



Media Coverage:
Dehcho Press Conference
April 4, 2007

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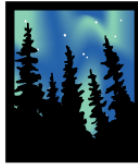
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Source	Headline	Reporter	Media	Type	Primary Hit	Date
Canadian Boreal Initiative	Environmental Groups and Dehcho First Nations Meet to Discuss Land Use Plan for Mackenzie Valley	N/A	Press Release	Press Release	TRUE	02-Apr-07
Nationtalk Newswire	Environmental Groups and Dehcho First Nations Meet to Discuss Land Use Plan for Mackenzie Valley	N/A	Press Release	Press Release	TRUE	02-Apr-07
Canadian Boreal Initiative	Environmental Groups and Dehcho First Nations Meet to Advance Land Use Plan for Mackenzie Valley	N/A	Press Release	Press Release	TRUE	04-Apr-07
570 News	First Nation demands vast land protection before agreeing to gas pipeline	James Stevenson (CP)	Web	Article	FALSE	04-Apr-07
680 News	First Nation demands vast land protection before agreeing to gas pipeline	James Stevenson (CP)	Web	Article	FALSE	04-Apr-07
Brandon Sun	First Nation demands vast land protection before agreeing to gas pipeline	James Stevenson (CP)	Web	Article	FALSE	04-Apr-07
CBC Business	First Nation demands vast land protection before agreeing to gas pipeline	James Stevenson (CP)	Web	Article	FALSE	04-Apr-07
News 1130	First Nation demands vast land protection before agreeing to gas pipeline	James Stevenson	Web	Article	FALSE	04-Apr-07
Oilweek Magazine	First Nation demands vast land protection before agreeing to gas pipeline	James Stevenson	Web	Article	FALSE	04-Apr-07
Calgary Herald	Deh Cho presses Ottawa to adopt conservation plan	Lisa Schmidt	Print	Article	FALSE	05-Apr-07
Calgary Herald	Deh Cho presses Ottawa to adopt conservation plan	Lisa Schmidt	Web	Article	FALSE	05-Apr-07
Calgary Sun	Plan may block gas pipeline	James Stevenson (CP)	Web	Article	FALSE	05-Apr-07
Canoë	Des autochtones demandent à Ottawa de protéger leur territoire	James Stevenson (CP)	Web	Article	FALSE	05-Apr-07
CBC Edmonton	Environmental groups back Dehcho land-use plan	CBC News	Web	Article	TRUE	05-Apr-07
CBC Montreal	Environmental groups back Dehcho land-use plan	CBC News	Web	Article	TRUE	05-Apr-07
CBC North	Environmental groups back Dehcho land-use plan	CBC News	Web	Article	TRUE	05-Apr-07
Edmonton Journal	Aboriginal band puts up new hurdle to northern project	Lisa Schmidt	Print	Article	FALSE	05-Apr-07
Edmonton Journal	Aboriginal band puts up new hurdle to northern project	Lisa Schmidt	Web	Article	FALSE	05-Apr-07

Matinternet	Des autochtones demandent à Ottawa de protéger leur territoire	James Stevenson (CP)	Web	Article	FALSE	05-Apr-07
Montreal Gazette	Mackenzie Valley gas pipeline hits new snag	Lisa Schmidt	Print	Article	FALSE	05-Apr-07
Montreal Gazette	Mackenzie Valley gas pipeline hits new snag	Lisa Schmidt	Web	Article	FALSE	05-Apr-07
Toronto Star	Protect land or sacrifice pipeline, Dene chief says	Toronto Star	Print	Article	FALSE	05-Apr-07
Toronto Star	Protect land or sacrifice pipeline, Dene chief says	Toronto Star	Web	Article	FALSE	05-Apr-07
Vancouver Sun	Mackenzie Valley gas pipeline hits new snag	Lisa Schmidt	Print	Article	FALSE	05-Apr-07
Vancouver Sun	Mackenzie Valley gas pipeline hits new snag	Lisa Schmidt	Web	Article	FALSE	05-Apr-07
La Presse	Pas de pipeline si Ottawa ne protégé pas nos terres, menacent les autochtones	James Stevenson (CP)	Print	Article	FALSE	05-Apr-07
CBC Calgary - News at Six	Another potential roadblock for the Mackenize Valley pipeline	Dave Sims	TV	Article	TRUE	04-Apr-07
CBC North	Environmental Groups Throw Support Behind Dehcho Land Use Plan	Erin Ward	Radio	Article	TRUE	04-Apr-07
Moose Jaw Times Herald	First Nation demands vast land protection before agreeing to gas pipeline	James Stevenson	Print	Article	FALSE	05-Apr-07
Penticton Herald	Pipeline plan calls for land in watershed	James Stevenson	Print	Article	FALSE	05-Apr-07
Petroleum News	Deh Cho: No conservation, no pipeline	Gary Park	Web	Article	TRUE	06-Apr-07
Red Deer Advocate	First Nation demands land protection in pipeline pact	James Stevenson	Print	Article	FALSE	05-Apr-07
Grande Prairie Daily Herald-Tribute	First Nation demands land protection before OK'ing pipeline	James Stevenson	Print	Article	FALSE	05-Apr-07
Prince Rupert Daily News	First Nation demands vast land protection before agreeing to natural gas pipeline	James Stevenson	Print	Article	FALSE	05-Apr-07
Red Deer Advocate	First Nation demands land protection in pipeline pact	James Stevenson	Web	Article	FALSE	05-Apr-07
Manitoba Wildlands	DehCho First Nations Demand 'Conservation First'	Manitoba Wildlands	Web	Article	FALSE	13-Apr-07
Petroleum News	Conservation trumps pipeline	Gary Park	Web	Article	FALSE	13-Apr-07

Northern News Services	Groups applaud land use plan	Roxanna Thompson	Print	Article	TRUE	13-Apr-07
Fort McMurray Today	First Nation demands vast land protection before agreeing to gas pipeline	James Stevenson	Print	Article	FALSE	05-Apr-07



MEDIA ADVISORY

For immediate release

ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS AND DEHCHO FIRST NATIONS MEET TO DISCUSS LAND USE PLAN FOR MACKENZIE VALLEY

WHAT: Convened by the Canadian Boreal Initiative (CBI), conservation groups including World Wildlife Fund Canada (WWF), Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) and Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) will meet with Dehcho First Nations Grand Chief Herb Norwegian to discuss the Dehcho Land Use Plan as a balanced approach to land and resource decision-making in the Mackenzie Valley region and as a model for other areas of Canada's Boreal region.

WHEN: **Wednesday, April 4, 2007**
10:00 a.m. MT

WHERE: Delta Bow Valley Hotel – Calgary, Alta
Red Deer Room
209 Fourth Avenue South East

WHO: **Larry Innes**, Acting Executive Director, CBI
Herb Norwegian, Grand Chief, Deh Cho First Nation
Monte Hummel, President Emeritus, WWF Canada
Harvey Locke, Senior Conservation Advisor, CPAWS
Shannon Hazard, NWT Manager, Ducks Unlimited Canada

Based in Ottawa, the Canadian Boreal Initiative brings together diverse partners to create new solutions for Boreal conservation and acts as a catalyst by supporting a variety of on-the-ground efforts across the Boreal by governments, industry, First Nations, conservation groups, major retailers, financial institutions and scientists.

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Media contact:
Christine Choury
Director of Communications, Canadian Boreal Initiative
T: 613-230-4739, Ext. 222
C: 613-355-6513

Media Advisory - Environmental Groups and Dehcho First Nations Meet to Discuss Land use Plan for Mackenzie Valley

Environment

Posted by: admin

Posted on : 2007/4/2 19:46:33

OTTAWA, April 2 -

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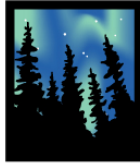
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For further information: Media contact: Christine Choury, Director of Communications, Canadian Boreal Initiative, (613) 230-4739, Ext. 222, C: (613) 355-6513



For immediate release

NEWS RELEASE

DEHCHO FIRST NATIONS AND CONSERVATION GROUPS SEEK SOLUTION TO IMPLEMENT LAND USE PLAN IN ADVANCE OF MACKENZIE PIPELINE

CALGARY, April 4, 2007 –The Dehcho First Nations together with WWF-Canada, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) and the Canadian Boreal Initiative called on the Government of Canada to implement the Dehcho Land Use Plan.

The Dehcho First Nations have linked the future of the proposed Mackenzie Valley Pipeline project to the Land Use Plan.

“Our position is that without the Land Use Plan, there won’t be a pipeline”, said Dehcho First Nations Grand Chief Herb Norwegian. “Implementing the Land Use Plan is the key to unlocking the development potential of our territory and securing a sustainable future for our children.”

Under an Interim Measures Agreement signed between Canada, the Northwest Territories and the Dehcho First Nations in 2001, approximately half of the Dehcho region—covering 20 million hectares of the Mackenzie watershed--was protected from development to enable land use planning and negotiations to proceed.

The Plan was developed over a four year period by an independent planning committee with members appointed by the governments of Canada, the Northwest Territories and the Dehcho First Nations. The final draft Plan released in June 2006 identifies conservation zones (including national parks and national wildlife areas) to be established in approximately half of the planning area, while opening the remainder of the territory to well-regulated development. Negotiators for the Government of Canada have stated that the Plan places too much emphasis on conservation and will not be approved in its current form.

“Our people have poured our hearts into the development of this plan. The Plan reflects the wisdom of our elders, the knowledge of hunters and the aspirations of our communities,” said Norwegian. “It is something that the Government of Canada should take pride in helping to advance.”

Conservation organizations noted the national significance of the Dehcho Land Use Plan and supported Dehcho First Nations call for governments to implement it.

“Canada’s Boreal forest is one of the world’s great ecosystems and spans a third of the country’s total land area,” said Larry Innes, CBI Acting Executive Director. “Pressure on this ecosystem—particularly in the Mackenzie—is growing at an exponential rate. The Dehcho Land Use Plan is a leading example of how Aboriginal peoples can provide leadership in making sustainable land use decisions. A decision by the Government of Canada to implement this land use plan would be a positive step towards achieving support a balanced approach to conservation and development in the Boreal.”

“Almost four years ago in Ft Providence, WWF recognized both the Dehcho and Government of Canada with our highest honour - a ‘Gift to the Earth’ for their 10.1 million ha *Land Withdrawal and Interim Resource Management Agreement*,” said Monte Hummel, President Emeritus of WWF-Canada. “The federal government enjoyed this high profile international recognition at that time; now it’s time for them to live up to the conservation commitments they have made to the Dehcho, to WWF and to the world.”

“This Plan is an excellent example of how traditional knowledge and scientific information can be integrated to promote conservation while advancing sustainable development,” said Shannon Haszard, Northwest Territories Manager, Ducks Unlimited Canada. “We are proud to have been part of the collaborative process that resulted in the development of this Plan.”

"CPAWS applauds and commits itself to supporting the Dehcho Land Use Plan as it is aligned with our vision that at least 50% of the Canadian boreal landscape be protected in a network of interconnected areas and that there be sustainable management on the rest of the landscape, said Harvey Locke, CPAWS Senior Conservation Advisor. “We particularly note that the protection of the South Nahanni Watershed and Nahanni karstlands is a centre piece of this land use plan. The plan would be of great benefit to all Canadians.”

Canada’s chief negotiator recently advised the Dehcho First Nations that their land rights negotiations would be postponed until further instructions are received from the Minister of Indian Affairs.

Based in Ottawa, the Canadian Boreal Initiative brings together diverse partners to create new solutions for Boreal conservation and acts as a catalyst by supporting a variety of on-the-ground efforts across the Boreal by governments, industry, First Nations, conservation groups, major retailers, financial institutions and scientists.

For interview requests, please contact:

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BUSINESS

First Nation demands vast land protection before agreeing to gas pipeline

April 4, 2007 - 19:53

By: JAMES STEVENSON

CALGARY (CP) - Ottawa must act now to protect a vast swath of land in the Northwest Territories if it wants to see a \$16-billion natural gas pipeline built down the Mackenzie Valley, a major Dene First Nation said Wednesday.

Dehcho Grand Chief Herb Norwegian said there will be no pipeline if the federal government doesn't adopt the Dehcho land-use plan that calls for about half of its lands - or about 20 million hectares - to be protected from development. "It's the plan first and then the pipeline second," Norwegian said at a news conference in Calgary.

A coalition of environmental groups is backing the Dehcho plan, arguing that it's a critical step to protecting an area still largely untouched by industry.

Norwegian says Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government is now balking at a tentative deal arranged by the former Liberal government and is trying to link it to ongoing land claim negotiations with the Dehcho.

"Canada seems to be dragging their heels and renege on all the previous agreements that they've made."

An interim agreement signed in 2001 between the federal government, the Northwest Territories and the Dehcho set aside an area more than twice the size of New Brunswick to be protected from development.

The Dehcho say the remainder of their territory, including most of the areas of interest to oil and gas companies, would be open to "well-regulated" development.

Norwegian said Wednesday that if the federal government refuses to endorse the land-use plan and tries to go ahead with the pipeline anyway, the Dehcho have a legal strategy ready. They would also look at "direct action" where people would "defend themselves" and take steps to stop development.

The Dehcho are the largest aboriginal group opposing the massive project and lay claim to land that covers about 40 per cent of the proposed pipeline route.

They have been involved in land-claim negotiations with Ottawa but say the land-use plan should not be tied directly to those talks.

A spokeswoman for Indian Affairs Minister Jim Prentice said he hopes to be back at the negotiating table "in a matter of weeks."

"We have indicated to the Dehcho that we're willing to work on the land-use plan with them in order to find a satisfactory solution for all sides," Deirdra McCracken said from Ottawa.

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It also pushed the expected completion date back three years to 2014, due to delays in permits and approvals.

Imperial spokesman Pius Rolheiser said the land-use issue has a potential to affect the pipeline, but the companies were watching from the sidelines.

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Business

WEATHER

		
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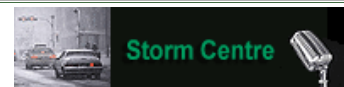
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Thursday, April 5th, 2007

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Business

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Published: Wednesday, April 4, 2007 | 7:53 PM ET

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Business

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"Canada seems to be dragging their heels and renegeing on all the previous agreements that they've made."

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The Dehcho say the remainder of their territory, including most of the areas of interest to oil and gas companies, would be open to "well-regulated" development.

Norwegian said Wednesday that if the federal government refuses to endorse the land-use plan and tries to go ahead with the pipeline anyway, the Dehcho have a legal strategy ready. They would also look at "direct action" where people would "defend themselves" and take steps to stop development.

The Dehcho are the largest aboriginal group opposing the massive project and lay claim to land that covers about 40 per cent of the proposed pipeline route.

They have been involved in land-claim negotiations with Ottawa but say the land-use plan should not be tied directly to those talks.

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"We, the Government of Canada, continue to believe that the place to resolve these issues is at the negotiation table - not in the media."

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It also pushed the expected completion date back three years to 2014, due to delays in permits and approvals.

Imperial spokesman Pius Rolheiser said the land-use issue has a potential to affect the pipeline, but the companies were watching from the sidelines.

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Apr 4, 2007 4:56:00 PM MST

First Nation demands vast land protection before agreeing to gas pipeline (Northern-Pipeline)

CALGARY (CP) _ Ottawa must act now to protect a vast swath of land in the Northwest Territories if it wants to see a \$16-billion natural gas pipeline built down the Mackenzie Valley, a major Dene First Nation said Wednesday.

Dehcho Grand Chief Herb Norwegian said there will be no pipeline if the federal government doesn't adopt the Dehcho land-use plan that calls for about half of its lands _ or about 20 million hectares _ to be protected from development.

"It's the plan first and then the pipeline second," Norwegian said at a news conference in Calgary.

A coalition of environmental groups is backing the Dehcho plan, arguing that it's a critical step to protecting an area still largely untouched by industry.

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INDEX: POLITICS BUSINESS OIL&GAS ENVIRONMENT CP Command News is one of many services from The Canadian Press, Canada's No. 1 Source for News.

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Deh Cho presses Ottawa to adopt conservation plan

Band wants 60% of lands set aside

LISA SCHMIDT
CALGARY HERALD

The last aboriginal hold-out to the Mackenzie Valley natural gas pipeline is putting up another hurdle to its development, calling Wednesday on the federal government to protect vast swaths of northern wilderness before the project proceeds.

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The land use plan was developed over the past four years and approved by the band last June. But Norwegian said fed-

eral negotiators have rejected the proposal, saying it places too much emphasis on conservation.

A spokeswoman for Indian Affairs Minister Jim Prentice, who is heading up the northern pipeline file, said talks continue on the land use plan but declined to discuss any specifics.

"We've made it clear to the Deh Cho . . . that we're willing to work with them on the land use plan in order to find a satisfactory solution for all sides. But that being said, the place to resolve issues is at the negotiation table," said Deirdra McCracken, press secretary.

Environmentalists backed the land use plan on Wednesday, criticizing Ottawa for moving so slowly to set aside key wilderness areas at a time when the environment is a top concern among Canadians.

"It borders on the unbelievable to think that we would squander this opportunity to protect this world-class area," said Harvey Locke, a spokesman for the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society.

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“
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plan, there
will be no
pipeline
”

DEH CHO FIRST
NATION CHIEF
HERB
NORWEGIAN

LSCHMIDT@THEHERALD.CANWEST.COM



MACKENZIE VALLEY PIPELINE



Herald Archive, CanWest News Service

Deh Cho First Nation Chief Herb Norwegian says Ottawa should approve the band's land use plan, which would set aside 60 per cent of its lands in the Northwest Territories as conservation areas.

Deh Cho presses Ottawa to adopt conservation plan Band wants 60% of lands set aside

Lisa Schmidt
Calgary Herald

Thursday, April 05, 2007

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Ischmidt@theherald.canwest.com

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The Calgary Sun (Calgary, AB)		Order/Commande
		89687
Date 05.04.2007	Circ. 80000	Page 26
		1 / 1

Plan may block gas pipeline

Natives want area protected

Ottawa must act now to protect a vast swath of land in the Northwest Territories if it wants to see a \$16-billion natural gas pipeline built down the Mackenzie Valley, a major Dene First Nation said yesterday.

Dene Grand Chief **Henry Norwegian** said there will be no pipeline if the federal government doesn't adopt the **Denecho** land-use plan that calls for about half of its lands — or about 20-million hectares — to be protected from development.

"It's the plan first and then the pipeline second," Norwegian said in Calgary.

A coalition of environmental groups is backing the **Denecho** plan, arguing it's a critical step to protecting an area largely untouched by industry.

Norwegian says Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government is now balking at a

tentative deal arranged by the former Liberal government and is trying to link it to ongoing land claim negotiations with the **Denecho**.

An interim agreement signed in 2001 set aside an area more than twice the size of New Brunswick to be protected from development.

A spokeswoman for Indian Affairs Minister Jim Prentice said he hopes to be back at the negotiating table "in a matter of weeks."

The Mackenzie pipeline group includes Imperial Oil, ConocoPhillips, Royal Dutch Shell, ExxonMobil and the Aboriginal Pipeline Group, which consists of most of the other major First Nations groups in the Northwest Territories.

Imperial spokesman Pius Rolheiser said the companies were watching from the sidelines.

— CP



April 5, 2007

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Mise à jour: 04/04/2007 20:45

Alberta

Des autochtones demandent à Ottawa de protéger leur territoire

(PC) James Stevenson



Des autochtones affirment que le gouvernement fédéral devrait agir dès maintenant afin de protéger une partie de leurs terres dans les Territoires du Nord-Ouest s'il tient à ce que soit construit un pipeline de gaz naturel de 16 milliards \$ dans la vallée de la Mackenzie.

Le chef des Premières nations Dehcho, Herb Norwegian, avance qu'il n'y aura pas de pipeline si Ottawa n'adopte pas le plan d'aménagement du territoire Dehcho réclamant que près de la moitié de ce territoire -ou environ 20 millions d'hectares- soit à l'abri des projets de développement.

En conférence de presse à Calgary, ce mercredi, le chef Norwegian a indiqué que le plan d'aménagement passait avant le projet de conduite de gaz.

Une coalition de groupes environnementaux appuie le plan des Premières nations Dehcho, estimant qu'il constitue une étape importante afin de protéger un secteur encore largement épargné par l'industrie.

M. Norwegian accuse le gouvernement du premier ministre Stephen Harper de ne pas vouloir respecter une entente de principe atteinte avec le précédent gouvernement libéral et de tenter de la lier aux revendications territoriales des Dehcho.

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Environmental groups back Dehcho land-use plan

Last Updated: Wednesday, April 4, 2007 | 5:07 PM MT

[CBC News](#)

Four major conservation groups have thrown their support behind the Dehcho's proposed land-use plan in the Northwest Territories — a plan that has become the main obstacle in land-claim talks between the Dehcho First Nation and the federal government.

World Wildlife Fund Canada, the Canadian Boreal Initiative, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, and Ducks Unlimited Canada expressed their support for the First Nation's plan at a news conference in Calgary on Wednesday.

The WWF, which has worked with the Dehcho, the federal government and others on developing the plan for the past 10 years, is calling on Indian and Northern Affairs Minister Jim Prentice to live up to his government's "green" rhetoric of late.

"We kind of say, 'Gee, if you can't approve a plan like this, what can you approve?'" said Monte Hummel, president emeritus of WWF Canada.

"The position that Canada's taken, that this plan proposes to protect too much, we find rather breathtaking. Does Jim Prentice really believe that future generations are going to blame him or any of us for having protected too much of Canada? I don't think so."

The land-use plan, which the Dehcho approved at its assembly in June, calls for 60 per cent of their lands to be protected, as well as a rigorous system for approving new development. In January, the federal government refused to accept the plan as is, saying it protects too much land from development.

The plan has since become the main sticking point in land-claim and self-government negotiations between the Dehcho and Ottawa. The latest round of talks were cancelled in March, with the next round scheduled later this month.

No plan, no pipeline: grand chief

The Dehcho First Nation, which represents 10 communities in the southwest region of the Northwest Territories, is the only aboriginal group without a land-claim agreement along the route of the proposed 1,200-kilometre Mackenzie Valley pipeline. About 40 per cent of the pipeline route falls within Dehcho territory.

Grand Chief Herb Norwegian said if Ottawa does not agree to its land-use plan, it will block construction of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline, which would carry northern natural gas to Alberta's oil sands.

"Our position is that without the land-use plan, there won't be a pipeline," Norwegian said in a release Wednesday.

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The Edmonton Journal (Edmonton, AB)		Order/Commande
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Date 05.04.2007	Circ. 138700 Page E11	1 / 1

Aboriginal band puts up new hurdle to northern project

LISA SCHMIDT
Calgary Herald
 CALGARY

The last aboriginal holdout to the **Mackenzie Valley** natural gas pipeline is putting up another hurdle to its development, calling Wednesday on the federal government to protect vast swaths of northern wilderness before the project proceeds.

Deh Cho First Nation Chief **Herb Norwegian** said Wednesday Ottawa should approve the band's land use plan, which would set aside 60 per cent of its lands in the Northwest Territories as conservation areas, including national parks and wildlife areas, and open the rest for development.

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"They've been dragging their heels, they just haven't moved on any issues. ... We need to move forward, we need some decisions."

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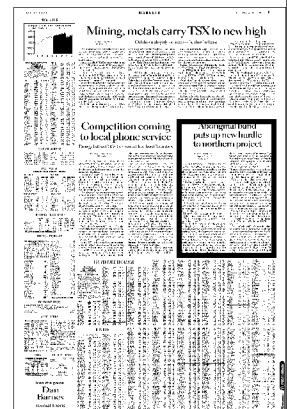
"We've made it clear to the **Deh Cho** ... that we're willing to work with them on the land-use plan in order to find a satisfactory solution for all sides. But that being said, the place to resolve issues is at the negotiation table," said press secretary Deirdra McCracken.

Environmentalists backed the land use plan on Wednesday, criticizing Ottawa for moving so slowly to set aside key wilderness areas at a time when the environment is a top concern.

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"It is unbelievable that at this time of rampant extinctions and high-speed climate change that someone could say there is too much conservation."

The 1,220-kilometre line would run down the **Mackenzie Valley** into Alberta's natural gas network. Imperial's partners in the project include Shell Canada, ConocoPhillips, Exxon Mobil Corp. and the Aboriginal Pipeline Group.



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Lisa Schmidt

Calgary Herald; CanWest News Service

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Des autochtones demandent à Ottawa de protéger leur territoire

Le 4 avril 2007 - 20:23 | Presse Canadienne

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Mackenzie Valley gas pipeline hits new snag

First Nation wants wilderness plan first

LISA SCHMIDT

CanWest News Service

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"We've made it clear to the Deh Cho ... that we're willing to work with them on the land use plan in order to find a satisfactory solution for all sides. But that being said, the place to resolve issues is at the negotiation table," press secretary Deirdra McCracken said.

Environmentalists backed the land use plan yesterday, criticizing Ottawa for moving so slowly on it. "It borders on the unbelievable to think that we would squander this opportunity to protect this world-class area," said Harvey Locke, spokesman for the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society.

Calgary Herald

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The Toronto Star (Toronto, ON)		Order/Commande
		89687
Date 05.04.2007	Circ. 454992 Page C2	1 / 1

Protect land or sacrifice pipeline, Dene chief says

Ottawa must act now to protect a vast swath of land in the Northwest Territories if it wants to see a \$16 billion natural-gas pipeline built down the **Mackenzie Valley**, a major Dene First Nation said yesterday.

Dehcho grand chief **Herb Norwegian** said there will be no pipeline if Ottawa doesn't adopt the **Dehcho** land-use plan that calls for about half of its lands — about 20 million hectares — to be protected. "It's the plan first and then the pipeline second," Norwegian said in Calgary.

A spokeswoman for Indian Affairs Minister Jim Prentice, right, said he hopes to be back at the negotiating table "in a matter of weeks."



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April 05, 2007

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A spokeswoman for Indian Affairs Minister Jim Prentice, right, said he hopes to be back at the negotiating table "in a matter of weeks."

Mackenzie Valley gas pipeline hits new snag

First Nation wants wilderness plan first

LISA SCHMIDT

CanWest News Service

Thursday, April 05, 2007

The last aboriginal holdout to the Mackenzie Valley natural gas pipeline is putting up another hurdle to its development, calling on the federal government yesterday to protect vast swaths of northern wilderness before the project can proceed.

Deh Cho First Nation Chief Herb Norwegian said Ottawa should approve the band's land use plan, which would set aside 60 per cent of its lands in the Northwest Territories as conservation areas, including national parks and wildlife areas, and open the rest for development.

"If there's no plan, there will be no pipeline," Norwegian said at a news conference with environmental leaders. "They've been dragging their heels, they just haven't moved on any issues."

The 1,220-kilometre pipeline, seen to be key to unlocking large Arctic gas reserves, has been plagued by regulatory delays and soaring cost estimates, which project leader Imperial Oil Ltd. said last month have more than doubled to \$16.2 billion.

About 40 per cent of the proposed pipeline crosses lands claimed by the Deh Cho, the only major aboriginal group that hasn't yet signed onto the pipeline.

The land use plan was developed over four years and approved by the band last June. But Norwegian said federal negotiators rejected it, saying it places too much emphasis on conservation.

A spokeswoman for Indian Affairs Minister Jim Prentice, who is heading up the pipeline file, said talks continue on the land use plan.

"We've made it clear to the Deh Cho ... that we're willing to work with them on the land use plan in order to find a satisfactory solution for all sides. But that being said, the place to resolve issues is at the negotiation table," press secretary Deirdra McCracken said.

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Calgary Herald

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EN BREF

Pas de pipeline si Ottawa ne protège pas nos terres, menacent les autochtones

Des autochtones affirment que le gouvernement fédéral devrait agir dès maintenant afin de protéger une partie de leurs terres dans les Territoires du Nord-Ouest s'il tient à ce que soit construit un pipeline de gaz naturel de 16 milliards dans la vallée de la Mackenzie. Le chef des Premières nations Dehcho, Herb Norwegian, avance qu'il n'y aura pas de pipeline si Ottawa n'adopte pas le plan d'aménagement du territoire Dehcho réclamant que près de la moitié de ce territoire – ou environ 20 millions d'hectares – soit à l'abri des projets de développement. En conférence de presse à Calgary, hier, le chef Norwegian a indiqué que le plan d'aménagement passait avant le projet de conduite de gaz. Une coalition de groupes environnementaux appuie le plan des Premières nations Dehcho, estimant qu'il constitue une étape importante afin de protéger un secteur encore largement épargné par l'industrie.

Presse Canadienne

INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE PIPELINE PROJECT

CBC News at Six

CBC Calgary (TV)

April 4, 2007 - Runs 2:05

DOUG DIRKS (CBRT-TV): Another potential roadblock for the Mackenzie Valley pipeline. Conservation groups are promising to lead an international campaign against the project unless Ottawa agrees to set aside huge new areas of the Boreal Forest for protection. Our business specialist, Dave Sims reports.

DAVE SIMS (Reporter): The group want Ottawa to agree to a plan to set aside 780,000 hectares for protection in the Northwest Territories.

HERB NORWEGIAN (Deh Cho First Nations): The plan needs to be implemented; it needs to be adopted by Canada before your pipeline can be talked about.

SIMS: Boreal Forest twice the area of New Brunswick.

LARRY INNER (Canadian Boreal Institute): ...Which is one of the last large intact ecosystem on the planet...

SIMS: Identified by the Deh Cho First Nation which live around the pipeline route and have an outstanding land claim. On side are the Canadian Boreal Initiative, the World Wildlife Fund, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society and Ducks Unlimited. Ottawa refuses to set aside that much land. So now the five group strategy is to mobilize opinion including outside Canada.

MONTE HUMMEL (World Wildlife Federation): The significance of recognizing this as a gift so near that enjoys the support of our worldwide organizations...

SIMS: A spokesperson for Jim Prentice, the minister responsible, says Ottawa is willing to work on the plan to come up with a compromise that suits everybody. But it won't negotiate in the media and plans to resume negotiations in a matter of weeks.

NORWEGIAN: Deh Cho land...

SIMS: Norwegian has repeated a threat to block construction of the pipeline by force if it goes ahead without their land-use plan.

NORWEGIAN: If they have bulldozers coming up to the tent frames and trashing over their trap lines. And you know, if there is something like that that's happening, then the Deh Cho Denes have a right to defend themselves.

SIMS: All of this may be irrelevant anyway. The consortium recently doubled its cost estimate for the project to 16.2 billion dollars raising questions about whether the pipeline could even compete with shipping gas by tanker from overseas. Dave Sims, CBC News, Calgary.

CBC North Radio – April 4, 2007

Environmental Groups Throw Support Behind Dehcho Land Use Plan

CBC Radio, Wednesday, April 4, 2007, 4:30 p.m.

ERIN WARD, CBC: Four major conservation groups have thrown their support behind the Dehcho Land Use Plan. The plan has become the main stumbling block in land claim and self-government negotiations for the First Nations in the region. The Dehcho are calling for protection of 60 percent of their lands and a rigorous system for approving new development. The federal government says that's too much conservation. The president emeritus of the World Wildlife Fund has been working with the Dehcho First Nations, the federal government and others for the last 10 years to develop the plan. Monte Hummel.

HUMMEL: We kind of say gee, if you can't approve a plan like this what can you approve? The position that Canada has taken that this plan proposes to protect too much we find rather breathtaking. Does Jim Prentice really believe that future generations are going to blame him or any of us for having protected too much of Canada? I don't think so.

CBC: Hummel says his organization is calling on the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs to live up to his government's green rhetoric. The Canadian Boreal Initiative, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society and Ducks Unlimited Canada are also supporting the Dehcho.

Moose Jaw Times-Herald (Moose Jaw,SK)		Order/Commande
		89687
Date 05.04.2007	Circ. 10250 Page b7	1 / 1

First Nation demands vast land protection before agreeing to gas pipeline

CALGARY (CP) — Ottawa must act now to protect a vast swath of land in the Northwest Territories if it wants to see a \$16-billion natural gas pipeline built down the Mackenzie Valley, a major Dene First Nation said Wednesday.

Dehcho Grand Chief **Herb Norwegian** said there will be no pipeline if the federal government doesn't adopt the **Dehcho** land-use plan that calls for about half of its lands — or about 20 million hectares — to be protected from development.

"It's the plan first and then the pipeline second," Norwegian said at a news conference in Calgary.

A coalition of environmental groups is backing the **Dehcho** plan, arguing that it's a critical step to protecting an area still largely untouched by industry.

Norwegian says Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government is now balking at a tentative deal arranged by the former Liberal government and is trying to link it to ongoing land claim negotiations with the **Dehcho**.

"Canada seems to be dragging their heels and renegeing on all the previous agreements that they've made."

An interim agreement signed in 2001 between the federal government, the Northwest Territories and the **Dehcho** set aside an area more than twice the size of New Brunswick to be protected from development.

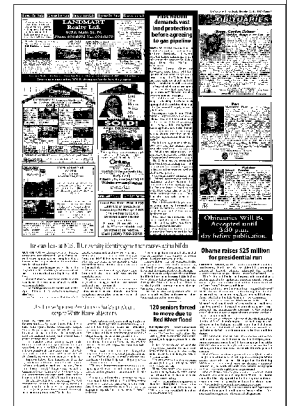
The **Dehcho** say the remainder of their territory, including most of the areas of interest to oil and gas companies, would be open to "well-regulated" development.

Norwegian said Wednesday that if the federal government refuses to endorse the land-use plan and tries to go ahead with the pipeline anyway, the **Dehcho** have a legal strategy ready. They would also look at "direct action" where people would "defend themselves" and take steps to stop development.

The **Dehcho** are the largest aboriginal group opposing the massive project and lay claim to land that covers about 40 per cent of the proposed pipeline route.

They have been involved in land-claim negotiations with Ottawa but say the land-use plan should not be tied directly to those talks.

A spokeswoman for Indian Affairs Minister Jim Prentice said he hopes to be back at the negotiating table "in a matter of weeks."



The Penticton Herald (Penticton, BC)		Order/Commande
		89687
Date 05.04.2007	Circ. 8900 Page A4	1 / 1

ALBERTA

Pipeline plan calls for land in watershed

CALGARY — A First Nation in the Northwest Territories says Ottawa must protect more than half of the band's land if the government wants to see a \$16-billion natural gas pipeline built down the **Mackenzie Valley**.

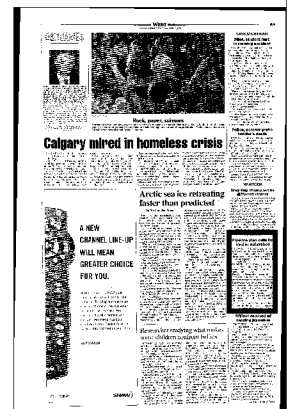
Grand Chief **Herb Norwegian** says there will be no pipeline if the federal government doesn't implement the **Dehcho** land-use plan.

The plan calls for about 20 million hectares of land in the Mackenzie watershed to be protected from development.

The **Dehcho** are the largest aboriginal group opposing the massive project and lay claim to land that covers about 40 per cent of the proposed pipeline route.

Several environmental groups support the **Dehcho** plan, saying it's a great way to protect an area still largely untouched by industry.

A spokeswoman for Indian Affairs Minister Jim Prentice says he hopes to be back at the negotiating table "in a matter of weeks."



Petroleum News – April 6, 2007

Deh Cho: No conservation, no pipeline

This time the last aboriginal holdout against the Mackenzie gas pipeline project has the backing of four environmental groups

Gary Park

The Deh Cho First Nation has issued another ultimatum to the Canadian government — either a sprawling area of the Northwest Territories is set aside as a conservation area or there will be no gas pipeline along the Mackenzie Valley.

And this time the aboriginal community has the backing of four environmental groups to set aside 60 percent of the land being claimed by the Deh Cho as part of its self-government negotiations.

Grand Chief Herb Norwegian told reporters in Calgary that unless Ottawa agrees to the proposal the Deh Cho will block construction of the proposed pipeline.

He said the government has been “dragging their heels; they just haven’t moved on any issues. We need to move forward. We need some decisions.”

The Deh Cho, whose region covers 40 percent of the planned pipeline route and embraces 10 communities in the southwest region of the NWT, is the last aboriginal holdout against the project.

The land use plan was developed over four years and approved by the Deh Cho leadership last June.

But Norwegian said it has been rejected by federal negotiators because it places too much emphasis on conservation.

Conservation groups back move

Backing the Deh Cho are the World Wildlife Fund Canada, the Canadian Boreal Initiative, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society and Ducks Unlimited.

Monte Hummel, president emeritus of the WWF, challenged Indian Affairs and Northern Development Minister Jim Prentice to match his government’s “green” rhetoric of late with action.

He said it is “rather breathtaking” that the government believes the proposal wants to protect “too much.”

“Does Jim Prentice really believe that future generations are going to blame him or any of us for having protected too much of Canada?” Hummel said. “I don’t think so.”

Harvey Locke, a spokesman for the parks and wilderness society, said it “borders on the unbelievable to think that we would squander this opportunity to protect this world-class area” at a time of “rampant extinctions and high-speed climate change”

Norwegian said that if the federal government refuses to endorse the land-use plan and tries to push ahead with pipeline approval it will collide with a Deh Cho legal strategy.

He also warned his community is ready to take “direct action” where people would “defend themselves” and take steps to block development.

A spokeswoman for Prentice said the minister hopes to resume negotiations “in a matter of weeks.”

She said the government has told the Deh Cho it is willing to work on a satisfactory solution to the land-use issue, but the place to resolve the dispute is at the negotiating table.

First Nation demands land protection in pipeline pact

CALGARY (CP) — Ottawa must act now to protect a vast swath of land in the Northwest Territories if it wants to see a \$16-billion natural gas pipeline built down the Mackenzie Valley, a major Dene First Nation said Wednesday.

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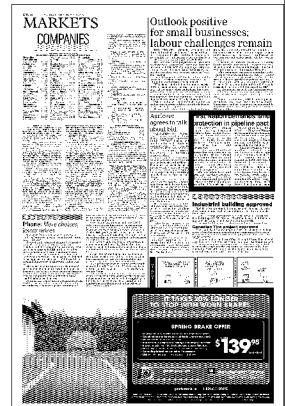
"It's the plan first and then the pipeline second," Norwegian said. A coalition of environmental groups is backing the Dehcho plan, arguing that it's a critical step to protecting an area largely untouched by industry.

Norwegian says Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government is now balking at a tentative deal arranged by the former Liberal government and is trying to link it to ongoing land claim negotiations with the Dehcho.

"Canada seems to be dragging their heels and reneging on all the previous agreements that they've made."

An interim agreement signed in 2001 between the federal government, the Northwest Territories and the Dehcho set aside an area more than twice the size of New Brunswick to be protected from development.

The Dehcho say the remainder of their territory, including most of the areas of interest to oil and gas companies, would be open to "well-regulated" development.



MARKETS COMPANIES
 Outlook positive for small businesses; labour challenges remain
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Daily Herald-Tribune (Grande Prairie, AB)			Order/Commande 89687
Date 05.04.2007	Circ. 20700	Page A43	1 / 1

First Nation demands land protection before OK'ing pipeline

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Norwegian said Wednesday that if the federal government refuses to endorse the land-use plan and tries to go ahead with the pipeline anyway, the **Dehcho** have a legal strategy ready. They would also look at "direct action" where people would "defend themselves" and take steps to stop development.

The **Dehcho** are the largest aboriginal group opposing the massive project and lay claim to land that covers about 40 per cent of the proposed pipeline route.

They have been involved in land-claim negotiations with Ottawa but say the land-use plan should not be tied directly to those talks.

A spokeswoman for Indian Affairs Minister Jim Prentice said he hopes to be back at the negotiating table "in a matter of weeks."



First Nation demands vast land protection before agreeing to natural gas pipeline

JAMES STEVENSON

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Apr 05 2007

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DehCho First Nations Demand 'Conservation First'

11 April 07

Conservation groups are rallying behind the DehCho First Nations, who are saying the federal government must adopt the DehCho land-use plan before they will proceed with negotiations regarding the proposed Mackenzie Valley Pipeline project.



"Our position is that without the Land Use Plan, there won't be a pipeline", said DehCho First Nations Grand Chief Herb Norwegian. "Implementing the Land Use Plan is key to unlocking the development potential of our territory and securing a sustainable future for our children." Government of Canada negotiators have stated the Plan places too much emphasis on conservation and will not be approved in its current form.

WWF-Canada, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS), Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) and the Canadian Boreal Initiative recently announced their support for the DehCho First Nations Land Use Plan.

Under an Interim Measures Agreement signed in 2001, half of the DehCho region - covering 20 million hectares of the Mackenzie watershed - has been protected from development.

Grand Chief Norwegian said if the federal government refuses to endorse the land-use plan and tries to go ahead with the pipeline anyway, the DehCho have a legal strategy ready. The DehCho are the largest aboriginal group opposing the massive project and lay claim to land that covers about 40 per cent of the proposed pipeline route.

View the [April 4, 2007 DehCho First Nations, WWF Canada, CPAWS, Ducks Unlimited Canada & CBI release](#)

View the [April 4, 2007 Canadian Press article on CBC](#)

View the [April 05, 2007 Calgary Herald article on Edmonton Journal](#)

View the [CBI backgrounder, *The Real Wealth of the Mackenzie Region*](#) (PDF)

View a [Timeline of the DehCho Land Use Plan](#) (PDF)

Sources: Canadian Boreal Initiative, Canadian Press

MANITOBA WILDLANDS © 2002-2007

Petroleum News – April 13, 2007

Conservation trumps pipeline

Deh Cho take decisive step in linking Mac gas project approval to its agenda

Gary Park

After years of bluster, rhetoric, ultimatums and legal ploys, it seems to have finally come down to an all-or-nothing demand from the Deh Cho First Nations.

The chances of unified aboriginal support for the Mackenzie Gas Project and perhaps the fate of the project itself ride on the outcome.

It's also possible, given their negotiating history, the Deh Cho aren't finished.

But for now the Deh Cho position is clear-cut.

A Mackenzie Valley pipeline, about 40 percent of which crosses Deh Cho land, won't have that community's support unless a swath of 50 million acres at the southern end of the Northwest Territories is set aside from development under a conservation plan.

Herb Norwegian, the hard-line grand chief of the Deh Cho, declared "it's the plan first and the pipeline second. Our position is that without the land-use plan, there won't be a pipeline."

For the Deh Cho, this is the most decisive step yet to use the pipeline as leverage in negotiations for a land claim and self-government.

A coalition of four environmental groups has aligned itself with the Deh Cho at a time when the debate over natural resource exploitation in Canada is moving to a crescendo.

Issue could be final straw

Unless there is a speedy resolution of the issue it could be the final straw for the MGP proponents, who have increasingly warned that delays in the regulatory process pose one of the greatest obstacles to the future development of northern Canadian gas.

But, in the case of the Deh Cho, lead partner Imperial Oil has taken a consistent position by refusing to get drawn into taking sides on matters it says are strictly for the Deh Cho and federal government to resolve.

Imperial's only function is to reach benefits and access agreements with the aboriginal regions, which it has with all along the pipeline route except the Deh Cho.

So the heat is squarely on the Canadian government to decide how it will deal with the Deh Cho's declaration, provoked by Norwegian's assertions that Prime Minister Stephen Harper's administration "seems to be dragging their heels and renegeing on all previous agreements that they have made."

Previous government took first steps

Under an interim deal signed in 2001 by the previous federal government, the Northwest Territories and the Deh Cho made the first serious move towards reaching a modern treaty for land and self-government.

The offer proposed giving the Deh Cho ownership over surface and subsurface rights covering 10,000 square miles of the total settlement area of 54,000 square miles.

With ownership the Deh Cho would, among other things, control all subsurface leasing for mining and oil and gas development, as well as collecting permitting and lease fees and 100 percent of resource royalties, although the terms still have to be negotiated.

The Harper government followed that last June by offering a land claim proposal that included a capital transfer payment of C\$104 million to be paid out over 15 years for the 4,500 members of the Deh Cho, including 12.5 percent of the first C\$2 million and 2.45 percent of any additional royalties collected in the Mackenzie Valley — in line with the formula used for other settlements.

The first step required the government and the Deh Cho to come to terms on an agreement in principle to incorporate the main provisions of a final agreement, such as the amount of land, amount of money, locations of the land and fundamental principles of self-government, federal negotiator Tim Christian said at the time.

He said then that agreements in principle typically took up to two years to settle.

Ominous undertones to initial response

Norwegian's initial response gave cause for optimism, but there were ominous undertones.

He said the Deh Cho, the Mackenzie proponents and the NWT government would be in a "win-win situation if we can move along and get this thing to happen. I think there is enough for anyone to benefit."

He also described the unexpected offer from the government as being "way out in left field."

Indian Affairs and Northern Development Minister Jim Prentice, chosen by Harper to clear the path to Mackenzie pipeline, said the package was a "fair offer and I am hopeful that we will be able to get a resolution."

He said the Deh Cho treaty was the “largest bit of unfinished business north of (the 60th parallel) in this country, so it’s an important claim.”

“It’s a claim we wish to resolve and it has implications in terms of the routing of the pipeline.”

But then and since Prentice has delivered an unambiguous message to the Deh Cho: The pipeline will be built whether or not they are full partners in the project.

“It would be nice to have the land claim settled, but this process takes a lot of time,” said Prentice, who speaks from experience. Before entering politics, he was law commissioner on the Indian Claims Commission of Canada for 10 years and is widely-respected as a land claims negotiator.

Tony Williams, chief operating officer for the Gwich’in Tribal Council, which has a land claim and a Mackenzie access and benefits agreement, said it was a “milestone” for the government to make such an offer.

Nellie Cournoyea, leader of the Inuvialuit, said she would not even be unhappy if the Deh Cho secured a better deal than the one she helped negotiate in 1984.

Hopes for settlement have faded

Whatever the hopes of a negotiated settlement, they have faded over the past nine months, overshadowed by the Deh Cho land use plan.

In January, Norwegian said the final draft of that plan holds the key to achieving a “just final agreement.”

“Land and resources are integral to our claim,” he said. “We are militant on land use.”

But he accused the Canadian and NWT governments of wanting to scrap the Deh Cho efforts on land use “because they say it is too conservation-oriented. We reject that.”

He said the federal government was asked late in 2006 to suggest changes. “We’ve had no response. They’ve ignored us.”

Norwegian said the work over the past five years by the Deh Cho Land Use Planning Committee has attracted national and international praise as a model.

Yet the federal and territorial negotiators have “renege” on their promise to include land use planning under the interim agreement and now say there will be no land use planning until there is an agreement in principle, he said.

“I suggest Canada is afraid of this land use report being implemented,” he said. “They are well aware that the Deh Cho has a ‘green’ environmental agenda where they are so weak in their policies on the environment, especially in the north.

“Where does the Mackenzie Gas Project fit into the environmental agenda? There is a federal decision coming and the environment will play a big part in that,” Norwegian said.

So the question is what next?

The latest round of land claims negotiations was cancelled in mid-March, with no comment from Norwegian or Christian.

Meanwhile, the Deh Cho are refusing to nominate any members to two boards working on Mackenzie Valley resource management.

Another round of talks is scheduled for April, but there is evident frustration in federal ranks over the conservation ultimatum.

A spokeswoman for Prentice told reporters the government has “made it clear to the Deh Cho that we’re willing to work with them on the land use plan in order to find a satisfactory solution for all sides. That being said, the place to resolve issues is at the negotiation table.”

The ingredients for a pivotal test of wills are in place.

Northern News Services – April 13, 2007

Groups applaud land use plan

Roxanna Thompson

Calgary, Alta - Dehcho First Nations has the support of four conservation groups for their proposed Dehcho Land Use Plan.

On April 4, World Wildlife Fund Canada, Canadian Boreal Initiative, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society and Ducks Unlimited Canada voiced their support for the land use plan at a news conference in Calgary.

The groups called on the federal government to support the plan.

The Dehcho First Nations' land use plan is an example of how community vision, in partnership with government and conservation organizations, can develop a plan that protects ecological and cultural integrity, said Larry Innes, acting executive director of Canadian Boreal Initiative (CBI).

He added the land use plan balances environmental and cultural sensitivity with future economic and industrial development.

CBI considers the land use plan to have a well-thought-out economic strategy that ties development to local needs and sets the right pace, he said.

"From our perspective it's a very well-thought-out and well-supported land use plan that could be adopted elsewhere in the North," said Innes.

The land use plan has been a sticking point in negotiations between the Dehcho First Nations and the federal government.

Both the governments of Canada and the Northwest Territories have raised concerns about elements of the land use plan, saying in its current form neither government will approve it.

In January, the governments said the plan protects too much land from development. The current plan prohibits almost all forms of non-renewable development in 69 per cent of the region. The governments have proposed 40 per cent conservation.

In the past, the federal government's chief negotiator has said the Dehcho's land use plan is out of sync with the rest of the territory and the world. Similar plans drafted in other jurisdictions do not include such a high level of conservation, adding that it would not allow for enough development for the region to be sustainable.

Conservation groups have a hard time understanding the government's position, said Innes.

"We're surprised the government of Canada is not supporting this plan given they were part of the land use planning committee that developed it," he said.

The four conservation organizations at the conference are calling on the government to do what they said they would do and implement the plan, Innes said.

"We're quite surprised the government of Canada is not seeing this for what it is, which is really a key to taking a rational and well-thought-out approach to development in the North," he said.

The plan provides for many of the things that the federal government says they want, including sustainable development and the Mackenzie Gas Project, said Innes.

"It's now an opportunity for the government of Canada to do the right thing both in terms of the Deh Cho and the rest of Canada," said Innes.

CBI called the news conference, which brought together the four conservation organizations involved in the CBI's Boreal Leadership Council.

Although support from the conservation groups has been ongoing, the Dehcho First Nations is pleased to see them turn their energy towards the land use plan, said Grand Chief Herb Norwegian.

The land use plan is a chance for the federal government to show leadership in the environment, said Norwegian. The government talks about wanting to be green but they need to take on initiatives, he said.

"Here is a government that is talking about it but really doing nothing," said Norwegian.

The government also needs to approve the plan if they want to see the Dehcho First Nations approve the Mackenzie Gas Project.

"If there is no plan, there will be no pipeline," said Norwegian.



Fort McMurray Today (AB)

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Circ. 5200 Page a7

1 / 1

First Nation demands vast land protection before agreeing to gas pipeline

CALGARY (CP) — Ottawa must act now to protect a vast swath of land in the Northwest Territories if it wants to see a \$16-billion natural gas pipeline built down the Mackenzie Valley, a major Dene First Nation said Wednesday.

Dehcho Grand Chief Herb Norwegian said there will be no pipeline if the federal government doesn't adopt the Dehcho land-use plan that calls for about half of its lands — or about 20 million hectares — to be protected from development.

"It's the plan first and then the pipeline second," Norwegian said at a news conference in Calgary.

A coalition of environmental groups is backing the Dehcho plan, arguing that it's a critical step to protecting an area still largely untouched by industry.

Norwegian says Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government is now balking at a tentative deal arranged by the former Liberal government and is trying to link it to ongoing land claim negotiations with the Dehcho.

"Canada seems to be dragging their heels and renegeing on all the previous agreements that they've made."

An interim agreement signed in 2001 between the federal government, the Northwest Territories and the Dehcho set aside an area more than twice the size of New Brunswick to be protected from development.

The Dehcho say the remainder of their territory, including most of the areas of interest to oil and gas companies, would be open to "well-regulated" development.

Norwegian said Wednesday that if the federal government refuses to endorse the land-use plan and tries to go ahead with the pipeline anyway, the Dehcho have a legal strategy ready. They would also look at "direct action" where people would "defend themselves" and take steps to stop devel-

opment.

The Dehcho are the largest aboriginal group opposing the massive project and lay claim to land that covers about 40 per cent of the proposed pipeline route.

