

# Collaborative Development of a Northern Canadian Regional Study: It's Hard, It Takes Time, and It's Worth It!



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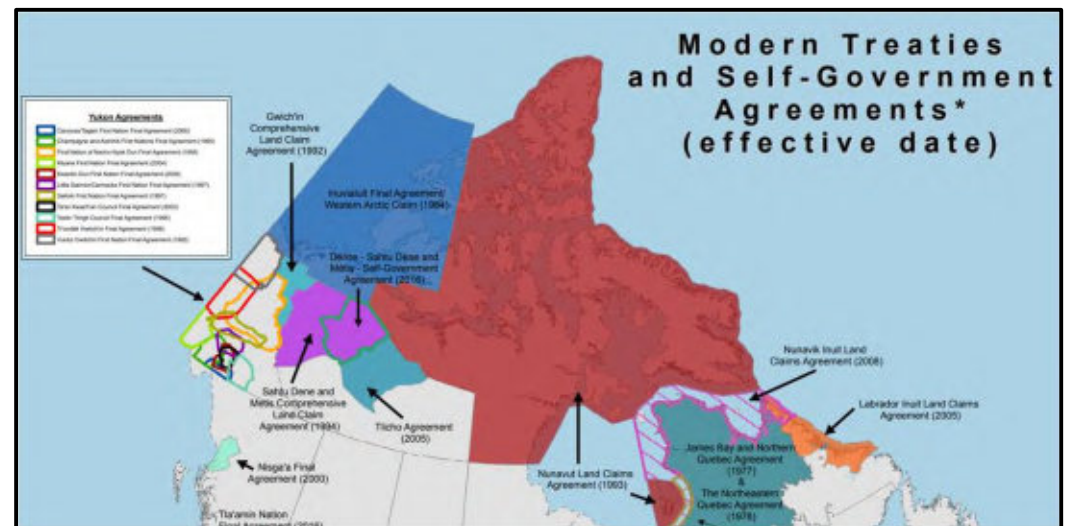
**Brett Wheler**, *Tlcho Government*

**Mark Cliffe-Phillips**, *Mackenzie Valley Impact Review Board*



# Northern Resource Management

Reconciliation in Action:  
Integrated, participatory  
resource co-management  
regimes in Northern  
Canada are rooted in land  
claim agreements which  
shape how Indigenous,  
federal & territorial  
governments work  
together



# Regional Context: Northwest Territories

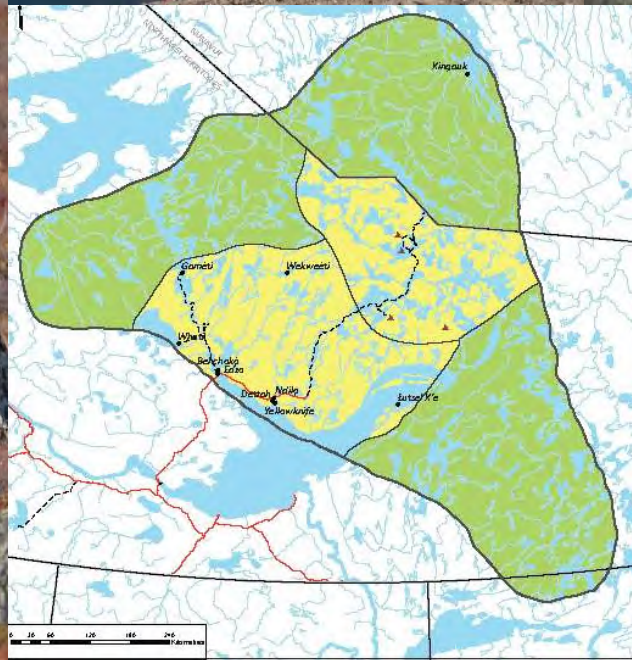
- *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act (MVRMA)*
  - product of 3 negotiated agreements
  - sets out resource co-management regime, including regional co-management boards
  - 2019 MVRMA amendments provide for regional studies as a co-management tool
- Modern agreements not yet finalized in southern NWT; no regional boards, may affect trust in the regime





# Why Does it Matter?

- Mineral potential
- Infrastructure development
- Home to Bathurst caribou herd
- Cumulative effects
- Indigenous culture, way of life and well-being intimately tied to the land



# Request to Initiate a Regional Study

- June 2021: Tłıchǫ Government Grand Chief requested a Regional Study in the SGP **prior to** major anticipated development:

*“To make good decisions about the future of this region, we need good information”*

*“An independent strategic assessment of all the factors in the region will inform TG, GNWT, and all decision-makers and interested parties about future development of the region...An evidence-based, non-political assessment would help show the full picture of potential impacts, benefits, and trade-offs.”*



# Consideration of the Request



- Minister needed to learn the views / interests of other parties & resources
- Workshop with experts & practitioners from across Canada to share knowledge
- Indigenous Governments & Organizations, territorial & federal governments, co-management boards, and industry
- The workshop helped to confirm the interests...



Workshop hosted by the Mackenzie Valley Review Board to learn more about Regional SEAs

# Minister's Support

*“The importance of cooperation and collaboration, along with fairness and transparency, cannot be understated—partners emphasized these elements as critical to the study's success [...]*

*I support a collaborative approach to the design and implementation of the study.”*

The Right Honourable Dan Vandal  
Minister of Northern Affairs



## Study Criteria

1. Ensure fair & transparent process over interest-based outcomes; maximize meaningful public participation
2. Identify impacts to caribou & strategies for mitigation of cumulative effects & protecting caribou
3. Consider northern priorities, including: Social/cultural/economic well-being; Climate change/cumulative effects/ green economy; Critical Minerals Strategy
4. Focus on the Mackenzie Valley (NWT) portion of SGP
5. Design so outcomes can be considered for near-term anticipated development (2-3 years) and into the future
6. No interruption of existing regulatory / planning processes



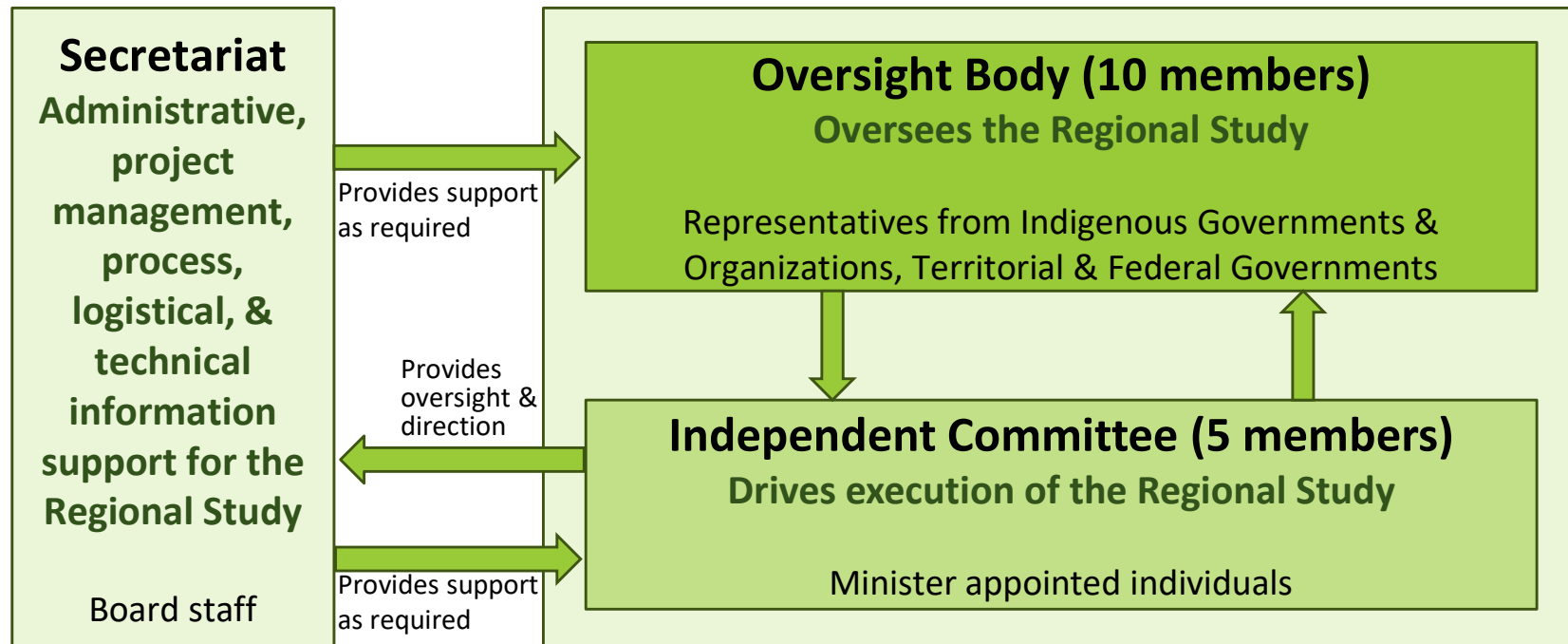
# Process to Date



- GOVERNANCE**
- Government of Canada, CIRNAC
  - Government of the Northwest Territories
  - Tłıchų Government
  - Yellowknives Dene First Nation
  - Deninu Kųę First Nation
  - Łutsel K'e Dene First Nation
  - North Slave Métis Alliance
  - Northwest Territory Métis Nation
  - Kitikmeot Inuit Association
  - Observer: Government of Nunavut



# Current Draft Proposed Governance Model



# Challenges

Risk of moving too fast  
(without buy-in)

- Meeting multiple interests (e.g. goal/objectives)
- Role of MVEIRB & committee selection process
- Decision-making authority
- Challenge reaching consensus

Risk of moving too slow

- Missing window of completion
- Involvement of other parties
- Future projects may face delays / lack of support
- Decisions won't benefit from outcomes
- Limited time / budget

## Proposed Workplan Phases (over 2-3 years)

Study Start Up

Phase 1: Scoping

Phase 2: Identifying Strategic Development Scenarios

Phase 3: Assessment and Analysis

Phase 4: Reporting

Phase 5: Dissemination and Outreach

# Early Lessons Learned

- Perfection vs Progress
- One size fits one
- It's personal
- Words matter
- Half a baked cake is better than a half-baked cake



# Looking Forward: Preparing for the Study


**Traditional Knowledge Advisory Committee**

DCLP is creating a TK Advisory Committee for a 2-year regional study of potential developments along the treeline and barrenlands.

We are looking for Tłı̨cẖo Citizens with **knowledge/experience** of:

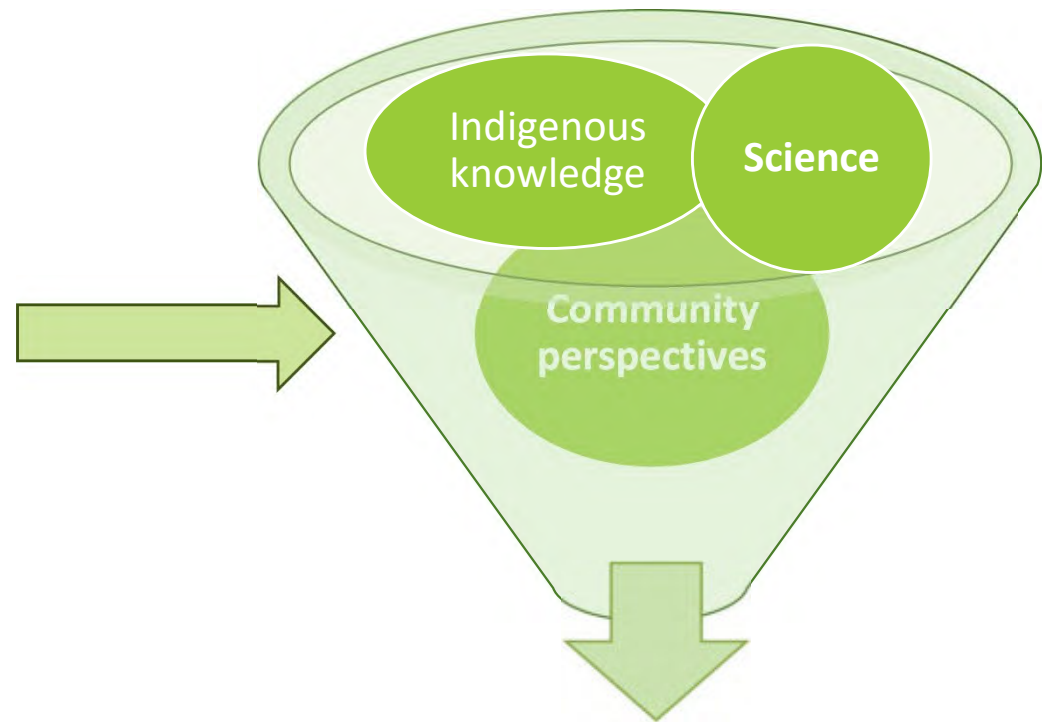
- Ekw̱: migration and habitat;
- Tłı̨cẖo culture and way of life; and
- Impacts from roads and mines on ekw̱.

**DEADLINE EXTENDED UNTIL MARCH 15, 2024**



For more information or to apply verbally, contact Violet Camsell-Blondin at 1-867-392-6381 Ext: 1336 and [lands@tlcho.ca](mailto:lands@tlcho.ca).

**Tłı̨cẖo ı̨łı̨k'áı̨ı̱ı̱ı̱**  
Tłı̨cẖo Government



SGP Regional Study

# Let's continue the conversation!

Post questions and comments in the IAIA24 app.

Masì Cho  
Thank you  
Merci



**#iaia24**

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*Canada*

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