

## ORAL QUESTION—KEVIN O'REILLY, MLA FRAME LAKE

### QUESTION 107-18(2): STATUS OF THAIDENE NENE PARK DEVELOPEMENT

March 2, 2016

**MR. O'REILLY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker and my apologies to the Minister of the Environment and Natural Resources that I didn't give him a heads-up, but I'd like to ask him some questions about Thaidene Nene, if I may. I think these are sweetheart questions, so I think they are going to be pretty easy for him to answer.

---Laughter.

**MR. O'REILLY:** There's a rather large land withdrawal that has been set aside for this area and some of it dates back to 1970. And I think that's a good thing, but as I understand, that land withdrawal is going to expire on March 31 of this year. Is the department prepared to extend the land withdrawal? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mahsi. Minister of the Environment and Natural Resources.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and the Member is correct. Interim land withdrawal is expiring in the coming days, but we have applied to renew that. Thank You, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I want to thank the Minister for the response. I think one of the key pieces that's missing to get this going a little more quickly is a review of the Territorial Parks Act. This is an ancient piece of legislation that dates from the 1970s that helped us set up roadside campgrounds, and it really needs to be updated to provide for much bigger protected areas, landscape-level sort of protection. Is the Minister prepared to review and amend the Territorial Parks Act?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** The Territorial Parks Act is actually under the banner of Industry, Tourism, and Investment (ITI), but we will be looking at bringing that forward with him and it's something in the mandate of this 18th Assembly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** I appreciate the answer from the Minister. Can the Minister tell us when we might expect to see a legislative proposal for the Territorial Parks Act?

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** That is something we would have to confirm. As I said, it falls under the department of ITI, but we can look into it and get back to the Member.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Mahsi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Mahsi, Mr. Speaker, and I look forward to getting the information from the Minister. The last question I have on this is this. I did attend a public consultation session on the Thaidene Nene last year. I was a bit alarmed to hear the Minister, of the day, of Environment and Natural Resources say that the primary objective of the territorial government was to limit the federal footprint in the Northwest Territories with regard to Thaidene Nene. I don't think that's a good idea. The feds actually can bring money to the table, and actually have a lot of experience with co-managing parks. I just want to ask the Minister. Is it still a primary objective of the GNWT to try to limit to federal footprint in the Northwest Territories with regard to Thaidene Nene? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. WALLY SCHUMANN:** This is something that the department is still working on with all Aboriginal governments and partners, including Parks Canada and people in the general public, so what the park and who controls what in the end is still not a final decision. That's something that we will continue to work on, and we can engage the Member on that too.