

Developing a *Recreational Land Management Framework* for the Northwest Territories

Post-devolution, the Department of Lands assumed responsibility for administering two separate sets of public land management policies. In order to ensure that land is managed in a fair, transparent and consistent manner across the territory, the Department of Lands has begun to develop a Recreational Land Management Framework that will apply to both Commissioner's land and newly devolved Territorial land.

The department will look at a focus area along the Ingraham Trail and Highway 3 where recreational leases are in high demand. Increased authorized and unauthorized occupation in this area has the GNWT looking for ways to meet demand while ensuring the environment is protected and northern values are respected. By late 2016, the department expects to have a framework that will ensure the non-commercial leasing of rural land across the Northwest Territories meets the recreational needs of residents now and into the future.

While the Recreational Land Management Framework is being developed, the Department of Lands will not be accepting applications for new recreational leases within the focus area. In the short term, the department will also be evaluating options for managing vacancies within established subdivisions in this area. Existing leases in good standing will not be impacted, nor will commercial activity be affected. Lease applications for recreational uses in other areas of the NWT will continue to be accepted.

In addition, this approach will allow the department to complete studies and planning to support the informed development of the framework. Knowing more about how land is being used in the area can help the department manage the land in a sustainable and respectful manner.

Over the next few months, and prior to developing the framework, the department will be engaging Aboriginal governments, as well as the public and key stakeholders, to identify their interests and concerns about recreational land management. The department will post the draft framework on its website at www.lands.gov.nt.ca so that the public and stakeholders can review, ask questions and provide feedback.

Media requests for interviews with Members of the Executive Council may be directed to:

Cabinet Communications
Government of the Northwest Territories • PO Box 1320 • Yellowknife • NT • X1A 2L9
Tel: (867) 669-2302 • Fax: (867) 873-0111