



## 1. Statement of Policy

The Government of the Northwest Territories will establish a Department called the Department of Lands under the direction of a Minister.

## 2. Mandate

The mandate of the Minister and Department is to manage, administer and plan for the sustainable use of public land in the Northwest Territories in a fair and transparent manner that reflects the interests of the people of the Northwest Territories.

## 3. Principles

In directing the Department of Lands to carry out its mandate, the Minister will adhere to the following principles:

1. Land management decision making should recognize and respect Aboriginal and Treaty rights, as well as third party land interests and legal rights.
2. Decisions about public land should take into consideration ecological, social, cultural, recreational and economic values.
3. Decisions about land and resources within the NWT should be made in an effective and accountable manner and as close as practical to the people being served.
4. Traditional and scientific knowledge should be brought to bear in the effective and efficient management of land within the NWT.
5. Land use planning should be a shared responsibility across the NWT.
6. Land management decision-making processes should be clear, transparent, consistent and communicated.
7. Natural resources should be managed and developed in a manner that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.



## 4. Scope

This Policy applies to all employees of the Government of the Northwest Territories.

## 5. Definitions

The following terms apply to this policy:

### Land Use Planning

The formulation of policy through the systematic assessment of land potential and value within a specified geographic area.

### Natural Resources

Naturally occurring components of the environment that can be used for human purposes, consisting of flora and fauna and their habitat, including wildlife, forests and agricultural products and resources that cannot be replaced or renewed following extraction, including all minerals, aggregates and petroleum resources.

### Public Land

Any lands in the NWT over which the GNWT holds the administration and control.

### Traditional Knowledge

Knowledge and values, which have been acquired through experience, observation, from the land or from spiritual teachings, or handed down from one generation to another.

## 6. Authority and Accountability

### (1) General

This Policy is issued under the authority of the Executive Council. The authority to make exceptions and approve revisions to the Policy rests with the Executive Council. Authority and accountability is further defined as follows:

#### (a) Minister

The Minister of Lands (the Minister) is accountable to the Executive Council for the implementation of this Policy.

#### (b) Deputy Minister

The Deputy Minister of Lands (the Deputy Minister) is accountable to the Minister and responsible to the Minister for the administration of this Policy.

### (2) Specific

#### (a) Executive Council

The Executive Council may approve a change to the mandate of the Department of Lands.

#### (b) Minister

The Minister is:

- (i) responsible for carrying out the mandate of the Department of Lands and shall preside over the operation of the Department; and
- (ii) authorized to carry out the duties described in this Policy in a manner the Minister deems appropriate for the efficient and economical fulfilment of the Department's mandate.

(c) Deputy Minister

The Deputy Minister is:

- (i) responsible for the management of the Department of Lands including the planning, administration and other functions necessary to further the Department's mandate; and
- (ii) accountable to the Minister of the Department of Lands for the proper conduct of the business of the Department.

## 7. Provisions

(1) Mandate Establishment

Pursuant to the Government Organization Policy, the mandate, including the authority, responsibilities and functions, of the Minister and the Department of Lands is established in this Policy.

(2) Duties of the Minister

The Minister shall develop and carry out programs and services in the Department as may be appropriate to fulfill the mandate of the Minister and the Department.

The Minister shall have charge of and be responsible for:

- (a) Coordinating the Government of the Northwest Territories' approach to the management of surface rights to public land;
- (b) Developing and recommending policy for the management, administration and sustainable use of public land to the maximum benefit to the people of the NWT;
- (c) Promoting the interests of the people of the Northwest Territories through the development and enforcement of legislation, policies and agreements related to land;
- (d) Fostering collaborative working relationships with other Government of the Northwest Territories' departments, with federal, provincial, territorial, community and Aboriginal governments and with other organizations on mutually

beneficial administration, management and sustainable use of land;

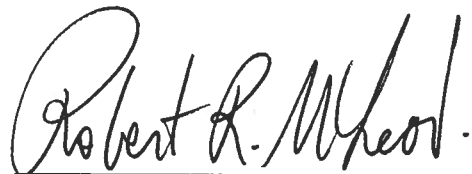
- (e) Evaluating Northwest Territories' land interests, including ecological, social, cultural and economic values, to make timely, balanced and sustainable, evidence-based decisions and recommendations about public land.
- (f) Representing the Government of the Northwest Territories and coordinating its involvement in territorial, national and international matters related to public land, including land use planning and environmental assessment processes.
- (g) Ensuring that timely, relevant and accessible information is available to support sustainable use of land in the Northwest Territories.
- (h) Providing financial and administrative support to other government agencies or secretariats when required.

### (3) Administration

The Department of Lands shall be administered in such a manner as to ensure that government requirements as expressed in statutes, agreements, regulations, policies and directives are satisfied.

## 8. Prerogative of the Executive Council

Nothing in this Policy shall in any way be construed to limit the prerogative of the Executive Council to make decisions or take action respecting the Department of Lands outside the provisions of this Policy.



Premier and Chairman of the  
Executive Council