

KEVIN O'REILLY—MLA FRAME LAKE
Cameron Hills Abandoned Site Inspection and Remediation
Committee of the Whole—2021-2022 Operating Budget Review
Dept. of Lands—February 24, 2021

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, I'll move on now, too. Can the Minister tell me whether there is any funding in here for inspection and remediation of Cameron Hills? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you. For that detail, I'll ask Assistant Deputy Minister Chapman to respond. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Mr. Chapman.

MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As part of our ongoing budget, we do provide for inspection services in the South Slave, and so we have our regular inspections at Cameron Hills or in other locations where there is activity going on. We do have that as part of our ongoing affairs, year in and year out. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Chapman. Member.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Is there any funding in here for remediation work at Cameron Hills? I understand that the property is in bankruptcy and there is still a court-appointed receiver, but it is certainly heading our way. Do we record a contingent liability anywhere in the department for the remediation that is required there? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For that detail, I'll turn to Mr. Chapman. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Mr. Chapman.

MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. No, there is nothing in our existing or current budget for remediation. While this operator is certainly under court-monitored protection at this point in time, we are not at a stage where we have determined what the final outcome will be, and so fundamentally, until that point in time, we have not submitted for any form of remediation costs associated with that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Chapman. Member.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I'll get a little bit more technical here. Where would a contingent liability then be? It's not found anywhere in the main estimates. Is it recorded in the public accounts somehow? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you. For that detail, I'm going to have to go to the deputy minister. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Chapman.

MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To the best of my knowledge, we haven't booked a liability because, again, there is an operator in place. I understand the Member's concern where this is potentially going, but until such time that the decision is finally made and the outcome is clear, we are not in a position at this point. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Chapman. Member.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I understand that whoever is left in charge of the property, I guess the receiver, has to submit some plans to the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board for remediation by March 31st. Is the department aware of the status of that work, and is there an expectation that it is going to be submitted and that we are going to review it and participate in that process? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Thank you. For that detail, I will need to ask the assistant deputy minister to respond. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Mr. Chapman.

MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am unaware of what work the receiver has completed to date. At this point in time, they haven't chaired that, to the best of my knowledge, with ourselves. They are working with the court-appointed process and working through that process, but until that point in time, we are still awaiting some outcome from that decision. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Rocky Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Chapman. Member.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I'm just more than a little bit disappointed that whoever is in charge of the property hasn't bothered to consult or talk to the GNWT about what the remediation plans are at this point because it's heading our way. Look, I'm going to be here asking these questions next year, and I suspect, by then, this property is going to be on our books. A fair heads-up to my colleague on the other side, I will be asking these questions again a year from now. Thanks, Mr. Chair. That's all I have. Thank you.