



Leif-Erik Aune, Clerk of the Committee
Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs
Sixth Floor, 131 Queen Street
House of Commons
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6
Canada
E-mail: INAN@parl.gc.ca
Fax: 613-947-3089

May 15, 2019

Re: CPAWS-NWT Submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs for Review of Bill C-88

Dear Mr. Aune,

Please accept these comments from the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society – NWT Chapter (CPAWS-NWT) regarding Bill C-88 ***An Act to amend the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act and the Canada Petroleum Resources Act.***

The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society – NWT Chapter (CPAWS-NWT)'s mission is to promote the conservation of land, water, and wildlife in the NWT for current and future generations, by working with NWT residents, Indigenous and public governments, communities, and organizations. We are based in Yellowknife where our local staff, members and volunteers have participated in a variety of conservation and resource management initiatives since our establishment in 1996. Our submission is focused only on the proposed amendments to the ***Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act.***

Bill C-88 proposes the repeal of the provisions of Bill C-15 *The Devolution Act* that would have restructured the four land and water boards in the Mackenzie Valley.

We strongly support that these provisions are repealed.

This ensures that the current board structure consisting of the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board, the Gwich'in Land and Water Board, Sahtu Land and Water Board, and Wek'èezhìi (Tłı̄chų) Land and Water Board is retained.

NWT residents are generally in support of resource development projects provided that they are managed to protect water, land and wildlife. The Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act (MVRMA) provides certainty that safe and environmentally sound development will occur. The creation of a "Super board" as proposed in Bill C-15 disregards a Nation to Nation approach to resource

management in the north and would reduce robust participation from the land claim regions that will host development. Centralizing the land and water boards, likely in Yellowknife, would frustrate opportunities for local residents to be involved in regulatory reviews. This negates the significant expertise in local and traditional knowledge that is so important in determining the values and issues that contribute to thorough decision making and planning. A “super board” could be seen as a mechanism of centralized control that would likely create land-use conflict and uncertainty. One of the strengths of the MVRMA is the provision of regional land and water boards negotiated in treaties. Not only do these co-management boards ensure that decision making is equitable to include the interests of land claim beneficiaries, but also provides an integrated and coordinated system of land and water management in the NWT. The integrated resource management system provided through the MVRMA is effective and needs on-going support and investment to continue serving NWT residents.

Thank-you for the opportunity to provide comment on this important amendment of the MVRMA in Bill C-88,

Kris Brekke

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

Executive Director
CPAWS-NWT Chapter
Box1934
Yellowknife, NT
X1A 1L5
kris@cpaws.org
867-873-9893