

Recreational Leasing Management Framework

Mr. Speaker, this government committed in its mandate to complete a framework for managing recreational leasing, and completing a recreation management plan for the Yellowknife periphery area.

In March, we fulfilled the first part of that commitment by releasing the Recreational Leasing Management Framework, which will guide land management decisions for years to come. This framework outlines our vision, goals, and short-term and long-term priorities for improving the way we plan and manage recreational leases and other recreational uses. By working towards the goals in the framework, we aim to have an efficient, effective, and transparent recreational leasing system in the Northwest Territories.

Today I want to highlight the efforts we are taking to support recreation management planning in the priority areas, one of six goals outlined in the Recreational Land Management Framework and a key component of our mandate commitment.

As you are aware, we have already begun working on our first recreation management plan for the Yellowknife periphery area, which includes the public land surrounding Yellowknife, Ndilo, and Dettah.

Since last year's public engagements, we have been working with an external Planning Advisory Group and engaging with Aboriginal governments and organizations in the area. We are doing this to determine what kind of recreational opportunities are wanted, based on the information we have collected through our research and public engagements. We are also working with other stakeholder groups to advance this work.

On-the-land activities, whether recreation or traditional uses, contribute directly to the quality of life, health, and wellness of the residents of Dettah, Ndilo, and Yellowknife, today and into the future.

The planning process takes time and significant effort. We are extending our timeframes, so that we may continue to work directly with Aboriginal governments and organizations to ensure that their ideas are reflected, that we have adequately considered section 35 Aboriginal and treaty rights, and have provided accommodations, where appropriate.

Based on this work, we look forward to establishing a plan that will provide for better management of recreational uses in the area, greater awareness of the cultural and historical value and of respectful uses of the land and water, and greater clarity around recreational cabin leasing.

We are hoping to have a draft of the plan ready for public comment later this year.

Moving forward on the goals outlined in the Recreational Leasing Management Framework, and completing our work on the Yellowknife periphery area recreation management plan are important steps in meeting our mandate commitment.

This work requires the cooperation and participation of all interested groups and governments, and I look forward to continuing our collaborative work over the life of this Legislative Assembly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.