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Kenny Ruptash
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Dear Kenny Ruptash:

Thank you for your correspondence of September 19, 2025, regarding updating the 2002 Mine Site Reclamation Policies for the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Thank you also for sharing the Northwest Territories and Nunavut Chamber of Mines' (the Chamber) *RECLAIM V8 and the 2002 Mine Site Reclamation Policy for Northwest Territories & Nunavut White Paper*. We truly appreciate the Chamber's constructive engagement throughout the RECLAIM update process, from version 7.0 to 8.0, and value the thoughtful recommendations you have provided.

Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (the Department) and the Government of Northwest Territories remain committed to the 2002 Mine Site Reclamation Policies for Nunavut and the Northwest Territories and the four main objectives that continue to guide them:

- Ensure the impact of mining on the environment and human health and safety is minimized;
- Reduce the environmental liability that falls to the governments to the greatest extent possible;
- Provide industry and the public with a clear signal of the governments' expectations; and
- Build positive and supportive relationships with the new regulatory authorities in the North.

The Department and the Government of Northwest Territories have a shared responsibility to safeguard both northern environments and Canadian taxpayers. For this reason, any potential amendments to the policy framework would be considered only where there is demonstrable evidence that such changes would strengthen environmental protection or reduce long-term public liabilities.

The Department, working in close collaboration with the Government of Northwest Territories, continues to advance the finalizing of version 8 of the RECLAIM model, a Government of Canada tool used to calculate mine site reclamation liability. The goal of this update is to offer a more accurate reflection of mine closure costs and help ensure financial securities are robust and reliable. Certain elements identified in this model update may be implemented at the discretion of each jurisdiction.

We acknowledge that issues raised by the Chamber in the paper, and those raised by workshop participants in October, deserve further exploration. The Department and the Government of Northwest Territories remain open to dialogue with northern partners and industry to explore mutually beneficial opportunities consistent with the principles and intent of the 2002 Mine Site Reclamation Policies. In that regard, we propose to convene a joint discussion with Government of Canada officials, the Chamber and stakeholders to explore ideas related to mine site reclamation, including associated reclamation securities, security guidance, and related tools.

While the Department and the Government of Northwest Territories are committed to working together to the extent possible, there may be a point after which the discussions will diverge based on the differences in jurisdictional processes. In the Nunavut context, the Government of Nunavut, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., and regional Inuit associations will need to work in partnership to ensure that the policy is in the best interest of Nunavummiut.

Likewise, in the Northwest Territories, the Government of Northwest Territories in collaboration with the Department, as appropriate, will engage directly with Indigenous governments and organizations, the Land and Water Boards within the co-management regulatory system, environmental monitoring agencies, industry and the Chamber. This engagement will focus on next steps for the implementation of the RECLAIM V8 tool, once the final review process is completed and implications for other sectors, such as oil and gas, are understood.

Thank you again for your continued leadership and collaboration. We look forward to continued collaboration in the coming weeks to establish an agenda for this important joint discussion early in the new year.

Sincerely,



Valerie Gideon
Deputy Minister of Crown-Indigenous
Relations and Northern Affairs Canada
Government of Canada



Robert Jenkins
Deputy Minister of Environment and
Climate Change
Government of the Northwest Territories

c.c.: The Honourable Craig Simailak, M.L.A.