has been achieved by acknowledging that economic development and wildlife in many cases can co-exist. Simplifying the Plan to focus on managing specific land uses that may affect a limited number of important areas is the end result.

The Commission also encouraged written submissions on the 2011/2012 draft plan. The Commission has responded to 412 written comments from the Government of Canada, Government of Nunavut, Inuit organizations, First Nations, Industry and environmental interests. The comments and responses are attached.

The Options and Recommendations Document has been updated to provide the background material considered to support decision making of the Plan.

The Plan has been updated to reflect the 2 year public consultation period. It is intended to be future focussed and is designed as a framework to support on-going land use planning study and enactment of the Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act (NUPPAA). NUPPAA adds responsibilities to the Commission which will not be implemented before the Bill is enacted. For instance the Plan references an on-line public registry which has not been developed. It is important to also recognize that this is a draft plan, and is open to additional input at the Public Hearing. Final revisions to the plan will occur after the Public Hearing and prior to submission for approval. The plan and the Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act (NUPPAA) will be new to the Nunavut regulatory system. To assist in understanding the relationship between the two the draft plan contains verbatim linkages to NUPPAA that are intended to aid the reader. The final version of the Plan will not contain verbatim references.

The June 2014 Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan and supporting materials are available at www.nunavut.ca

Respectfully

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "P. Kabloona".

Percy Kabloona, A/Chairperson
Nunavut Planning Commission

cc: Nunavut Planning Commission, Commissioners

Attachments:

Appendix A What does the Plan achieve?
Responses to Written Submissions

Appendix A

What does the Plan achieve?

- Land Use Designations have been simplified. Protected Areas, Special Management Areas and Mixed Use land use designations are assigned to the NSA. The generalized designations are managed through the development of site specific prohibitions, Terms, Direction to Regulatory Authorities and priorities and values of residents.
- Priorities and values of residents have been identified and brought into the regulatory process making it possible for proponents to design project proposals aligned with community concerns prior to engaging the community.
- Land Use Designations and Direction to Regulatory Authorities identified on Schedules A and B are numbered for ease of reference to the corresponding Tables. The NPC intends to have the tables automated and integrated into a GIS based interactive map. In short, a map on the NPC website will inform proponents of the requirements of the Plan and the cumbersome Tables will be requirements for approval only.
- The Plan proposes just over 15% of the NSA as Protected Area; approximately 17% as Special Management, and 67% as Mixed Use land use designations.
- The Plan proposes protecting 15% of the NSA. This includes protecting 80% of the core caribou calving and post-calving areas.
- Special Management Areas (SMA) compose about 17% of the NSA which includes sensitive areas such as: unique wildlife habitat and community drinking water supplies, where project proposals may be subject to Terms such as Cumulative Impact Referrals and setbacks. SMAs also manage land use in areas important for economic development, and of the 17% of the NSA that is designated SMA, 6.5% is for the exclusive use of mineral exploration and development.
- 67% of the NSA is designated Mixed Use although mineral exploration and production may occur in 84% of the NSA.
- Accessory uses such as winter roads, existing airstrips, open water ports and related staging, warehousing and storage areas, unless expressly prohibited are considered to conform in all land use designations.
- Existing rights of proponents are protected by the land use plan so land use designations will have no negative impacts on existing mineral investment.