

Master Comments from Nunavut Water Board

Comment ID	Organization Name	Date of Submission	Document Referenced	Section Referenced	Theme of submission or Location /ID# Referenced	Comment	NPC Response
NWB-1	Nunavut Water Board	14/02/2014	Working Together		Mandate/Responsibilities	The Nunavut Water Board (NWB or Board) is an Institution of Public Government (IPG) created under Article 13 of the <i>Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA)</i> . The NWB is responsible for the use, management, and regulation of inland waters or freshwaters in the territory of Nunavut. The Board is required, in carrying out its responsibilities, to consider any detrimental effects that potential use of waters or deposit of wastes could have on other water users and the freshwater receiving environment. This requirement corresponds with a key objective of the NWB's mandate to provide for the conservation and utilization of waters in Nunavut - except in national parks - in a manner that will provide optimum benefits for the residents of Nunavut in particular and all Canadians in general.	The plan has been updated to more fully describe the integrated nature of the regularity process in Nunavut.
NWB-10	Nunavut Water Board	14/02/2014	Options and Recommendations		Mineral Exploration and Production	The Options document does not address how the DNLUP will be implemented with respect to existing water users and licence holders. For instance, the NWB is seeking clarification on how the designation for Mineral Exploration and Production applies to projects that are at early exploration stage, but will eventually progress to advanced exploration and/or mining stages. If there are existing provisions (e.g. grandfathering provisions) that are intended to apply to existing users, then specific timelines should be detailed as part of the Options document and/or DNLUP. Details regarding how the designation will treat any other activities associated with, but not currently listed under the Commission's recommended option for Mineral Exploration and Production (Option 3), should also be provided.	Existing rights are detailed in NUPPAA. The Implementation Strategy has been revised to include the NUPPAA requirements.
NWB-11	Nunavut Water Board	14/02/2014	Working Together		Periodic Review	The NWB is interested to receive further details pertaining to the manner through which its own evolving needs will be incorporated into the NLUP in the near and distant future. In particular, further details pertinent to the periodic review of the NLUP should be provided to all planning partners and interested parties, including the anticipated timelines for a 'standard amendment', information requirements, and a process overview. There should also be a discussion in the Options document or DNLUP that details the feedback loops that will be incorporated to inform the periodic review sessions (e.g. <i>monitoring programs, types of data being collected, the stakeholders who will be involved in such review periods, etc.</i>).	The Plan has been revised to provide a framework for integration of land use planning and water management. The NWB Water Policy will be a useful tool to support future land use planning decisions and the Water Management Areas are now integrated.
NWB-12	Nunavut Water Board	14/02/2014	Options and Recommendations /DNLUP		Permitted and Prohibited Uses	The NWB is concerned that the term 'Permitted Uses' may be misconstrued as meaning ' <i>activities that require permits</i> '. It would be preferable to use terms such as 'allowable' or 'permissible' to avoid any confusion. If the Commission is unwilling to modify its use of this term, the NWB recommends that text be added to the definition that provides clarification, such as " <i>Permitted Uses do not necessarily refer to the requirement for a government authorized permit</i> ".	NUPPAA uses the term "permitted" use. However we try to use language such as considered to conform to the plan to minimize risk of confusing proponents and others.



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NWB-13	Nunavut Water Board	14/02/2014	DNLUP/Options and Recommendations	General	Water Management Areas and the Strategy for Water Management	<p>The NWB has emphasized the importance of including the boundaries of the 65 Water Management Areas (WMAs) in the DNLUP to the Commission from almost the inception of the Commission's process (e.g. <i>submissions to the Commission, one- on-one meetings, workshops, etc.</i>). To the NWB's understanding, the Commission had actually gone as far as to include the WMAs in a previous iteration of the DNLUP, but then subsequently removed them without explanation. Nonetheless, at the Commission's most recent workshop (September 17-19, 2013), the Commission stated that the WMAs would be included in the next iteration of the DNLUP¹. The usage of water-related terminology by Commission staff also increased as the workshop progressed, such as the acknowledgement that land-use planning in Nunavut should strive to develop plans at the 'watershed scale' as the territory moves forward. These are encouraging developments that are highly supported by the NWB. While the Commission has already agreed that the WMAs should be included in a revised version of the DNLUP, the Commission has also requested that the NWB document the rationale for this recommendation by providing further details in the NWB's submission to the Commission. In response to the Commission's request, the NWB is confirming that it strongly supports the inclusion of the boundaries of the 65 WMAs defined in the Nunavut Waters Regulations (the Regulations) (SOR 2013/669 18th April, 2013) in the DNLUP. There are many reasons why it is important to include the 65 WMAs as a fundamental feature of the NLUP, including the following:</p> <p>Watershed Planning</p> <p>Deciding which activities and ecosystem components should be considered in land use planning decision-making can be challenging (e.g. should activity 'x' at distance 'y' from land feature 'z' be considered?). Moving towards watershed planning could directly assist the Commission in such decision-making processes by providing a spatial metric through which a comprehensive assessment of land uses in each respective WMA can be conducted, which may further support the Commission's determination of cumulative effects. For instance, consider how land use planning goals under the DNLUP relate to the mining activity occurring in WMA 5 (Lower Thelon Watershed), represented on the territory-wide maps provided in Appendix A (Maps 1-4). Were the Commission to approach land use planning at the watershed scale in WMA 5, a wide range of interrelated issues could be addressed at a level that is manageable both in terms of conceptualizing problems and addressing them with planning partners. Consider how the DNLUP's goals for the thematic area 'Encouraging Conservation Planning' are affected by not providing consideration to the impacts of other activities occurring within the watershed. In this particular example, the DNLUP's goal of protecting the Thelon River² cannot be adequately met if impacts from activities occurring within the watershed are not accounted for in the design of conservation plans and/or the authorization of further activities (e.g. the effects of mining activities on the Thelon River may go unaccounted for when a watershed planning approach is not used, as the analysis for decision-making may be occurring on a different spatial scale). This approach has already been applied on the Soper River (another Heritage River), wherein the management plan applies to the entire watershed of the river.</p> <p>Water Management Strategy</p> <p>The WMAs are part of the central mechanism through which the NWB and its partners will seek to incorporate the strategy that will be developed for water management across Nunavut. Should these boundaries not be incorporated at this time, there is the possibility that the final land use plan would need to be amended multiple times in order to incorporate policies that will be developed for each respective WMA.</p> <p>In all cases where it is unclear to the Commission on how to approach a given water management issue, the NLUP should refer the interested party or applicant to the Strategy as part of their conformity determination with the Commission, wherein a project's proponent is required to confirm that it (a.) meets the requirements of the Strategy or (b.) has received authorization from the NWB to proceed through the regulatory process. Ultimately, the DNLUP should include language and conditions that are sufficiently flexible to allow for an immediate or subsequent integration of the Strategy's policies and associated water management actions.</p> <p>A list of the WMAs and associated metadata has been provided for your reference in Appendix B.</p> <p>Legislative Authority</p> <p>The WMAs have been officially defined in federal legislation (the Regulations) and have thus been deemed an essential component of Nunavut's overall natural resources management regime. The NWB is therefore, once again, recommending that the Commission incorporate the WMAs as a fundamental planning feature, represented on all maps of all scales. The NWB further encourages the Commission to actively move towards using the WMA boundaries as the preferred spatial scale for planning in Nunavut.</p>	Water Management Areas have been included in the DNLUP as well as a discussion on the importance of Watershed Planning.



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NWB-14	Nunavut Water Board	14/02/2014	DNLUP/Options and Recommendations	Definitions	Value of Water	While the DNLUP implicitly considers water through its definition for <i>land 4</i> , it is important that the DNLUP explicitly recognizes the role and value of water given that impacts to water resources may affect all other ecosystem components covered in the DNLUP. In particular, the NWB looks forward to seeing the inclusion of a discussion in the next iteration of the DNLUP that gives attention to themes such as ecosystems' fundamental need for water to sustain integrity and the valuation of water as an economic and therefore social resource. The DNLUP should ultimately recognize that water is a fundamental consideration in land use planning and refer its audience to the NWB's strategy for water management for consideration of specific water management concerns (i.e. <i>the strategy that is currently being formulated by the NWB and its partners</i>).	Water Management Areas have been included in the DNLUP as well as a discussion on the importance of Watershed Planning.
NWB-15	Nunavut Water Board	14/02/2014	Options and Recommendations		Cumulative Impacts	In the Options document, the Commission presented the following two options for managing cumulative impacts in Nunavut: Option 2: Implement agreed upon thresholds for land use activities. As there are no agreed upon thresholds at this time, the Commission has proceeded to recommend Option 1. While the DNLUP currently states that it is the Commission's Policy to "consider implementing thresholds for cumulative impacts, or levels of acceptable change...", there are no details regarding the process forward through which such thresholds would be developed. The NWB recommends that the Commission (a.) includes the NWB in the development of the directive for referring project proposals with potential cumulative impacts for review and (b.) develops a general work plan or 'path forward' with its Planning Partners that would facilitate the development of thresholds. Furthermore, as noted above, the WMA boundaries can assist the Commission in conducting its cumulative effects assessment by providing a spatial unit of analysis that would not exist otherwise. The overloading of a watershed with projects and their associated cumulative impact on the ecosystem would not be accurately captured under the current iteration of the DNLUP. As such, the NWB recommends that the Commission includes the WMA boundaries and actively uses them to assist the Commission in the analyses it conducts. The NWB may also be uniquely positioned to provide some of the relevant data (e.g. data that supports an environmental baseline for certain regions) in this regard as its new technological systems are implemented and pertinent data feedback loops are initiated.	The DNLUP has been revised to address calving and post-calving areas. At this time the NPC is not coordinating the development of thresholds. The Commission's broad planning policies, objectives and goals require the NPC to implement thresholds and indicators developed by government and other IPGs. The Plan has been revised to identify in which specific situations the NPC may refer a project for cumulative impact concerns.
NWB-16	Nunavut Water Board	14/02/2014			Process	The extensive data-gathering undertaking the Commission is currently conducting and the resulting information will significantly benefit both Nunavummiut and the Commission's Planning Partners. The NWB recognizes that the Commission's tour of Nunavut's 26 communities is in progress and that 'the ship is sailing' in regards to input for the DNLUP. Nonetheless, as a note for future community meetings, the NWB feels strongly that the current community meetings would have benefited from a more directed approach that made use of guidance from the NWB prior to visiting the communities, such as guidance for the types of probing questions that draw upon Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit (IQ) and other elements of concern in order to provide guidance to the NWB in areas that are meaningful to it (e.g. information that is useful for the purposes of water management). In regards to analyzing the resulting data, it is the NWB's understanding that there has been no weighting of the public input (e.g. 1 community member identifies issue X as a concern, 9 community members identify issue Y as a concern). While the NWB anticipates that the Commission will adequately assess the results of the community tour prior to finalizing the NLUP, it is not clear if the resulting analyses will be made available to the Commission's Planning Partners and stakeholders, where it is considered relevant. As such, the NWB recommends that the following be provided to all concerned parties: (a) raw data from community tours, (b) the results of all relevant final analyses, and (c) descriptions of the corresponding methodologies.	The NPC believes that it has compiled useful information for land use. Perhaps when the Water Policy Strategy is finalized the NWB will be able to provide more comprehensive feedback. All data has been made public. The raw data from the communities is on the NPC website as NWB was previously advised. Comments regarding community feedback have been addressed above.
NWB-2	Nunavut Water Board	14/02/2014	Guide to Engagement		Process	An initial issue is that the document is non-binding, which reduces the degree of certainty associated with the process. While the NWB recognizes that a binding guide might provide less flexibility on the part of the Commission, such a guide would provide planning partners and stakeholders with the clarity that is needed to properly plan for their respective contributions to the DNLUP.	The engagement strategy is a guide not a contract. It is intended to be flexible and adaptive to address unknown matters.
NWB-3	Nunavut Water Board	14/02/2014	Guide to Engagement		Process	Another issue is that the nature of the submissions required at different stages is not very clear. A more comprehensive description of the types of information and format the Commission is seeking in the Guide, and the significance of each respective submission in terms of the overall DNLUP process would serve as improvements to the Guide. Additionally, the Guide is also not clear as to what opportunities exist for the NWB to participate in the Commission's consultative process	General comment noted.
NWB-4	Nunavut Water Board	14/02/2014	Guide to Engagement		Process	The Commission has requested in the Guide that comments be received from all parties (February 14, 2014) prior to the anticipated date for completion of the Commission's community consultations (March 2014). This consequently does not provide parties with the opportunity to review the draft community reports that are based on the results of those consultations, which are scheduled to be released <i>after</i> parties have had the opportunity to provide comments on the DNLUP (May 2014). Furthermore, it was evident at the Commission's most recent workshop entitled " <i>Filling Gaps in the DNLUP</i> " held on September 17-19, 2013 (Workshop) that the approach of having parties comment on the 'Options and Recommendations' document rather than a revised DNLUP is confusing for some concerned parties. If the Commission is not willing to adjust the DNLUP review timeline to allow for the preparation and review of a revised DNLUP, then every effort should be made to provide parties with all relevant materials (e.g. <i>data, reports, plans, etc.</i>) well in-advance of deadlines and meetings among planning partners and stakeholders, such as those between Government, Regional Inuit Associations, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, and other concerned parties.	General comment noted.

