



Robert C. McLeod
Deputy Premier
Minister of Finance
Minister of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR)
Minister Responsible for the Northwest Territories Power Corporation
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October 3, 2018

Dear Minister McLeod,

We write to you upon urgent business concerning the published docket of NWT legislation to be introduced to the upcoming sitting of the House commencing on October 11, 2018. We are very disappointed that the schedule does not include a Territorial Protected Areas Act proposal.

What is very unclear is why the department of Environment and Natural Resources would allow timeline extensions that jeopardize the government's ability to make good on this important part of its current mandate--- to deliver on a piece of enabling legislation for new Territorial Protected Areas.

We understand that the process which ENR has taken in partnership with Indigenous Governments to develop this legislation has been of high quality; for this ENR should be commended. However, it was our understanding that the bill was to be ready for introduction into the Legislative Assembly this fall, which seems to be essential if the legislation is to be enacted and used to designate "ready to go" candidate protected areas within the lifespan of this Assembly.

Why the urgency?

Because communities from Rádeyǰǰikóé to Łutsël K'é to Samba K'e have been waiting on a Territorial Protected Areas Act, since the GNWT committed to creating one shortly after devolution.

The Protected Areas Act is an incredible opportunity.

It will be a truly, made-in-the-north piece of legislation that **we all** will be able to feel proud about our government delivering on. It will be applied to validate almost two decades of commitment by the people of the Northwest Territories who have been actively engaged in local community processes to protect very special places to them. It will stimulate economic opportunities that are now being actively planned for which are based on connecting community values and economic aspirations with important candidate protected areas. There is also an unprecedented but time limited opportunity through the federal Nature Fund to financially resource the GNWT and communities to participate in the establishment, management, and economic diversification associated with each of the candidate areas.

Should the NWT Legislature delay, these opportunities will lapse as funding will be captured by other jurisdictions who demonstrate more readiness.

Our understanding is that this legislation is tracking ahead of others being contemplated by ENR, getting it into the House in advance of the impending rush to pass a large number of legislation pieces in 2019 would seem wise. We urge you to prioritize this legislative proposal and proceed with a fall introduction into the Legislative Assembly. We want to celebrate your success. Deliver on this mandate promise and it will not be forgotten.

Most Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kris Brekke". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kris Brekke
Executive Director
Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society – NWT Chapter

Cc.

Joe Dragon, Deputy Minister of Environment and Natural Resources
Michael V. McLeod, Member of Parliament for Northwest Territories
Honourable Catherine McKenna, Federal Minister ECCC
All GNWT MLAs