

MEMBER STATEMENT—KEVIN O'REILLY MLA FRAME LAKE

LAND USE PLANNING CO-MANAGEMENT PROCESSES

May 30, 2019

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. My educational background includes a planning degree, and that is what brought me to the Northwest Territories on December 15, 1985, to become the land-use planning coordinator for the Dene Nation. I had the privilege of working directly with some great Northerners, including David Krutko, George Barnaby, Gina Bayha, Violet Camsell-Blondin, Raymond Jones, and Michael Nadli. I have maintained a keen interest in land-use planning and looked over the document "Finding Common Ground" tabled in the House a couple of days ago by the Minister of Lands.

The Tlicho Government completed a detailed land-use plan for their own lands in 2013, and it is very well done. The Tlicho Land Claims and Self-Government Agreement provides for land-use planning on other lands within the Wek'eezhii management area that are not owned by the Tlicho Government. Section 22.5.1 states: "Government may establish a mechanism for the preparation, approval, and implementation of a land-use plan that applies to all parts of Wek'eezhii, other than Tlicho lands, national parks, and lands in a community." Section 22.5.3 says, "The Parties may, by agreement, establish a land-use planning body and a mechanism for the preparation, approval, and implementation of a land-use plan that applies to all of Wek'eezhii other than national parks."

The GNWT Department of Lands, Tlicho Department of Culture and Lands Protection, and the Department of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada agreed to work together to design, cost, and develop a terms of reference to implement a land-use planning approach for public lands in Wek'eezhii. As a part of this collaboration the parties are proceeding on a government-to-government basis to establish a joint planning office in Behchoko and to carry out a land-use planning process for Wek'eezhii. This House approved a contribution of \$726,000 towards this effort in 2019-2020.

It is my understanding that a committee is being established to develop their land-use plan and that it will be legally-binding. The deputy minister of Lands confirmed this in Committee of the Whole on March 7, 2019, when he said: "At the end of the day, it will be legally binding, signed off by the Tlicho government, the Government of the Northwest Territories, and the federal government will sign it, and it will be a legal document. As to legislation, I would have to get back to you on exactly how to see that going forward." I am still waiting for that response and will have some questions later today for the Minister of Lands. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.