

December 18, 2020

The Honourable Daniel Vandal, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Northern Affairs  
Terrasses de la Chaudière  
10 Wellington Street, North Tower  
Hull, Québec K1A 0H4

Sent by email

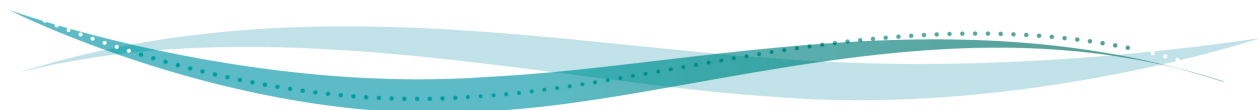
Dear Minister Vandal,

**RE: Board Appointments Process**

The Chairs of the Land and Water Boards of the Mackenzie Valley (the Boards) are writing in follow-up to our meeting with you and your staff on September 18, 2020 and subsequent correspondence from your office dated October 26, 2020. We are appreciative of the open communication you have shown and your commitment to seeing improvements to the nomination and appointments process, and to putting more focus on the process as a whole. Since that time we have written twice to the Regional Director General, Matthew Spence, here in Yellowknife to seek updates on the process his office has in place and what communications have taken place with nominating parties to ensure the co-management Boards of the Mackenzie Valley can continue to make decisions without interruption or delays. As of the date of this letter, we have yet to receive any such updates.

The Boards currently have vacancies and are facing many more in the near-term. These are listed below per nominating party:

- 1) Government of Canada:
  - The term for Kimberly Fairman (MVLWB) expired on August 13, 2020.
  - The term for Violet Doolittle (SLWB) expired on August 22, 2020.
  - The term for Gerry Kisoun (GLWB) expires March 1, 2021.
  - The term for Rachel Crapeau (WLWB) expires May 23, 2021.
  - The term for Joe Mackenzie (WLWB) expires on September 5, 2021.
- 2) Dehcho First Nation:
  - The term for Sam Gargan (MVLWB) expired on November 29, 2020.
- 3) Akaitcho Territory Government:
  - The term for Florence Catholique (MVLWB) expires on March 1, 2021.
- 4) Gwich'in Tribal Council:
  - The term for Nigit'stil Norbert (GLWB) expires March 1, 2021.
- 5) Government of the Northwest Territories:
  - A nominee for the WLWB was submitted early March 2020 and that re-appointment remains outstanding.
- 6) Gwich'in Land and Water Board Chair
  - The term for Elizabeth Wright expires March 11, 2021 and that re-appointment remains outstanding.
- 7) Sahtu Land and Water Board Chair



# Land and Water Boards of the Mackenzie Valley

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- The term for Larry Wallace expires May 31, 2021 and the Board has submitted two nominees for consideration.

As indicated above the greatest gap is for the federal nominations. To address these, your October 26, 2020 letter stated:

“For sole discretion Ministerial appointments, I remain committed to a fair, open and transparent process to these appointments and have instructed my officials to launch an advertised selection process this fall in order to solicit expressions of interest for appointments to several seats, including on your respective Boards.”

We are not aware of public advertisements already published in NWT-wide newspapers to solicit expressions of interest, and we have not been able to get an update on this from the regional CIRNAC office.

As previously stated, our experience with appointments indicates at least 9 months are required from the time of a nomination being submitted to the Minister and an appointment being approved. And if that continues to be the case, we are very concerned about the multiple additional vacancies we will face as early as March 2021. Our Boards will face quorum issues and since we continue to be very busy, it is possible the result will be delays in project approvals and associated economic development.

At this time, we are requesting an update on the communications and process that has occurred to solicit nominations and to ensure the co-management Boards of the Mackenzie Valley can continue to make decisions without interruption or delays.

Sincerely,



Mavis Cli-Michaud  
Chair  
Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board



Joseph Mackenzie  
Chair  
Wek'èezhii Land and Water Board



Larry Wallace  
Chair  
Sahtu Land and Water Board



Elizabeth Wright  
Chair  
Gwich'in Land and Water Board

Copied to: Michael McLeod, Member of Parliament for the NWT  
Matthew Spence, Regional Director General, CIRNAC  
Michel Carpentier, Issues Advisor, Office of the Minister of Northern Affairs

