



2022 Virtual Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act (MVRMA) Workshop Series: The Co-management System and Ongoing Initiatives

WORKSHOP REPORT

DATE OF SUBMISSION

April 29, 2022

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Introduction	2
ABOUT THIS REPORT	2
Day 1: The Past	3
MVRMA OVERVIEW	3
KEYNOTE WITH BRIAN CRANE	4
Question and Answer with Brian Crane	6
PANEL DISCUSSION	7
Day 2: The Present & Future	15
INFORMATION SESSION ON CURRENT INITIATIVES	15
Northern Participant Funding Program.....	15
Mackenzie Valley Operational Dialogue.....	15
Public Land Act Regulations.....	16
Mineral Resources Act Regulations.....	16
Land and Water Boards (LWB): Strategic Plan (2022-2026) including Consultation and Engagement Policy and Guidelines Update, Community Outreach Strategy, Closure and Reclamation Guideline Update	17
Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (MVEIRB): Updates on Current Processes, Procedures and Policies.....	17
Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT): Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) Legislative Initiatives Overview	18
OPEN QUESTION AND ANSWER	18
FIRESIDE CHAT ON INDIGENOUS PARTICIPATION AND THE FUTURE OF THE CO-MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.....	21
Question and Answer with the Fireside Panel	26
DAY 2 REFLECTIONS	27
CLOSING REFLECTIONS WITH MARK CLIFFE-PHILLIPS.....	27
CLOSING THOUGHTS: INCREASING INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT	28
Appendix A: Agendas	29
Appendix B: Poll Results and Quiz Questions	30
POLL RESULTS.....	30
QUIZ QUESTIONS	31
Appendix C: Workshop Planning Committee and Q&A Team	32

Executive Summary

Co-management Boards and the federal and territorial governments in the Mackenzie Valley host an annual workshop on the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* (MVRMA) for community representatives, Indigenous organizations and government as a key engagement activity to support an effective co-management system. The first of four two-day virtual workshops was held on March 30 and 31, 2022. The workshop was intended to explore and foster conversation on the co-management system and the ongoing initiatives relating to the MVRMA in the Northwest Territories (NWT).

Approximately 150 participants joined on both Day 1 and Day 2 representing active government employees, co-management board members, industry representatives, and Indigenous government/organization employees. The virtual session included presentations, panels, orientation quizzes, and open question and answer periods to explore and develop ideas within the workshop scope.

Day 1 of the workshop included initial presentations to build participant awareness of the MVRMA and the co-management system of the Mackenzie Valley. A keynote presentation and panel discussion explored the history of the how the MVRMA came to be. Key themes from this session include:

- Land claims are the fundamental foundation of the resource management system in the NWT.
- The MVRMA was established in the 1990s, but its history can be traced back to the 1970s with the Dene Métis negotiations.
- Co-management is not a new concept originating with the MVRMA, rather it arose out of the need to protect harvesting (pointing to earlier co-management boards such as the Porcupine Caribou Management Board).
- Some of the greatest strengths of the system is to consider communities' social, economic and cultural well-being and that all impacts to Indigenous peoples have to be mitigated as best as possible, using Traditional Knowledge (TK) and Western science.
- More resources are required to build capacity within the communities.

Day 2 of the workshop began with several quick presentations on current and ongoing initiatives and opportunities to increase engagement within the co-management system. The workshop closed with a 'fireside chat' discussion on how to build capacity and increase opportunities in the co-management system for Indigenous people in the Mackenzie Valley. Key themes from this session include:

- Indigenous youth are born with an incredible responsibility and expectation to be leaders of the future – we must equip them with education, mentorship, and tools to build capacity and thrive.
- Need to show youth that there are jobs within the regulatory system, not just in the trades in response to development.
- Being Indigenous to the Mackenzie Valley is qualification enough to be involved in the regulatory boards.
- The capacity to make decisions (related to natural resource management) exists within communities; we need to shift more decision-making power to communities.

Introduction

Co-management Boards and the federal and territorial governments in the Mackenzie Valley host an annual workshop on the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* (MVRMA) for community representatives, Indigenous organizations and government as a key engagement activity to support an effective co-management system. The first of four two-day virtual workshops was held on March 30 and 31, 2022. The workshop was intended to explore and foster discussion on the co-management system and the ongoing initiatives relating to the MVRMA in the Northwest Territories (NWT).

The workshop was attended by participants from the government, co-management boards, Indigenous organizations, and industry representatives. Throughout the event, participants heard from a number of panelists to reflect on how the MVRMA resource co-management system came to be and a more current view from panelists who contributed their thoughts and perspectives on present and future initiatives, projects, and opportunities for engagement and improvement within the system. The workshop purpose and goals are provided below. See Appendix A for the Agenda.

Workshop Purpose

- To help familiarize participants with the co-management and integrated system of land and water management established through the MVRMA.

Workshop Goals

- Describe the historical context for how and why this system for resource management in the NWT exists by engaging directly with those closely involved with the development of the MVRMA
- Provide information on Boards' and governments' current initiatives, projects and opportunities for engagement
- Consider ways on how to build capacity and increase opportunities in the co-management system for Indigenous people of the Mackenzie Valley
- Share knowledge, ideas and experiences on existing co-management processes

The Workshop Planning Committee was responsible for the delivery of the workshop. Stratos Inc., an ERM Group company (Stratos) was engaged to support the design and facilitation of the workshop, provide technical support and prepare this report. A full list of the Workshop Planning Committee and Stratos Delivery team members is found in Appendix C.

About This Report

This report provides a detailed account of all presentations and discussions from the two half-day sessions. Much of the content is the opinion of speakers and participants and reflects a range of views. This report can be used to inform the next steps to be taken by co-management boards and the government as they work to advance

Indigenous capacity and participation in the regulatory system. Links to the presentations are available and can be accessed at the [Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board website](#).

Day 1: The Past

The first day of the workshop was held virtually on March 30, 2022 (9am-12pm MT) focusing on the history of the MVRMA and how the co-management system came to be.

The workshop opened with a land acknowledgement of the Chief Drygeese Traditional Territory from Tanya Lantz, Community Outreach Coordinator with the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board, and a drumming circle hosted by Bobby Drygeese and the Yellowknives Dene Drummers. Following the Welcome and Opening remarks, participants were asked to provide a personal land acknowledgement in the Zoom Webinar chat and to answer a few brief poll questions to get a sense of who was in the ‘room’. Many attendees identified that they were located throughout Canada in Yellowknife, Ottawa, Inuvik, etc. and are active government employees, co-management board members, working for an Indigenous organization/government, or work in industry. See the results of the Zoom polls in Appendix B.



Figure 1: Tanya Lantz and the Yellowknives Dene Drummers.

A snapshot of who was in the room:

~150	62%	34%	30%
139 individuals participated on Day 1 and 158 on Day 2	were government employees	had 1-5 years of experience working in the co-management land and resource management system in the NWT	were new or somewhat familiar with the co-management system whereas the remaining participants considered themselves familiar or experts of the system

MVRMA Overview

To ensure all participants had a foundational understanding of the land and resource management system in the Mackenzie Valley from the start of the workshop, Mark Cliffe-Phillips, Executive Director, Mackenzie Valley

Environmental Impact Review Board (MVEIRB) presented a brief overview. (Note: See [NWT Board Forum's Board Orientation training course](#) for a comprehensive overview of the system.)

Key points of the overview include:

The fundamental foundation of the resource management system is based on the modern land claim agreements in the Sahtú, Gwich'in and Tłı̨chq̓ regions.

The two principles of NWT resource management:

- **Co-management:** Formal agreements or institutional arrangements between governments and Indigenous government organizations, specifying their respective rights, powers, and obligations with reference to the management and allocation of resources in a particular area in particular interest. The system guarantees Indigenous representation on boards to enable people to participate in decisions that affect them, and clarity on land ownership and access.
- **An integrated and coordinated resource management system**, which includes:
 - Land ownership and access
 - Land use planning
 - Environmental assessment
 - Land and water regulation
 - Wildlife and renewable resource management
 - Other parts that support the system as a whole (e.g., Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program, NWT Environmental Audit, Regional Studies)

Following Mark's overview presentation, participants took part in a short and fun quiz to test their understanding of the system. Access to Mark's presentation can be found <https://wlb.ca/resources/outreach>.

Keynote with Brian Crane



Brian Crane
Partner,
Gowling WLG

Brian Crane is a senior member of Gowling WLG's Advocacy Group and practises in constitutional, administrative, and Indigenous law. Brian worked extensively in the negotiation of Indigenous land claims and self-government agreements in the NWT. Through his presentation, he outlined the history of the MVRMA and how it came to be through his understanding and participation in the process. Brian joined the Dene Métis Joint Secretariat in 1982, when the Government of Canada would not negotiate separate land claim agreements with the Sahtú Dene and Métis, which resulted in both organizations working together. Brian reflected on the rigorous political debate that occurred, causing division between regions and leading the Gwich'in, Sahtú, and Tłı̨chq̓ to sign separate land claim agreements.

1970s – Land claim process begins in the Mackenzie Valley

Brian led his keynote presentation by bringing the audience back in time to reflect on the history of the co-management system and the origins of the MVRMA. He reflected on the 1970s, when the Dene Nation and the Métis each filed separate petitions to the Government of Canada to begin land claim negotiations. The Government of Canada responded that they would not negotiate separately with the Dene Nation and the Métis, but instead as one single negotiating party. By 1982, the two groups formed what was then known as the Dene Métis Joint Secretariat and negotiations began.

1980s – A new land claims policy

As a result of the first formal indication that the Government of Canada would agree to joint management institutes over a wide range of political and social activity in the North, Brian reflected on 1986, when the formal Land Claims Policy came into effect. This new policy indicated that the government would approve representation from Indigenous groups on co-management boards and advisory committees. Despite this breakthrough, the new land claims policy did not yet allow for the negotiation of self-government. However, the Dene Métis quickly drafted a proposal to negotiate, which included a number of co-management measures, including a land use planning process, an impact assessment and review agency, land and water management agencies, management in heritage resources, and wildlife management boards – all to include Indigenous representation.

Brian spoke to the idea of co-management and expressed that it is not a new concept originating with the MVRMA, but rather with the land claim negotiations. He reflected on local co-management boards and the need for co-management agreements for migrating species, such as caribou and beluga, among the Yukon, the NWT, and Alaska. Brian emphasized that the concept of co-management rose out of the need to protect harvesting.

1990s – Establishment of the MVRMA

Brian outlined how negotiations continued through the 1980s into the 1990s when the final agreements were being prepared to be brought before assemblies. He reflected on the rigorous political debate that occurred with the assemblies, which ultimately led to the rejection of the land claim agreement. Following the rejection of the land claim agreement, unity between the regions broke down resulting in the Dene and the Métis to both back out of the negotiations.

Despite the failed negotiations with the Dene and Métis, the Gwich'in decided to proceed with a separate land claim in 1992, with the Sahtú following suit in 1994, and the Tłı̨chǫ in 2005, which provided the framework for the new MVRMA regulatory system. Renewable Resource Boards (RRB) were fully established through the land claim agreements, but land and water management systems were lacking detail and required legislation before they would be established. The legislation creating the MVRMA was enacted by 1998, with later amendments corresponding to the Tłı̨chǫ agreement and Devolution.

Brian finished his keynote presentation by outlining the three basic principles of the land claim agreements that have been reflected in the Acts that have created the boards, including integration of all aspects of the land and water management system, fully coordinated project development in land and water management, and

participation of regulatory boards in every institution of public government to allow land claim bodies to nominate 50% of the members of the board.

Through his experience participating in the land claim agreements, Brian was able to provide highlights of the negotiations that concentrated on co-management. Brian identified that land claim agreements gave Indigenous parties a voice at the table in making decisions on how the land would be used and managed, including the land itself, the water, wildlife, and resources on that land.

Question and Answer with Brian Crane

The following questions were posed to Brian Crane:

- **Did the Committee for Original People’s Entitlement (COPE) have any involvement with this process?**
 - [COPE](#) was the equivalent of the Dene Métis secretariat for the Indigenous peoples of the Western Arctic. The Inuvialuit negotiated and settled their land claim before the Dene Métis in 1984, but that did not provide for a land and water management board or a cooperative land advantage between boards. It was assumed the management system would continue with appropriate engagement and consultation with COPE.
 - When the Gwich’in were doing their negotiations in 1990, some of the Gwich’in communities were composed not only of Indigenous people from Gwich’in, but also from Inuvialuit as it was a shared area. There was close coordination as they worked through the process of negotiation.
 - COPE knew about the Agreement-in-Principle and the provisions of the land and water management because they had been tabled in 1990, but COPE didn’t actually participate in the Dene Métis or Gwich’in negotiations, except when their actual lands were being dealt with.
- **From a legal perspective, how unique is the co-management system in the Mackenzie Valley to Canada? Is there a regulatory system for land and resource management like this anywhere else in the country?**
 - In the Western Arctic, specifically in the Yukon, there are established equivalents to the co-management boards dealing with the co-management of renewable resources, such as the [Porcupine Caribou Management Board \(PCMB\)](#). The PCMB was developed to deal with the migrating herds of caribou and an associated regulatory system exists to regulate land and water management.
 - In the case of land and water management, the co-management system is known, but the response of each area is unique. The idea of co-management is generally accepted throughout Canada, but its implementation is somewhat different.
 - In the case of the Eastern Arctic, the vast majority of government institutions are elected by the population and the population is over 70-80% Inuit; there is political control of every aspect of the system by people who are beneficiaries of various Inuit Land Claim Agreements. The idea of individual self-government has taken a different form in the Eastern Arctic than in the Western Arctic because of the enormous majority.
- **If you were negotiating co-management in the Mackenzie Valley today, what you would you ask for now in the agreements versus in 1980s?**

- I would certainly ask for more money now compared to what was negotiated in the 1980s.
- Some changes introduced in the Tłı̨chǫ Agreement with respect to the appointment process would likely be adopted formally into other regions as well.
- Greater community participation in the co-management process would be of request. Individual communities would assume greater importance, equal to the importance of a collection of regions.
- We still have a group of unsettled areas that nobody in the 1990s foresaw would still exist to this day. It was assumed that a land claim settlement in the Akaitcho and Deh Cho would have been dealt with within the decade, so there needs to be much more attention to the individual needs of those areas.
- There would need to be strong emphasis on land use planning, which in its process involves the communities more directly. The process as it is, is much too elaborate and lengthy, so there should be a much more efficient and speedy process developed. Getting formal approval from the Federal Government has always been lengthy because of the influence and conflict with industry and expansion groups who want to have more development quickly.

Panel Discussion

Mark Cliffe-Phillips moderated a panel discussion with Brian Crane, along with three other regional representatives, David Krutko, Violet Doolittle and Ted Blondin to further explore the history of how the MVRMA came to be. Panelists spoke to their personal role in the establishment and early days of the MVRMA and focused on the phases of negotiation, implementation, and community perspective through their answers. A Q&A with the audience followed the panel discussion.



David Krutko

Gwich'in Nominee to
the Mackenzie Valley
Environmental Impact
Review Board



Brian Crane

Partner,
Gowling WLG



Violet Doolittle

Member of the Sahtú
Land and Water Board



Ted Blondin

Member of the Tłı̨chǫ
Region Board of
Directors

- **Violet, what was your role in the early days of the MVRMA?**

- As a member of the Sahtú Land and Water Board (SLWB), I have seen changes in membership on the SLWB, but the SLWB Chair always brings the decision-making process back to members.
- Hunting and being on the land with my father, I recognize that my relationship with the land is very powerful and that the Sahtú region has the ability and knowledge to create our own Act.
- My experience on the SLWB has been more on the traditional side, as I found myself and co-members of the board out on the land more frequently. The land is so valuable along with all the resources within it. The SLWB continues to ensure that we are a non-political group, but we continue to follow the correct processes, rules, and regulations under the direction of the Chair of the board.

“Hunting and being on the land with my father, I recognize that my relationship with the land is very powerful and that the Sahtú region has the ability and knowledge to create our own Act.”
- Violet Doolittle

- **Ted, looking at some of the priorities within your respective region when negotiating, what do you think was the priority at the time when the Tłı̨chǫ agreement was coming into fruition?**

- The time of the negotiation for the Tłı̨chǫ Agreement was after the Gwich'in and the Sahtú had frameworks in place. The Tłı̨chǫ knew they were next in line to negotiate, but we wanted to develop a new mandate as to how to approach the land claim negotiations. The Tłı̨chǫ wanted to remove the Extinguishment Clause to negotiate self-government.
- At the time there was no self-government policy in place, so the Tłı̨chǫ had to align themselves with Indigenous groups in the Yukon and British Columbia to set up a coalition and co-develop a self-government plan. This plan led to a subcommittee being established.
- The Gwich'in and the Sahtú had to negotiate land parcel-by-parcel, whereas the Tłı̨chǫ approached our land claim agreement by holding a regional workshop with our Elders to discuss the land that was of most importance. The Tłı̨chǫ negotiated a quantum parcel of 39,400 square kilometres of land, both surface and subsurface lands, which surrounds the four key communities of the Tłı̨chǫ. Following the land claim agreement, we negotiated a self-government agreement, to where the Tłı̨chǫ is now a law-making government participating in the co-management system.

- **David, from your perspective, what did communities want to see within the new framework that would be put forward through the MVRMA after the claims? What were some of the priorities that you heard at the community-level?**

- It will be 30 years since the Gwich'in land claim agreement was settled in 1992. There was the settlement of the Inuvialuit land claim right before the Gwich'in in 1984, which allowed the Gwich'in to observe and build off what was done by the Inuvialuit.

- The Gwich'in recognized that engaging the community through working groups and discussing what was important to the community in terms of heritage, resources, etc. was fundamentally important. We were able to retain that information and build on it in our own land claim agreement in 1992.
 - The critical point of the land claim agreement was that the communities insisted on being engaged in the land use planning and through Participation Agreements, which required industry to negotiate any activity that would take place on the lands and had to be worked through the co-management systems.
 - I agree with the thoughts put forward by Brian, in that the co-management system came out of the Berger Inquiry in the 1970s when Indigenous people said, "resource development cannot continue the way it is, we have to be consulted on any activity that happens in our area."
 - Moving forward, the protection of the communities' engagement and involvement in anything that is going to affect us socially, economically, and most importantly, culturally, is key to ensure that we do not diminish the Indigenous culture of these communities.
- **Brian, do you believe the Government of Canada's refusal to work with the Dene and Métis separately in the initial land claim negotiation was the reason for the two working together, or was there always some intent of the groups to negotiate collaboratively from the start?**
 - There was a great deal of political action that occurred at the national level in the 1970s with the beginning of the constitutional debates and then in 1982, the repatriation of the constitution and the recognition of self-government as a piece of constitution.
 - With all the political action occurring, the initial concept of the Dene Nation was to have a single Indigenous government, where they would be the major player, and the Métis had their own agenda.
 - The Government of Canada realized in the 1980s that a great deal of overlap existed between the Dene and the Métis, and it was likely the most efficient way to proceed with one single negotiation group and combine the Dene and the Métis as a single organization.
 - I don't believe there was intent at the beginning of the negotiation to work jointly as a single organization, but the Government of Canada was funding the process and was very anxious to put a co-management system into place.
 - Eventually the unity between the Dene and the Métis broke down, as the Dene were particularly concerned over their Aboriginal and Treaty Rights. As the Dene backed out of the negotiations, the Métis also withdrew.
 - It is unfortunate that there is so much unfinished business with the unsettled land claims in the Deh Cho and Akaitcho regions, as they are still far from being complete.
 - Although I don't have any direct experience with the Deh Cho and the Akaitcho, the Interim Measure Agreements (IMAs) have been put in place as a temporary measure to ensure that their communities' views are taken into account until their land claim process is complete. Eventually,

"Moving forward, the protection of the communities' engagement and involvement in anything that is going to affect us socially, economically, and most importantly, culturally, is key to ensure that we do not diminish the Indigenous culture of these communities."

- David Krutko

the IMA conditions will have to be formally incorporated into the resource management system through separate legislation or through incorporation of the Mackenzie Valley legislation.

- **Ted, what has been the most effective part of the co-management system with your region?**
 - I think that involvement of the Tłıchǫ community gave us better insight to how we wanted to manage the lands within our region. Our Tłıchǫ Government has the Lands and Regulations Board, which is still being developed as managing lands and various issues comes into practice.
 - Getting our community involved has helped the Tłıchǫ move forward, but areas of concern still exist. As land use permits come to the table, it puts our Tłıchǫ leaders and Elders in a position where they have to create balance between the youths that want jobs, the Elders that want to protect the lands, and the business entities that want to maximize benefits. I believe that this need for balance is why when land permits are approved, terms and conditions are applied and have also benefited the community in getting involved.
- “As land use permits come to the table, it puts our Tłıchǫ leaders and Elders in a position where they have to create balance between the youths that want jobs, the Elders that want to protect the lands, and the business entities that want to maximize benefits.*

- Ted Blondin
- **Violet, you spoke of the experiences you bring in as somebody who uses the land and grew up on the land. Can you talk about the different perspective of how people like yourself are changing the way decisions are being made, and what is different now than what you would see happen before?**
 - My use of the land that I learned from my father and our Elders has made me very protective over the land. Unity amongst the people who want to protect the land is key. Where the unsettled land claims exist throughout the NWT, communities need to get involved to vocalize what they think and what they believe to protect the land, animals, and resources.
 - I think being involved in the land claim negotiations and teaching our youth to also be involved is really important because once the Elders are gone, the youth will be the protectors of our land.
 - **David, could you speak to the role of consensus decision-making, which happens within boards a majority of the time. Was there a spirit of intent of when these boards came into place that there would be consensus-decision making, or is it something that developed holistically through the implementation of the boards?**
 - I think individual boards operate on a resource basis, depending on what they can do under the land claim agreement. Each system has a plan in place, which they revise every five years depending on the developments occurring.
 - The resource boards that meet on an annual basis and host regional meetings facilitate the most diverse dialogue from affected communities. This dialogue is what builds capacity for our regions and helps us in identifying the issues moving forward.
 - The challenge seen most within our communities is having the resources and the capacity to be fully engaged in applications. Communities try to clearly define consultation so that it is meaningful, lengthy, and that communities have the capacity and resources to identify issues, if necessary.
 - **David, have you observed any differences in how co-management has functioned since Devolution in 2014?**

- The Government of Canada was at one point the sole authority of the NWT, but now that power has been transferred to the GNWT through Devolution. The Federal Government remains responsible of negotiating and consulting with Indigenous people under judiciary obligations.
- When the Federal Government had ownership of the land, there were thousands of employees, but ever since Devolution, a lot of the capacity was lost, along with the corporate knowledge.
- This has been a challenge for our communities because instead of working with people we know, organizations now have to deal with everything through the system.
- I think that capacity is the biggest challenge resulting from Devolution.
- **Ted, do you have any experiences or have you seen the difference with how the Tłı̨chǫ interacted with the system after Devolution?**
 - I've noticed within the boards that they follow the MVRMA precisely, but the boards have been evolving throughout the years that they've been operating.
 - The rules to how the boards must function are not written down, and it seems, from my perspective, that the land claim agreements play a large factor in how the boards operate and evolve.
 - The self-government of the Tłı̨chǫ region complicates how lands are managed at the regional level, as it becomes a question of who's running what? Within the Tłı̨chǫ land claim agreement, there is a government-to-government relationship with all parties being law-making authorities.
 - The way in which boards operate will become more clear as the other regions settle their outstanding land claim agreements, and how the MVRMA will evolve to become a more efficient and effective way of managing the lands that are most important to the people in our communities.
- **Violet, in the MVRMA there is a requirement for boards to consider Traditional Knowledge (TK). Going back to spirit and intent, have we been living up to that spirit and intent of including TK? What could we do to improve the way that we incorporate and consider TK in decision-making in the Mackenzie Valley?**
 - It is very important to keep the concept and practice of TK in place because the people that use the land and practice are involved with protecting the animals, land, and water.
 - Even though there are land claim agreements in place, I believe that there are pros and cons to them. For example, about three years ago the government wanted to kill off 300 wolves because they were rapidly killing the caribou population. However, the animals have existed for a long time prior to us and I believe that the animals know how to take care of each other, if humans use them respectfully.
 - Oftentimes, the government thinks they can control the wildlife, when in fact our people who use that resource know how to take care of it. Our youth need to learn the value of TK to carry that on.
 - I was upset and disappointed by the GNWT when I saw they had created a TK outline. I think that TK belongs to the people that live in those areas, not to those who travel from other provinces to develop the land.

“Oftentimes, the government thinks they can control the wildlife, when in fact our people who use that resource know how to take care of it. Our youth need to learn the value of Traditional Knowledge to carry that on.”
 – Violet Doolittle

- The Mackenzie River runs through all of our communities in the Mackenzie Valley. It is really important that those regions with unsettled land claims join the rest of our regions in unity, so that we can have a stronger voice when development is being considered.
- **David, in your perspective, what has been the biggest strength of the MVRMA coming to fruition?**
 - The notion that you have to consider the effects on communities' social, economic, and cultural well-being, and all impacts to Indigenous peoples have to be mitigated as best as possible are great strengths of the MVRMA.
 - Another key strength from the MVRMA is the aspect of public hearings. Public hearings allow for small communities to be engaged and heard in all processes that occur in the Mackenzie Valley region.
 - The balance of TK and Western science that also have to be considered where decisions are being made is really important because TK is such an integral part of Indigenous life.
 - To summarize, I think the key strengths of the MVRMA are the aspects of the land claim agreement, the wording of what is in the land claim agreements, and the acknowledgement of ensuring social, economic, and cultural well-being of our communities.
- **Brian, from your perspective looking at other jurisdictions, what is the greatest strength of the MVRMA?**
 - The Government of Canada attempted to have a single board/institution to manage the whole of the NWT, and then realized that this attempt to unify and make simpler and cost-effective would cause the whole regulatory system to break down. There continues to be a ground swell throughout the territories of community independence as opposed to regional government and/or territorial government.
 - The MVRMA recognizes TK, public hearings, the need to have the communities provide their voice, and all of these aspects are hugely important, but outweighed often by budget and the certain amount of money available for hearings and community hearings along with a great lack of resources.
 - I agree with the comments David made that TK needs community support. This is important because not everyone understands what it is and the board sometimes doesn't have a firm grip of what is important and what isn't. Communities must come forward to say here is the TK, here's what is important to us.
 - A shift of resources to communities to help them get their own points across and recognition in the statutes of the importance of community engagement and feedback. This is important in all sectors, including environment, heritage, and all other sectors that require community support.
 - We must treasure the communities and their heritage by continuing to make investments in those areas. The MVRMA has gone a certain way in that beneficial direction but its budgets are limited too. We need to bring more pressure politically for funding and resources for the community.
- **Ted, final remarks?**
 - Land use permits come to the table and the Elders are the first spoken to, as they know what activity and which community/family group uses that land and the TK that surrounds that land. We cannot allow development to displace that activity.

- Nothing can be done without money or capacity. This has been seen whilst developing the Tłıchq Lands Department. I've seen that the work is getting more complicated as we receive more land use permit applications, so we have to hire more staff (technical and new) or train existing employees.
- It is crucial to demonstrate to our Elders that we're working our hardest to protect the land and following regulations. Community members need to be involved through inspection, exploration, and closure and recognize that the land will never be the same as when they started, but it is critical to mitigate impacts.
- Each process involves a lot of activity and that costs money, so the Tłıchq needs money to continue that involvement and activity and keep land management more effective and efficient.
- Most importantly, life is not all about profit margin, as companies may believe. We cannot just extract resources and leave the land in disarray.
- Elders are not simply thinking of here and now, but rather seven generations down the road. Rooted in our decisions must be protection of land, water, and wildlife.
- The government needs to fill capacity and expertise so that land, water, and wildlife can be used by our grandchildren's grandchildren and so I think as a leader we don't want to be left with a legacy that we sold out and destroyed everything. We want to be left with a legacy that we thought of our children and our people seven generations down the road, so that they can enjoy what we enjoy today.

"The government needs to fill capacity and expertise so that land, water, and wildlife can be used by our grandchildren's grandchildren... We don't want to be left with a legacy that we sold out and destroyed everything. We want to be left with a legacy that we thought of our children and our people seven generations down the road, so that they can enjoy what we enjoy today."

– Ted Blondin



Figure 2: A snapshot of the Day 1 Panelists and Moderator, including Ted Blondin, Violet Doolittle, Mark Cliffe-Phillips, David Krutko, and Brian Crane.

Day 2: The Present & Future

The second day of the workshop was held virtually on March 31, 2022 focusing on the present and future initiatives, projects, and opportunities for engagement and improvement of the co-management system.

As a warm-up to the second day of the workshop, participants were invited to write in the chat one thing that they learned from the previous day's session on the history of the MVRMA. Some answers submitted by the participants include:

- “The realization that negotiations for the land claim agreements went back to the 1970s.”
- “I liked hearing the Elders’ perspective on the MVRMA.”
- “MVRMA co-management came out of a need for renewable resource management across borders/areas...was community-based.”
- “It was good to hear the history of the MVRMA and how it related to the COPE days.”
- “I like being reminded of the importance of Traditional Knowledge to the spirit and content of the MVRMA, when it was created, and its current application.”

Information Session on Current Initiatives

Seven speakers representing various co-management boards and government departments and agencies involved in the co-management system presented ongoing initiatives, projects, and opportunities for engagement within the system. Access to the slide decks of these presentations can be found on the [Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board website](#).

Northern Participant Funding Program

Mariah Smith, Acting Program Manager, CIRNAC

The purpose of the Northern Participant Funding Program ([NPFP](#)) is to provide funding for Indigenous peoples and other Northerners to participate meaningfully in impact assessments of major projects in the north. Success stories the NPFP has provided to the Mackenzie Valley thus far include providing \$342,000 for the Diavik Diamond Mine Project and \$1.5 million to seven Indigenous governments for the Pine Point Assessment. The NPFP has been able to provide Indigenous governments in the NWT with an additional \$469,000 to build their capacity to participate in future environmental assessments. Mariah explained the various outlets used to receive feedback on the NPFP and how the team hopes to implement several recommendations from the feedback shortly to improve the program.

Contact: aidefinanciereparticipants-participantfunding@rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca

Mackenzie Valley Operational Dialogue

Rebecca Chouinard, Senior Special Advisor, CIRNAC

The Mackenzie Valley Operational Dialogue (MVOD) is a collaboration between many partners from the co-management boards, Indigenous governments and organizations, industry representatives, and representatives in the Chamber of Mines. Rebecca spoke to the establishment of MVOD, which followed a request from the mineral industry to create a forum where general regulatory topics could be discussed outside of specific topics, with the aim of advancing regulatory operations using a dialogue-first approach by seeking to understand issues from various perspectives and collectively build solutions that do not require legislative amendments/change. Since the establishment of MVOD, four light work plans have been drafted, including application templates, education/outreach plans, reporting and tracking on ORS, and a communication/collaborate strategy. For future improvement, Rebecca is interested in hearing from attendees with suggestions and ideas to collectively learn and grow in the MVOD space.

Additional information, including information on the kick-off workshop can be found here:

<https://mvlwb.com/resources/external-initiatives>

Public Land Act Regulations

Sally Card, Consultation and Engagement Manger at Department of Lands, GNWT

Before Devolution, there were two governments and two administrations in the NWT. Post-Devolution, one government was established, but two administrations persisted. She stated how the federally-owned land had been transferred to the NWT, causing the Department of Lands to take over the commissioners land and mirror the NWT *Land Act*. The reason for reviewing the two *Land Acts* was initially to harmonize the two documents, but also to harmonize the two administrations that still existed Post-Devolution to create a more efficient and modernized process. The Department of Lands was able to consolidate the two bills into one – Bill 46 – which, will be brought into force once the associated regulations are developed. As the regulations are being developed, the GNWT will invite public engagement, with the hope that the regulations will be implemented by the end of 2022.

For more information on PLA regulations, go to <https://haveyoursay.nwt-tno.ca/regulating-public-land-in-the-nwt>

Mineral Resources Act Regulations

Julie Ward, Director, *Mineral Resources Act* Implementation, GNWT

Julie echoed the role of Devolution on the current circumstances of the NWT and how that has impacted the *Mineral Resources Act (MRA)*. In 2019, a new stand-alone *MRA* was created to govern mining administration and to meet the needs of the NWT's specific requirements anticipated under mineral resources. The GNWT's Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI) Department has been developing new extensive regulations for the *MRA* to come into force, specifically looking at if the coal and dredging regulations are to be mirrored in the new *MRA* and the mining regulations modernized.

Under the new *MRA*, NWT benefit regulations will be newly added to ensure benefits are received by the NWT and there is a process in place to deal with any disputes that may arise during the administrative process.

All this work is being done in collaboration with the GNWT's Indigenous counterparts through the Intergovernmental Council, following the steps of the Legislative Development Protocol. They are currently

planning to draft the instructions, and then move into extensive public engagement before finalizing the regulations by 2024. Once the regulations are finalized, attention will turn to training staff on the new processes or boards and finalizing the technical administrative system before being able to implement the *MRA*.

For more information, visit: <https://www.gov.nt.ca/en/engagements/mineral-resources-act>

Land and Water Boards (LWB): Strategic Plan (2022-2026) including Consultation and Engagement Policy and Guidelines Update, Community Outreach Strategy, Closure and Reclamation Guideline Update

Sarah Elsasser, Senior Regulatory Policy Advisor, Wek'èezhìi Land and Water Board

The responsibilities of the land and water boards (LWBs) includes regulating the use of land, water and the deposit of waste. The LWB mandate is to provide for the conservation, development, and utilization of land and water resources in a manner that will provide the optimum benefit for residents of the respective regions. The Gwich'in Land and Water Board (GLWB), Sahtú Land and Water Board (SLWB), and Wek'èezhìi Land and Water Board (WLWB) act as panels of the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board (MVLWB) and issue permits on public and private lands for activities that occur wholly within their respective management areas. The MVLWB exercises similar powers, but rather for activities that occur in more than one management area (transboundary) or wholly outside of the management areas of the other LWBs.

The LWBs have recently released their 2022 – 2026 Strategic Plan, which all the boards collaborated on to create consistencies where the boards will focus their efforts and how they will go about this collective work over the defined timeframe. The Strategic Plan was developed with input from internal and external resources, including interviews with representatives from Indigenous government organizations, the GNWT, Government of Canada, and industry representatives. The strategic plan focuses on four pillars, including relationship building and outreach, policy and guidance, capacity building, and internal processes and policies. To read the Strategic Plan and learn more about some of the projects the LWBs will be undertaking, visit: <https://wlwb.ca/our-board/corporate-documents-0>

Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (MVEIRB): Updates on Current Processes, Procedures and Policies

Kate Mansfield, Manager of Environmental Assessment Policy and Planning, MVEIRB

The Review Board is responsible for conducting environmental assessments (EAs) for development projects occurring in the Mackenzie Valley, with a specific focus on projects that may cause adverse impacts or public concern. Decisions are then made by a co-management board and guided by the MVRMA. MVEIRB is currently working on the EA for the Pine Point Mine, which is a proposed lead and zinc mine that will take about 1.5 years in development, have a 10-15 year mine life, followed by a closure period. More information on the Pine Point Mining Project assessment can be found at <https://reviewboard.ca/registry/ea2021-01>.

MVEIRB creates guidelines and policies for how EAs will be completed and provides guidance for developers, interveners, and other people who have an interest in participating in the EA process. At the end of 2021, MVEIRB conducted a public review of its draft guidelines for preliminary screeners, which is intended to assist them in their initial assessments of development. MVEIRB, in collaboration with the land and water boards, has also completed updates to the Online Review System (ORS) and the website to make the system more user friendly and accessible. Updates will continue to the website to make information about the EA process and developments more approachable and easily digestible.

MVEIRB is also in the process of drafting two guidelines this year. The first is a guideline for major projects which outlines an optional, direct pathway to EAs for developers of major projects that are likely to come to environmental assessment and describes the information developers need to provide to the Review Board, should they wish to pursue this pathway. The second is a guideline for assessing impacts on people and well-being, which describes how the Review Board will consider well-being in a holistic way through EA and how it will incorporate information about social, economic, cultural impacts into its decisions and processes. For more information, visit: <https://reviewboard.ca/>

Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT): Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) Legislative Initiatives Overview

Natasha Hunter, Director of Policy Legislation and Communications, GNWT

Natasha spoke to the work ENR is currently doing to advance the new *Forest Act* (FA) by creating a modern regulatory framework for forest resources in the NWT that will be rooted in the principles of co-management of the resource. The idea of the new FA is that it will repeal and replace the current *Forest Management Act* and the *Forest Protection Act* to fill gaps, particularly with respect to Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, sustainability, management, and non-timber products, and will also give opportunity to modernize the Wildfire Management best practices. ENR has committed to continuing work on the FA through collaborative development with the Intergovernmental Council. Although the FA is priority, Natasha noted that the ENR also has the *Waters Act* and the *Environmental Protection Act* on their radar to eventually modernize the legislation, fill gaps, eliminate overlap with other legislation, and create consistencies with other NWT legislation. For more information, visit: <https://www.enr.gov.nt.ca/en/service-categories>

Open Question and Answer

Participants were invited to pose questions using the Q&A or chat functions to the presenters as well as other representatives of co-management boards and government departments and agencies. A full list of the panelists available to answer questions can be found in Appendix C.

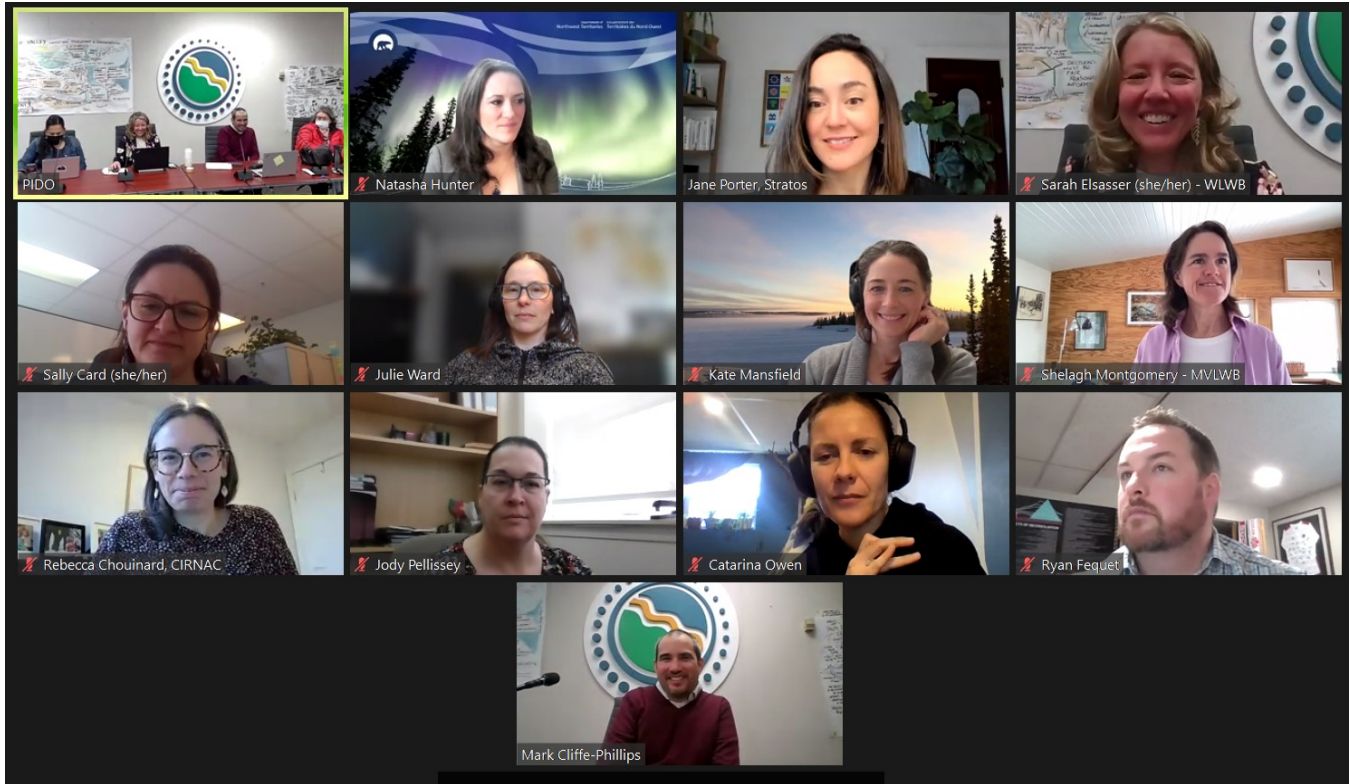


Figure 3: A snapshot of the Federal Government, Government of the Northwest Territories, and Co-management Board representatives available to answer questions for the Open Q&A.

The following questions were posed to the panelists:

- **Mariah, does the NPPF allow for municipal government to access funding from the NPPF? The reason I am asking this is because those people who are members of communities, but are not Indigenous people, who are not represented by the Indigenous organizations or governments are also affected by the impacts of development, like Pine Point.**
 - CIRNAC is starting to unpack this point a bit more and would agree there are gaps for non-Indigenous residents in the Mackenzie Valley.
 - Municipal governments are currently not eligible for NPPF in the North, but CIRNAC is open to discuss what allowing municipal governments to access the funding would look like in future projects.
- **Kate, what are the specific changes MVEIRB has made or wants to make to the online review system and the website?**
 - MVEIRB wants to make communications more accessible, approachable, and easily digestible.
 - For example, the Pine Point EA has started to incorporate plain language summaries, videos, and other multimedia avenues, which MVEIRB hopes to incorporate to the website.
 - Interested parties can now submit oral comments on different policy initiatives and other review aspects, so there are more ways to communicate and participate with the Review Board.

- **Given some communities or organizations have a smaller number of staff, do you believe a two-week public review period is sufficient?**
 - **Kate:** This depends on the project/document that is being reviewed. Some are lengthy, while others are short, so it depends, but the priority of MVEIRB is to always ensure that people have adequate time to assess the documents. There are legislated timelines to be considered, but there is ability to be flexible. Communities are always welcome to reach out and discuss their concerns so MVEIRB can make sure that the appropriate review time is available.
 - **Mark:** Eileen Marlowe, Manager of Community Engagement, Outreach and Partnerships, will be working with communities to develop community-specific engagement plans on guidelines and policies, as well as project specific engagement plans. MVEIRB is moving toward being more targeted rather than providing a single deadline for future engagement.
- **Do any of the co-management board members or GNWT employees have thoughts about the proposed equivalency agreements for mining? How do you see this affecting EAs?**
 - **Ryan:** All of the boards work together and have a team of technical experts participating with the GNWT, as they've been working toward seeking equivalency with the federal government.
- **Do land and water board reviews happen at the same time as MVEIRB screenings or EAs? Or do the reviews happen afterwards?**
 - **Mark:** The process within the MVRMA is application-driven, so somebody would apply for a permit or license that requires preliminary screening. MVEIRB would conduct an EA if the screening determines it needs one. The application goes back to the applicant with conditions, if it successfully goes through the EA process. MVEIRB does try to coordinate as much as possible through the EA process with the LWBs to ensure there is continuity of the review throughout the entire process.
- **What happened to the developer's commitment certificate that should have been completed and ready for use within the MVRMA in 2016?**
 - **Mark:** MVEIRB has been recently asking this question, as well, in dialogue with the government.
 - **Rebecca:** There is a team within CIRNAC who is discussing the developer's commitment certificate now. They were put on hold when board amalgamations were repealed from the original MVRMA resulting in a delay to put development certificates in force. I am not personally involved in these conversations, but I do know it is a topic of discussion and hopefully an announcement on timelines will follow soon.

Fireside Chat on Indigenous Participation and the Future of the Co-Management System



Dakota Erutse
Moderator

Member of the Sahtú
Land Use Planning
Board

Dakota Erutse favours conversations that make sense of the human condition, whether it's raw confession or a parlay of facts and philosophy. This does not include academic discourses nor political mantras. As a facilitator and intermediary, Dakota can manage conflict and still keep the conversation going, having dealt with men banging on doors and men with knives. He has been a member of the Sahtú Land Use Planning Board since 2016. He was born in Yellowknife and raised in Fort Good Hope, NWT, and now lives in Vancouver, BC.

Dakota moderated a fireside chat with three current representatives from the co-management system, Rosy Bjornson, Daniel T'seleie and Mason Mantla. The interactive panel session aimed to discuss looking to the future of the MVRMA, including how to build capacity and increase opportunities in the co-management system for Indigenous people of the Mackenzie Valley. Following the questions posed by Dakota, participants were invited to pose questions to the Panelists using the Q&A and chat functions. As time permitted, these questions were asked of the Panelists.



Rosy Bjornson

Environment Manager,
Ni Hadi Xa



Daniel T'seleie

Consultant, Fort Good
Hope



Mason Mantla

Chair of Wek'èezhii Land
and Water Board

- A reflection came to mind that First Nation people are born with two things: first, they are born with natural instincts and second, they are born with a statute of the Parliament of Canada – the *Indian Act*. So much of an expectation to be intimately acquainted with the law in general. I would like to look to the MVRMA – do you feel you have a solid understanding of all of these documents that are before you?

- **Mason:** I personally know a lot of the regulations and government associations now because of my current position as Chair on the WLWB. However, growing up in a small community in the NWT, I felt as though I wasn't heavily involved in the system and didn't hear about how our people negotiated their land claim agreement until I went to a big community. Indigenous youth are born with a lot of responsibility to become future leaders of our communities. Western Canadian kids don't have the responsibility of their people inherently built inside of them. We always say Native youth are the future and the next leaders. We expect a lot of the youth, but we don't always give them the tools they need to thrive.

"[Indigenous] youth these days are born with the responsibility of our people on their back...Western Canadian kids don't have the responsibility of their people inherently built inside of them. We always say Native youth are the future and the next leaders...We expect a lot of the youth, but we don't always give them the tools they need to thrive."

– Mason Mantla

- **Daniel:** I agree with Dakota and Mason in that there is more than an obligation on Indigenous people to understand a huge amount of Canadian Law that non-Indigenous people are not expected to know. In previous years, I may have said that I understand all of the MVRMA legislation, but I've since discovered that to completely understand is near impossible – there are so many

"Our name for our own people is not in the land claim...there has been a tendency for the land claim to almost recast the identity of our people and it's something the Elders are picking up on to raise as a concern."

– Daniel T'seleie

layers of understanding. Aside from the legal framework, there is also an important social and cultural framework when looking at land claim agreements and the impacts they have that goes outside of legal analysis. Through my work doing self-government negotiations, I've noticed that something as simple as identity of the people is not a clear answer. I've heard Elders express their disappointment as the Sahtú Dene Métis land claim agreement identifies the people as Sahtú Dene of Fort Good Hope, but we are not from Bear Lake. Our name for our

own people is not in the land claim and there has been a tendency for the land claim to almost recast the identity of our people and it's something the Elders are picking up on to raise as a concern. I recognize that there is both a legal and social framework that we, as Indigenous people, are expected to understand to make the work we are doing in the North be truly effective. In general, I don't believe it is valuable for everyone to know everything about the land claims and self-government agreements, instead, you need to be able to seek out the right people with the right knowledge to provide specific answers when an issue is raised.

- **Rosy:** I do feel as though I have a strong understanding of land claim agreements and land/water use regulatory processes. Although I do not have a formal education, I learned all my knowledge through my employment at the band office. I feel as though I am living in two worlds by trying to keep the Elders up to date with current happenings and the technology that coincides with it, but also trying to get the youth involved. Technology has been helpful in my experience in ensuring that the next seven generations will have a better understanding of the land claim agreements that are in place, by making the information accessible. I am thankful for the universities that exist in

- the NWT, so that youth can learn the NWT's rules and regulations in our own backyard, rather than going down to southern universities to learn the knowledge that is already in the north.
- **Mason, we're both board members, do you feel that you are equipped with the necessary tools to do your job?**
 - A decade ago, I didn't feel that I was well-equipped because I was expected to know a lot about laws and regulations coming into my role. As I started to adjust into the responsibilities of the role, I felt overwhelmed at first. My support staff helped me get through that overwhelming time, and that came from values derived from the Tłı̨chǫ culture. Seeing my community members become board members is really inspiring for me because I know that you have to be strong like two people to come in with scientific knowledge, but also with knowledge learned from Elders, which has gotten our community to this place of present day.
 - **Rosy, from your perspective, do land claim agreements capture Aboriginal and Treaty Rights or extinguish them?**
 - It is a treaty right to have fresh water, food, air, health, and education, but in the form of a land claim, I was wondering if the transfer of being governed as a union under the *Indian Act* devolved as we become our own government and our own nation within the nation of Canada. I was wondering if they extinguished those rights. I approached Ted after the first session and he informed me that concepts of the *Indian Act* were included in land claim agreements through a clause. Communities are not taking the whole *Indian Act* and turning it into their agreement, but rather taking parts of the *Act* and incorporating it into the land claim agreement.
 - **Daniel, I know you've done a lot of thinking about the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Would you like to say a few words about the role of UNDRIP in the system?**
 - Since Canada passed its federal regulation of UNDRIP there's now a requirement under federal law for Canada to work with Indigenous people to make all of its legislation consistent with the declaration, and that includes the MVRMA and the legislation that implements the Sahtú Dene and Métis land claim agreement. In my perspective, that's a requirement on the Government of Canada to be open to requests to change the regulatory system to make it more consistent with UNDRIP, as land claim agreements set out how the regulatory system works. The regulatory system was developed decades before the declaration was adopted and not entirely consistent with UNDRIP.
 - Indigenous people have been here since before Canada was here and we managed the land and water, had law on managing land use and land access, wildlife management, resource use, and sustainable management of resources. The issue is not that our people do not know how to manage the resources, the issue is the lack of capacity related to dealing with a very rigid and complicated colonial legal system, as well as the structure of this system.
 - I believe the capacity to do the management work and the regulatory work already exists in our communities, but the hard part is deciding how to share the workings of that regulatory system so that it is utilizing existing capacity.
 - Recognizing the right to self-government and self-determination, which includes control over decision-making about land use and actually implementing those rights and shifting some decision-making power to Indigenous institutions is key to making our work more effective.

- What comes to mind when thinking about capacity of Indigenous people is the truckload of lawyers and consultants assisting Indigenous leaders to frame problem statements and create solution in response to the problem statements. Daniel, what exactly does capacity building in communities look like beyond what appears to be a very strong relationship to the outside expertise?

- I believe that restructuring the jurisdiction system so that decision-making power is radically shifted from the government to Indigenous government organizations is necessary so that existing Indigenous knowledge is utilized. The capacity to make decisions already exists within communities.
- I've seen ongoing initiatives in the Law Department at the University of Victoria, where they are adopting stories and legends from Elders and analyzing the legal principles to provide the Federal Government with a synthesis of how Indigenous law and research methodology works.
- We start to let go of this framework that we have been caught up in, and we step back, and we start asking those people who haven't been immersed in this work. In a sense, we need to start forgetting what we know about the regulatory system, so that we can create a new vision for it.

"We start to let go of this framework that we have been caught up in, and we step back, and we start asking those people who haven't been immersed in this work...Forgetting what we know about the regulatory system, so that we can create a new vision for it."
 – Daniel T'seleie

"A lot of our efforts as Indigenous people is reclaiming spaces that once belonged to us and are now controlled by a colonial power. The more we become like the colonizer, the more difficult it is to reclaim our roots and reclaim the spaces as they once were... The higher up I have moved in the chain, the less power I feel I have. The system can't be changed overnight and I'm struggling against the system more than I'm changing it"
 – Mason Mantla

- Mason, do you feel in control? Recognizing who you are: Tłıchǫ citizen and Chair of the WLWB?

○ I feel in control of the small space that I am in. The history of those spaces cannot be erased, but rather community members can grow the spaces by re-implementing the use of TK. A lot of our struggles as Indigenous people today come from constantly fighting for reclamation of the land that once belonged to us and the difficulties surrounding the regulatory system, which is geared towards Western science, when TK is how Indigenous people have survived from generation to generation. The more we become like the colonizer, the more difficult it is to reclaim our roots and reclaim the spaces as they once were. The higher up I have moved in the chain, the less power I feel I have. The system can't be changed overnight and I'm struggling against the system more than I'm changing it.

- Rosy, do you have ideas around the capacity building of Indigenous people in terms of their participation in the system? Can you elaborate on youth participation?

- I have been involved in the regulatory process for over 16 years and from my experience, I have noticed there are not many people who understand the process to allow for Indigenous community members to be involved for what may be the next major development project. There is a lack of resources and funding available to be able to meaningfully engage the youth and Elders.

“If [youth] knew more about the [regulatory] processes, and how mines came to be, maybe they would go and get that degree or education and come home to help us.”
– Rosy Bjornson

- In terms of youth involvement, I’ve noticed that a majority of the emphasis in First Nation and Métis communities is on employment in the trades, such as welding, truck driving, carpentry, etc. but there are a large number of jobs available in paperwork, research, and scientific work prior to any major development in the NWT. If youth knew more about the regulatory processes, and how mines came to be, maybe they would go and get that degree or education and come home to help us.

- **Mason, how do we inspire youth in the Mackenzie Valley to become more involved and care about what we deal with in the regulatory system?**

- I can speak to my own journey of making my way in the world. I applied for a board position with minimal experience in politics or the regulatory system. The first time I stepped into the WLWB office, I was a mover and then a couple months later I became a board member for that very office. The Chief and Executive Council of the board saw potential in me, that I didn’t even see in myself. We have to learn to take risks and invest in youth to build capacity within them. Investing in youth is something that we have done for generations as Dene people.

- I remember one of the past hearings where the Tłı̨chǫ Government brought in youth and Elders to speak about work going on in the traditional territory and I remember how abnormal that seemed, when in reality that should become the norm to involve community members in these regulatory processes, as they are likely to provide us with insight that may otherwise be overlooked.

“We have to learn to take risks and invest in youth to build capacity within them. Investing in youth is something that we have done for generations as Dene people.”
– Mason Mantla



Figure 4: A snapshot of the Day 2 Fireside Chat Panelists and Moderator, including Daniel T'seleie, Dakota Erutse, Mason Mantla, and Rosy Bjornson.

Question and Answer with the Fireside Panel

- **Mason mentioned not feeling qualified to apply for the board. This imposter syndrome is very common among Indigenous youth. How can we empower our youth to feel welcome and valued in these spaces?**
 - **Dakota:** Being Indigenous to the Mackenzie Valley is qualification enough to be involved in the regulatory boards. We have the right to participate in decision-making in respect to the land and resources in the Mackenzie Valley, and I think that's inspiration enough, at least for me.
- **What about the engagement obligations of developments and components to assist affected Indigenous government organization with capacity funding? What are your feelings or experiences?**
 - **Mason:** There is always room for engagement, but every development struggles with engagement because they're operating on someone else's land without the consent of the population at large. Oftentimes, members of the community voice their concerns, but it doesn't necessarily impact the process. This can even become a problem in our own system, as we convey that knowledge of the land is just as significant as a university degree, but we often do not see regulatory specialists from a small community. There is still a lot of work to be done to build traditional knowledge within our own system, before asking for it from communities.

Day 2 Reflections

At the end of Day 2, participants were invited to share one reflection in the chat of something they learned from the two-day workshop, whether it was an “aha!” moment, something that will stick and guide their work, an outstanding question, or a piece of advice/potential opportunity that could improve the system. Some of the answers submitted by the participants include:

- “Daniel’s point about capacity existing in communities, but our systems are not set up properly to use it was my “aha!” moment.”
- “Listen to the stories.”
- “The importance of mentorship in building capacity and confidence will stick with me.”
- “MVRMA should host youth information workshops so they can begin to learn the process. Specifically, for youth representatives in leadership roles in councils, schools, friendship centres, etc.”
- “‘All processes should start with youth and elders.’ I’m wondering what changes we can make to our processes and systems to make this happen.”
- “Can this workshop be done in our Indigenous languages?”

Closing Reflections with Mark Cliffe-Phillips

Mark Cliffe-Phillips wrapped up the first session of the workshop series by concluding with a statement on behalf of the co-management boards. The commitments of the boards are outlined below, including:

- The commitment to working with Indigenous government and organizations to help build capacity and improve their ability to participate in the boards’ processes.
- Recognition that the boards need to improve their outreach and engagement so they can better understand the needs of the communities and do what they can within the authorities of the boards.
- The commitment to listen and educate themselves to understand the barriers that exist to meaningful participation in the boards’ processes.
- The commitment to continue to support the continuous expansion of the NPPF, for not just EAs, but for the entire regulatory process.
- The commitment to look at how the boards can become more welcoming and desirable for young Indigenous people to look for future employment.
 - *The boards welcome feedback on how they can do better in all aspects of their processes and operations.*

Gerry Kissoun closed the first workshop of the series in a good way by reciting the Lord’s Prayer in the language of the Inuvialuit from the Mackenzie Delta.

Closing Thoughts: Increasing Indigenous Engagement

Following the conclusion of the workshop, participants were invited to complete a feedback survey, which included a question asking ***“Do you have an ideas/suggestions on how to increase opportunities for Indigenous engagement in the Mackenzie Valley?”*** Some of the answers submitted by the participants include:

- “Letting people and communities know that their knowledge can and should be included in the decision-making process.”
- “Education. I agree with including information on the boards in schools. The only way to increase engagement is to share with the public who the boards are and what their purpose is.”
- “To continue building relationships and developing trust takes time. Without it Indigenous Peoples will not be engaging.”
- “Capacity funding.”
- “Mentorship or internships within each Indigenous Government Organization in resource management for the youth.”
- “Educational outreach beyond explaining laws and processes (i.e., hands-on experience with students on exploration, water sampling, etc.)”
- “Youth Engagement. Get into school outreach programs and see how they can be linked with the hiring departments, so that jobs can be shared within the network.”
- “Organize monthly or bi-monthly sessions where Elders can discuss some of the burning issues like the land claim agreements, so that you can increase the interest of youth in the regulatory processes and environmental protection, and instill the general knowledge in them. We need the youth for efficient growth, development and sustainability of our Indigenous Governments.”
- “Perhaps it is in ‘how’ the engagement is carried out that needs to also be looked at, so that it becomes more efficient. Increasing engagement can result in significantly more workload for Indigenous people/organizations and without capacity, there is a potential for delays in the engagement process. Funding will assist, but is the regulatory review and engagement process conducive to supporting increased engagement?”
- “Education is the biggest barrier to meaningful engagement in processes as complex as environmental assessments and other legal processes (MVRMA, land claim agreements, etc.)...I think that starts with sharing and mentoring on the parts of the boards and MVRMA participants/governments, but also has to be from the communities themselves. Traditional Knowledge and Western science both need to be embraced fully. With understanding comes further trust, knowledge, and capacity.”

Appendix A: Agendas

Day 1: Wednesday, March 30, 2022 (9am – 12pm MDT)

PAST: How did the MVRMA resource co-management system come to be?

Welcome & Guest Speaker – Brian Crane

9:00 - 10:15 *After our Opening Prayer and welcome remarks, we will have a guest speaker share their perspectives on the purpose of the MVRMA and how it came to be.*

10:15 - 10:30 *Break*

Panel Discussion & Closing – Brian Crane (Moderator)

Panelists: David Krutko, Ethel Blondin-Andrew, and Ted Blondin

10:30 - 12:00 *We will dive further into the history of the MVRMA from a regional lens with panelists with varying experiences of the MVRMA.
There will be time for questions and responses from the audience.*

Day 2: Thursday, March 31, 2022 (9am – 12pm MDT)

PRESENT & FUTURE: Initiatives, projects, and opportunities for engagement and improvement

Welcome back & Information session

Representatives of the various co-management Boards and government departments and agencies involved in the co-management system will share ongoing initiatives, projects, and opportunities for engagement, including information on:

- 9:00 - 10:15
- *Northern Participant Funding Program*
 - *Mackenzie Valley Operational Dialogue*
 - *Public Land Act Regulations*
 - *Mineral Resources Act Regulations*
 - *LWB Consultation and Engagement Policy and Guidelines Update, Community Outreach Strategy, Closure and Reclamation Guideline Update*
 - *MVEIRB Guidelines for Developers of Major Projects, Guideline for Assessing Impacts on People*
 - *Environment and Natural Resources Legislative Initiatives Overview*

10:15 - 10:30 *Break*

Fireside Chat Panel Discussion & Closing – Dakota Erutse (Moderator)

Panelists: Rosy Bjornson, Daniel T'seleie, and Mason Mantla

10:30 - 12:00 *We will have an interactive panel session and discussion on looking forward to the future including how to build capacity and increase opportunities in the co-management system for Indigenous people of the Mackenzie Valley.*

Appendix B: Poll Results and Quiz Questions

Poll Results

Figure 5: How would you rate your own knowledge of the co-management system of land and resource management in the NWT?

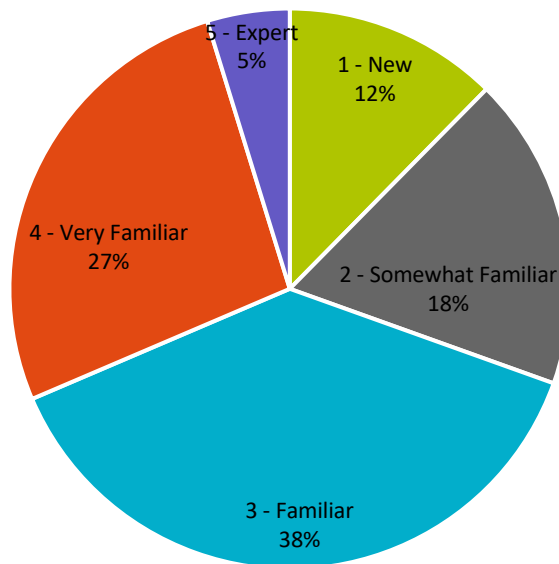


Figure 6: How long have you worked in the co-management land and resource management system in the NWT?

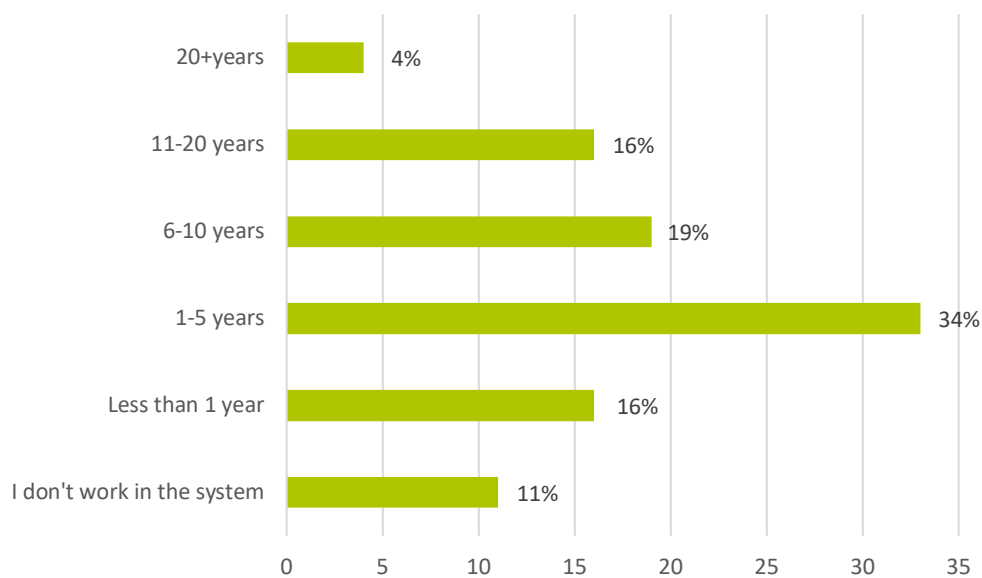
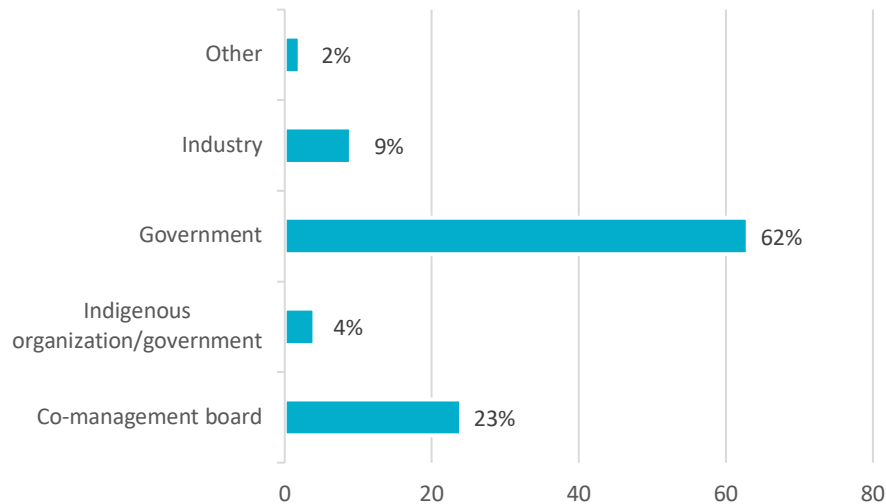


Figure 7: What type of organization do you work in?



Quiz Questions

On Day 1, participants were prompted with a series of ‘quiz’ questions to engage the audience and orient them with some of the topics that were discussed in Mark Cliffe-Phillips MVRMA Overview Presentation and ahead of the Panelist Discussion. The questions posed to participants include:

- What does MVRMA stand for?
- Where does MVRMA apply?
- Which activity is NOT the responsibility of a co-management board?
- Which option best describes co-management?
- Which one of these is NOT a co-management board in the Mackenzie Valley?
- Which type of board is primarily responsible for conducting preliminary screenings in the Mackenzie Valley?
- Which board is empowered to regulate the use of Crown and private land and water outside settled land claim areas, as well as those development activities that have impacts on more than one settlement region?
- True or False: Renewable Resource Boards in the Mackenzie Valley are also responsible for forest management.
- True or False: If the preliminary screening process is deemed to cause significant adverse impacts on the environment, the next step is for the Review Board to conduct an environmental impact review.
- True or False: Land use plans are used to establish regional zones and broad criteria to help evaluate and screen project proposals as part of regulatory permitting processes.

Appendix C: Workshop Planning Committee and Q&A Team

STRATOS DELIVERY TEAM

- Jane Porter, Facilitator
- Julia Ierullo, Notetaker / Reporter
- Rebecca Lafontaine, Tech

MVRMA WORKSHOP PLANNING COMMITTEE

- Sarah Elsasser (WLWB)
- Ryan Fequet (WLWB)
- Mark Cliffe-Phillips (MVEIRB)
- Eileen Marlowe (MVEIRB)
- Kate Mansfield (MVEIRB)
- Tanya Lantz (MVLWB)
- Shelagh Montgomery (MVLWB)
- Jody Pellissey (WRRB)
- Marcy MacDougall (CIRNAC)
- Malorey Nirlungayuk (GNWT)
- Melissa Pink (GNWT)
- Sebastian Toner (GNWT)

INFO SESSION PRESENTERS AND Q&A

TEAM

- Federal
 - Mariah Smith (CIRNAC)
 - Jeremy Weyerman (CIRNAC)
- GNWT
 - Sally Card (GNWT)
 - Julie Ward (GNWT)
 - Benji Straker (GNWT)
 - Malorey Nirlungayuk (GNWT - Dept of Lands)
 - Natasha Hunter (GNWT – ENR)
- Co-management Boards
 - Sue McKenzie (GLUPB)
 - Justin Stoyko (SLUPB)
 - Rebecca Chouinard (MVLWB)
 - Shelagh Montgomery (MVLWB)
 - Ryan Fequet (WLWB)
 - Sarah Elsasser (WLWB)
 - Paul Dixon (SLWB)
 - Leonard DeBastien (GLWB)
 - Wanda McDonald (GRRB)
 - Alyssa Bougie (SRRB)
 - Catarina Owen (SRRB)
 - Jody Pellissey (WRRB)
 - Kate Mansfield (MVEIRB)

About Stratos

Our Vision

A healthy planet. A productive and engaged society. A clean, diversified and inclusive economy.

Our Mission

We work collaboratively with governments, Indigenous peoples, business and civil society to navigate complex challenges, develop integrated and practical solutions and support societal transitions that result in sustainable outcomes.

Stratos runs its business in an environmentally and socially sustainable way, one that contributes to the well-being of our stakeholders – clients, employees and the communities in which we operate. Reflecting this commitment, we have an active Corporate Social Responsibility program. For more information about our commitments and initiatives, please visit our Web page: www.stratos-sts.com