

Prairie Creek Mine All-Season Road 2019 Den and Nest Pre-Clearing Survey



PRESENTED TO

Canadian Zinc Corporation

JULY 26, 2021 ISSUED FOR USE

FILE: ENW.EENW03326-02

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Conformity Table: Parks Canada Comments*

Item	Requirement	Review Comment Reference	Section of Plan
1.	8.1.1.1: Reporting and incorporation of baseline: The aerial transect survey and ground truth survey for dens and nests that are identified in this section as uncompleted were completed in Fall 2019. Nests and dens were detected however these results are not noted in the WMMP. This section should also acknowledge that bear dens and raptor nests are incredibly difficult to detect in forested areas from the air, and that surveys are likely to result in false negatives. The completion and results of these surveys should be incorporated as appropriate into the WMMP, appendix or associated report. In addition, please describe any project or route modifications made as a result of this analysis of this baseline, and any changes to mitigations required.	29	Refer to the WMMP Section 8.1.1.1 Results from the 2019 den and nest survey are provided herein, including project/route modifications and changes to mitigation.

^{*} Conformity Table per Table 14 of Parks Canada "Comments on Management Plans and other Submissions under Water License PC2014L8-0006 and Land Use Permit PC2014F0013" dated December 14, 2020.

Note: Other den/nest survey comments were received that are specific to the WMMP. Refer to the WMMP for these updates.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tetra Tech Canada Inc. (Tetra Tech) was retained by Canadian Zinc Corporation (CZN) to conduct pre-clearing den and nest surveys for the proposed Prairie Creek Mine Pioneer Winter Road (PWR), located in the southern Mackenzie Mountains, Northwest Territories. The pre-clearing den and nest surveys are required under CZN's Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan (WMMP) for the PWR.

Under the Northwest Territories Wildlife Act, nests, dens and dams/lodges of wildlife are protected. The objective of the pre-clearing surveys is to locate dens and raptor nests and, if found, avoid destruction of and or minimize disturbance to the dens/ raptor nests prior to PWR clearing and construction.

Aerial den and nest pre-clearing surveys were conducted over two days, on October 23 and October 24, 2019 by a professional biologist, a Dene Monitor, and a Parks Canada employee.

One unoccupied raptor nest was detected approximately 130 m from the proposed PWR, inside the eastern limit of Nahanni National Park Reserve (NNPR). One active grizzly bear den was detected outside of the NNPR and approximately 190 m from the proposed road. A number of beaver lodges and a single small mammal den were also detected during this aerial den/nest survey as well as earlier baseline surveys in 2016, 2017, and 2019.

After conducting the pre-clearing den and nest surveys, the proposed PWR clearing, and construction activities were postponed and did not proceed in 2019. The pre-clearing den and nest surveys will be repeated in October 2021 prior to the planned clearing and construction which is now intended to occur in Winter of 2021.

Three management actions were developed in 2019 to avoid and or minimize disturbance to the bear den based on the results of the pre-clearing survey and included (1) shifting the PWR alignment further from the bear den site, (2) rescheduling the clearing and construction activities to occur in January when the bear is in deeper hibernation, and (3) installing wildlife cameras to monitor the bear den prior to and during clearing and construction.

The following actions are planned to prepare for PWR clearing and construction this winter 2021:

- Continue to record beaver lodges/dams in proximity to the PWR alignment while flagging the centreline in August 2021. The PWR alignment will shift slightly to avoid destruction of the beaver lodges and dams.
- Conduct the aerial/ground-truthed den/nest survey in October/November 2021 to locate dens and raptor nests within 800 m of the PWR alignment and 1.5 km of the blast and potential avalanche control sites. Adaptive management actions will be taken based on the field results.
- Conduct the Clearing Scan survey in advance of clearing equipment, including the mini-mulcher, to locate dens
 and nests within the PWR alignment.



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ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

Acronyms/Abbreviations	Definition	
CZN	Canadian Zinc Corporation	
ENR	Environment and Natural Resources	
NNPR	Nahanni National Park Reserve	
PWR	Pioneer Winter Road	
WMMP	Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan	

LIMITATIONS OF REPORT

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Tetra Tech Canada Inc. (Tetra Tech) was retained by Canadian Zinc Corporation (CZN) to conduct pre-clearing den and nest surveys for the proposed Prairie Creek Mine Pioneer Winter Road (PWR), located in the southern Mackenzie Mountains, Northwest Territories. The pre-clearing den and nest surveys are required under CZN's Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plan (WMMP) for the PWR. These surveys must be conducted before clearing and construction of the PWR, including the use of the mini-mulcher.

Under the Northwest Territories Wildlife Act, nests, dens and dams/lodges of wildlife species are protected. The objective of the pre-clearing surveys is to locate dens and raptor nests and, if found, avoid destruction of and or minimize disturbance to the dens and nests prior to PWR clearing and construction. PWR clearing and construction is planned in the winter when bird nests and most carnivore dens are unoccupied. With exception, clearing activities have the potential to disturb and/or harm denning bears, in particular.

2.0 METHODS

The den and nest pre-clearing survey was conducted over two days, on October 23 and October 24, 2019 before the planned clearing and construction of the PWR. The field surveys were conducted when a light snow cover was present to detect fresh bear sign more easily (e.g., diggings, tracks, and den entrances). This allows signs of recent bear activity to be visible from the air but doesn't sufficiently hinder raptor nest visibility. All nests, dens and lodges detected within the study area were documented following the methods for aerial transect and ground-truth surveys described below.

Parks Canada suggests that bear dens and raptor nests are difficult to detect in forested areas from the air and consider that aerial-based surveys within forested areas can miss dens and nests (Parks Canada December 14, 2020 comments).

2.1 Survey Area

The den and nest pre-clearing survey were completed within:

- 1. Areas proposed for PWR clearing and blasting, including temporary camp footprints; and
- 2. Areas within 800 m of winter clearing/construction and 1.5 km from winter blasting.

At the time of the field survey, no bear dens or raptor nests had been previously documented, including from Environment and Natural Resources' [ENR] Wildlife Management Information System records. Thus, areas of previously known dens/nests were not included as part of this field survey.

The survey area and locations of survey transects flown can be found on Figure 1.

2.2 Aerial Survey Methods

The aerial surveys were conducted using the following methods:

 Aerial surveys were conducted along pre-determined parallel transects, spaced 500 m apart, that covered the entire survey area (Figure 1);



- When required, the flight path was diverted to investigate 1) possible dens/raptor nests, 2) site-specific features
 (e.g., hillsides, uprooted tree root mats) with the potential to provide appropriate habitat, or 3) densely treed
 areas that may require a more thorough search. The flight path was also deviated to cross overtop mountain
 ridges, as required for helicopter safety;
- Flight altitude was between approximately 100 150 m above ground level depending on vegetation;
- Transects were flown at an average speed of approximately 80 km/hr; and
- During the aerial survey, bear dens were considered occupied if fresh sign was detected (e.g., nearby tracks, freshly turned soil) or if a bear was observed near the den. All raptor nests were expected to be unoccupied at the time of the field survey.
- Upon observation of a den or nest, the survey crew did the following:
 - attempted to identify if the den was occupied or unoccupied;
 - photographed the den/nest for quality control and recorded the GPS location and a description of the surrounding habitat; and
 - if the den is suspected to be unoccupied (or if unknown), the aerial search was intensified within the defined setback distance to locate any additional dens (if any).
- Upon observation of a bear, the survey crew intensified the search for a den in the area until the nearby den was found;
- Possible unoccupied and/or suspected dens within the defined setback distance were ground-truthed;
- Confirmed observations of an occupied den (i.e., visual of the bear, nearby tracks and freshly turned soil) were
 not ground-truthed for the protection of the surveyors and the bear; and
- All dens (occupied, unoccupied, suspected) and nests observed were reported to CZN's VP of Environment
 & Permitting within 24 hours of observation.

2.3 Ground-Truth Survey Methods

Ground-truth surveys were used to confirm unoccupied and suspected den observations that were identified during the aerial surveys. The ground-truth surveys were conducted using the following methods:

- The ground crew walked slowly to intensively search the ground for a den entrance and fresh signs of bear (i.e., scat, diggings, tracks, claw marks, beds); paying close attention to uprooted tree root mats, areas of topographic relief (hillsides), windfall identified during the aerial survey.
- Bear dens were considered occupied if fresh bear sign is detected nearby (e.g., scat, tracks, freshly turned soil, beds) or if a bear is observed near the den. The ground crew will immediately leave the area once a den is determined to be occupied.
- Upon observation of a den that the activity status is unknown, the survey crew attempted to determine
 occupancy by using a pole-mounted video recording device (e.g., Aqua-Vu® micro camera) with an infrared
 light source to peer into the den. If no bear is observed inside the den and no fresh sign of a bear is observed
 nearby, the den will be determined to be unoccupied.



- If for some reason the activity status of a den can't be determined, the ground crew will temporarily install a remote camera with a view of the den to monitor for den site activity. Prior to clearing/blasting, the Dene Monitor will return to view the remote camera images and determine if the den is occupied or unoccupied. The den is considered active until proven otherwise with the remote camera.
- All dens and raptor nests observed were reported to CZN's VP Environment & Permitting Affairs within 24 hours of observation.

3.0 RESULTS

Surveys were hampered by fog and or low cloud either in Nahanni Butte, the mine site, or Fort Simpson between October 16 to 22, 2019. The den and nest pre-clearing surveys were conducted over 2-days from October 23 and October 24, 2019 by the following survey crew:

- Karla Langlois Lead Professional Biologist, Tetra Tech
- Brian Ekotla Dene Monitor
- Colleen Murchison Parks Canada

The most recent snow accumulation in Nahanni Butte was on the morning of October 19. At the mine site, light snow fell periodically from October 17 to 21; approximately 1 cm accumulated. On October 23, the average snow depth was 9 cm as measured at three locations, spaced approximately 25 m apart, along the Nahanni Butte airstrip near the treeline. A light snow fell the evening of October 23 at the Prairie Creek Mine site but there was no accumulation due to above freezing temperatures by the next morning. Throughout the survey, snow cover was nearly 100% and air temperatures ranged between 1 to 8 degrees Celsius.

Transects were flown at approximately 70 km/hr (not 80 km/hr in methods) which was selected while in the field by the survey crew to improve the search. Subsequent den and nest pre-clearing aerial survey methods will be updated to reflect this updated survey travel speed selected during the field survey.

3.1 Raptor Nests

One unoccupied raptor nest was detected 130 m northeast of the proposed road at KP 97.5 and would not be destroyed by the planned PWR activities (Figure 1; Photo 1). The nest was located inside the Nahanni National Park Reserve (NNPR) at the eastern boundary. The nest was located in an aspen forest (land cover mapped as temperate or sub-polar broadleaf deciduous forest) on the western slope of the Silent Hills.

The stick nest was located in a mature aspen tree (live) and positioned in a low fork approximately half to two-thirds up the tree. The nest was roughly 50 cm in diameter (outside diameter), of approximate equal size depth and was made of short medium-coarse sticks. At the time of the survey, the cup of the nest was filled with snow, but the outer rim of the nest was clearly visible.

3.2 Bear Dens

One active grizzly bear den was detected approximately 190 m east of the proposed road at KP 127 (Figure 1; Photo 2) and would not be destroyed by the planned PWR activities. Field personnel were able to confirm that the den was active due to the presence of a well-defined wildlife trail that led up to the den and the observation of an individual grizzly bear within approximately 75 m of the den site. Directly adjacent to the active den was a failed den attempt, likely abandoned in favor of the active den. The den site was not ground-truthed during the survey due to the presence of the bear.



The den was found on the eastern slopes of the Front Range Mountains, outside of the NNPR. The den was dug into the side of a short slope, approximately 5 m in height with a southeast aspect. Habitat surrounding the den site could be characterized as upland tall shrub habitat (land cover mapped as temperate or sub-polar shrubland), dominated by scrub birch. A small drainage channel, dominated by willows, was located just to the south of the den site.

3.3 Beaver Lodges and Dams

Ten beaver lodges and 25 beaver dams were observed immediately adjacent to the proposed road alignment (Figure 1). Other beaver sign, including old, harvested trees were also observed during previous fieldwork.

3.4 Other Denning Species

One small mammal den was detected 425 m northeast of the proposed road near KP 135. The den was ground-truthed and had marten tracks surrounding the den entrance. The den had a round entrance, approximately 35 cm in diameter, and was located on relatively level ground with a slight southeast aspect. The surrounding habitat could be characterized as shrub upland habitat. Given that the distance between the den and the road alignment, this den would not be destroyed or impacted during clearing and construction.

3.5 Incidental Wildlife Sightings

A total of 45 moose, 6 Dall's sheep, and 1 porcupine were also observed during the 2-day aerial survey. Moose group size ranged from 1 to 8 (group of 1 most common) and mostly occurred between approximately KP 43 to 74. Dall's sheep were detected in the lower Sundog Creek area (KP 38), Prairie Creek area (KP 10), and Grainger Gap (KP 122).

4.0 DISCUSSION

After conducting the pre-clearing den and nest surveys, the proposed clearing and construction activities were postponed and did not proceed in 2019. The pre-clearing den and nest surveys will be repeated in October/November 2021 prior to the planned PWR clearing and construction which is now intended to occur in Winter of 2021.

The PWR WMMP describes an 800 m setback distance to minimize disturbance to bear dens from clearing and construction and a 1.5 km setback from blasting. The grizzly bear den was detected within the 800 m setback to road clearing and construction and thus adaptive management action was taken.

Although PWR clearing and construction didn't proceed as planned in 2019, the following adaptive management actions were developed based on the results of the pre-clearing den and nest survey. It should be noted that the time required to clear and construct the PWR within the den setback was anticipated to require a half of a day, as the habitat is dominated by tall shrubs which are quick to brush, and no cut/fill construction was required in this area.

Further details regarding the adaptive management process, thresholds and actions are described in the WMMP. Adaptive management actions to minimize disturbance to the bear den, within the setback distance were:

- The proposed PWR was realigned to further avoid the bear den site to the extent possible. This section of road was shifted an additional 50 m to the west, away from the bear den. This was as far away from the den that the road could be realigned given that the slopes of the Front Range Mountains impede the realignment of the road any further west. With realignment, the PWR was located 225 m away from the den, and the 800 m setback was not able to be achieved.
- Clearing and construction within the den setback area was rescheduled to occur in January 2020 when the bear would be in the deepest period of hibernation and least disturbed by construction.
- Should clearing and construction have proceeded in 2019, a remote camera was to be installed at the bear den
 to monitor den activity before, during, and immediately after work inside the setback to determine if the work
 resulted in den disturbance/abandonment.

No adaptive management was required for the raptor nest. Due to the distance between the proposed road and the nest the proposed road will not result in the destruction of the raptor nest or removal of surrounding vegetation.

The following actions are planned to prepare for PWR clearing and construction this winter 2021:

- Continue to record beaver lodges/dams in proximity to the PWR alignment while flagging the centreline in August 2021. The PWR alignment will shifted slightly to avoid destruction of the beaver lodges and dams.
- Conduct the aerial/ground-truthed den/nest survey in October/November 2021 to locate dens and raptor nests within 800 m of the PWR alignment and 1.5 km of the blast and potential avalanche control sites. Adaptive management actions will be taken based on the field results.
- Conduct the Clearing Scan survey in advance of clearing equipment, including the mini-mulcher, to locate dens
 and nests within the PWR alignment.

5.0 CLOSURE

We trust this document meets your present requirements. If you have any questions or comments, please contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted, Tetra Tech Canada Inc.

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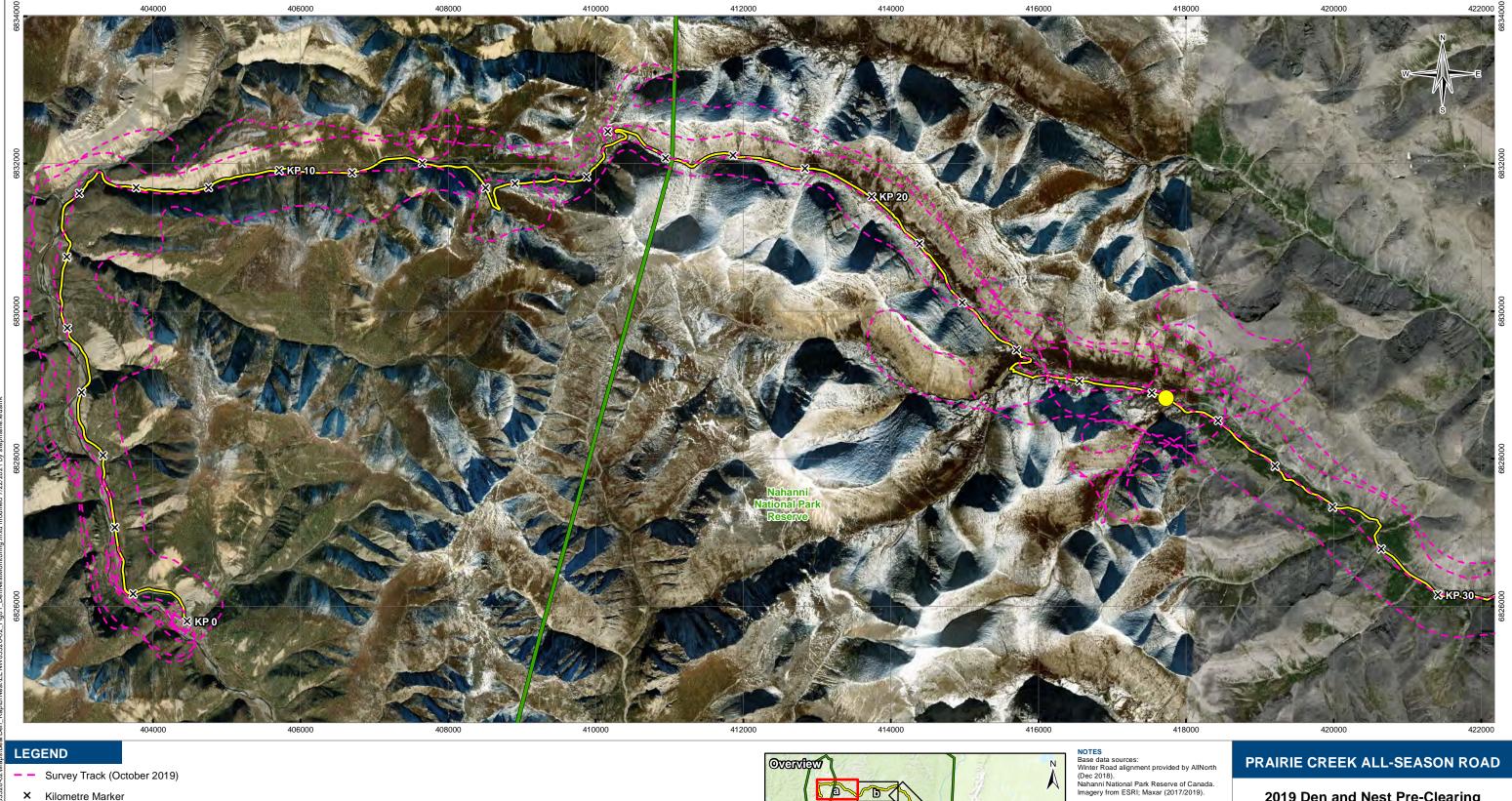
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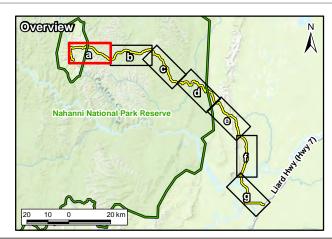
FIGURES

Figures 1a - 1g 2019 Pre-clearing Den and Nest Monitoring Results

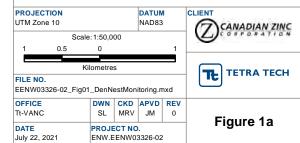




- Survey Track (October 2019)
- × Kilometre Marker
- 2018 Proposed Pioneer Winter Road (Phase 1)
- Spot Blasting Location (KP 25.2)
- Nahanni National Park Reserve Boundary

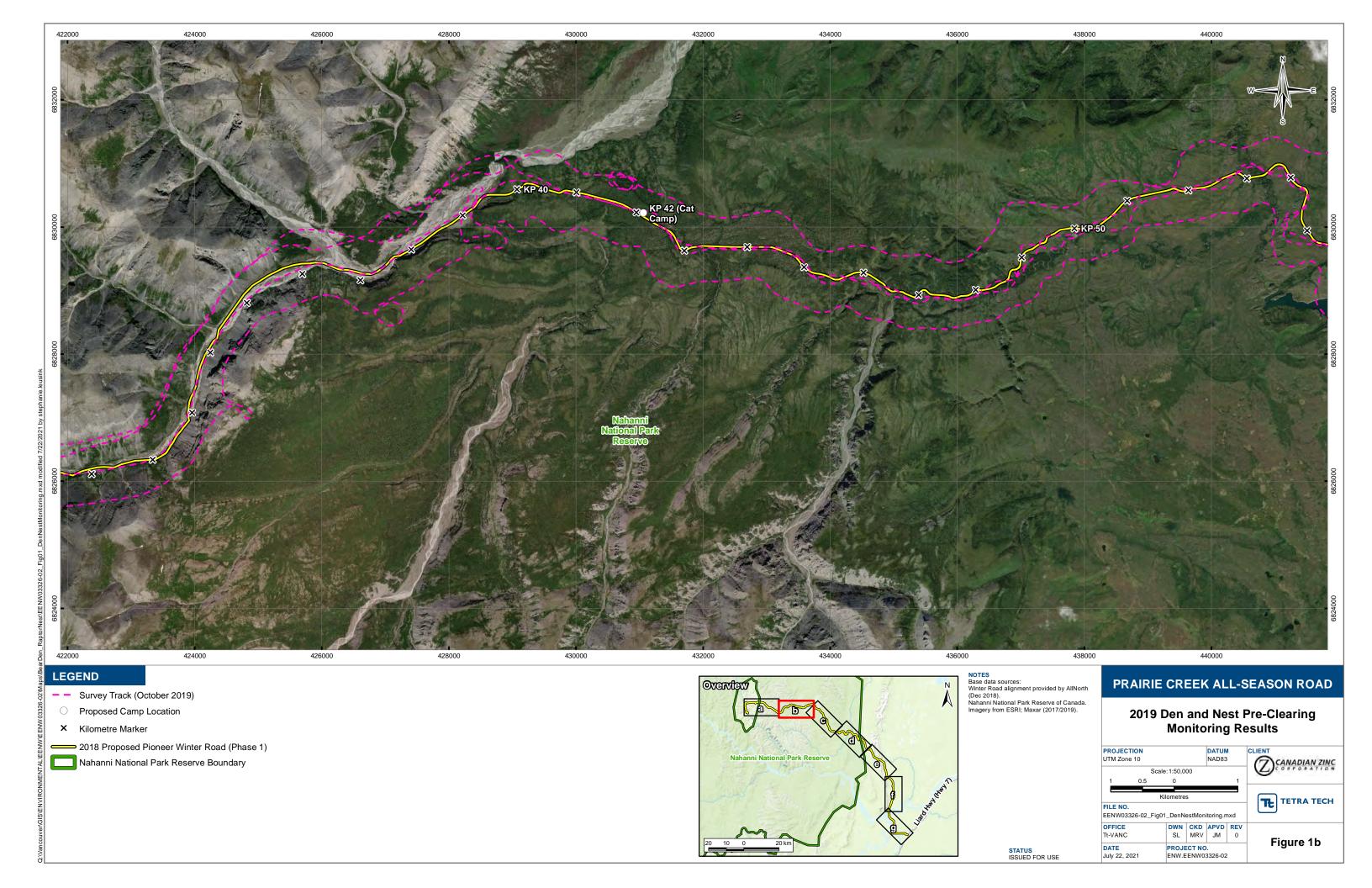


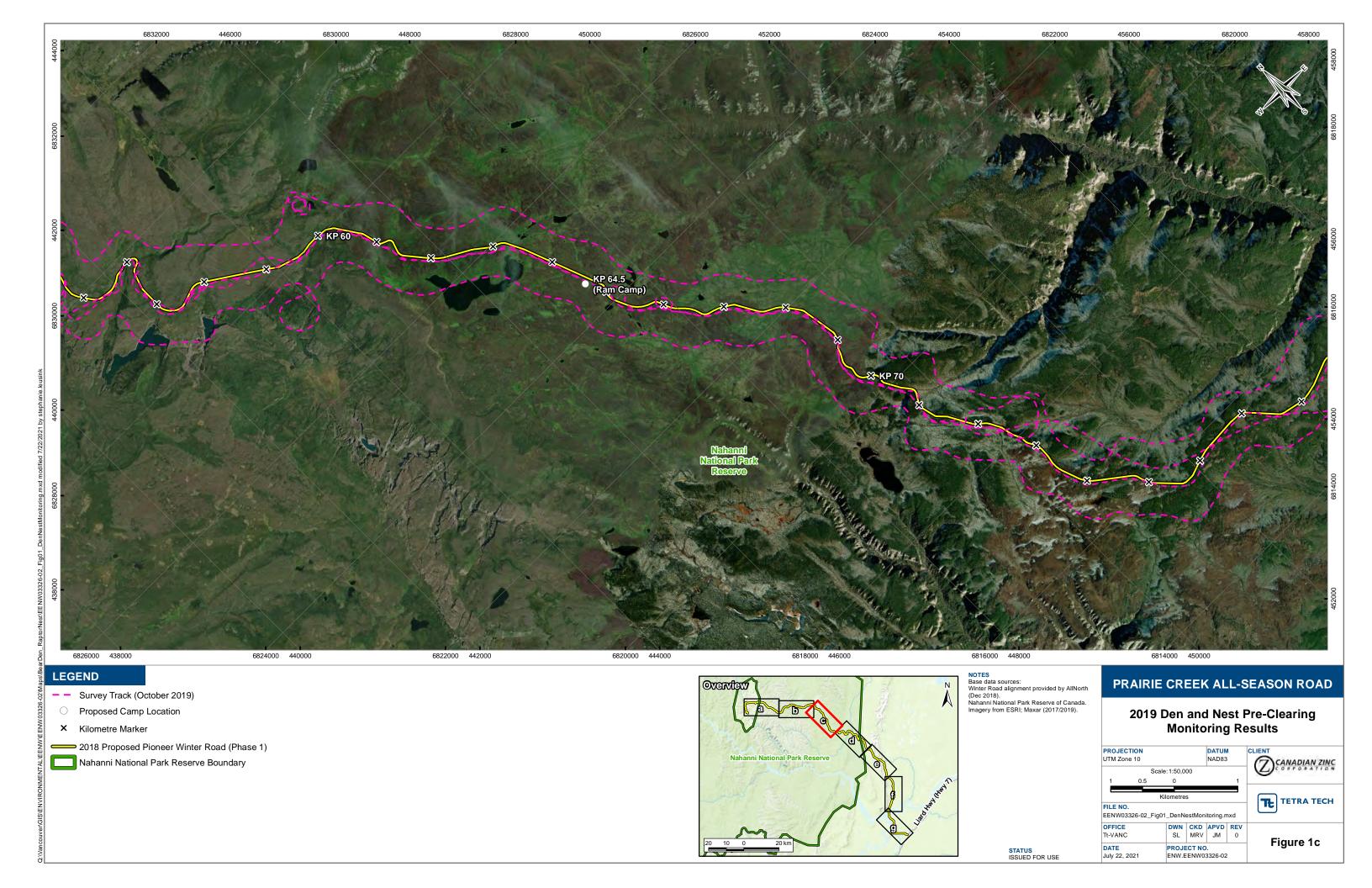
2019 Den and Nest Pre-Clearing **Monitoring Results**

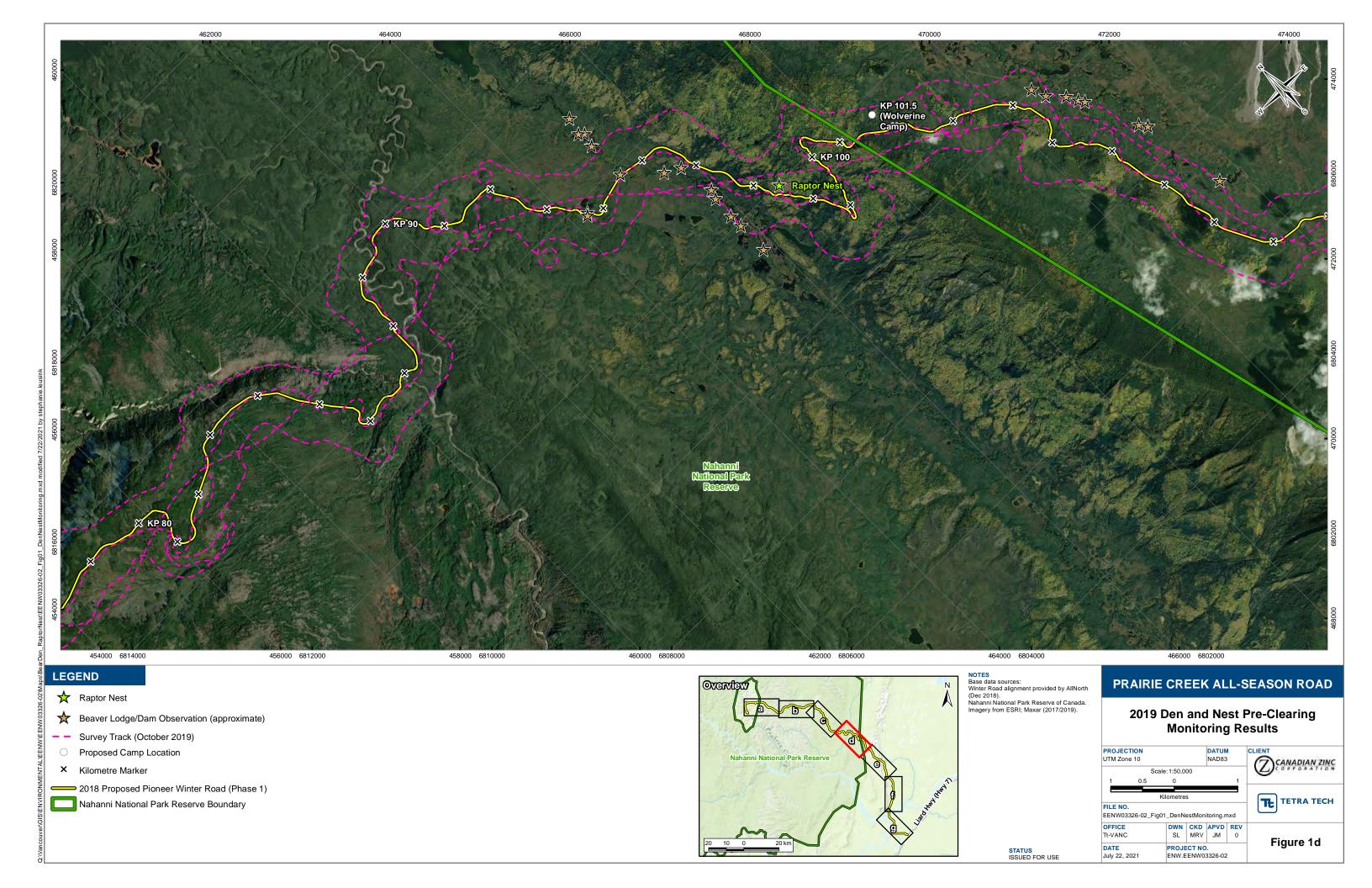


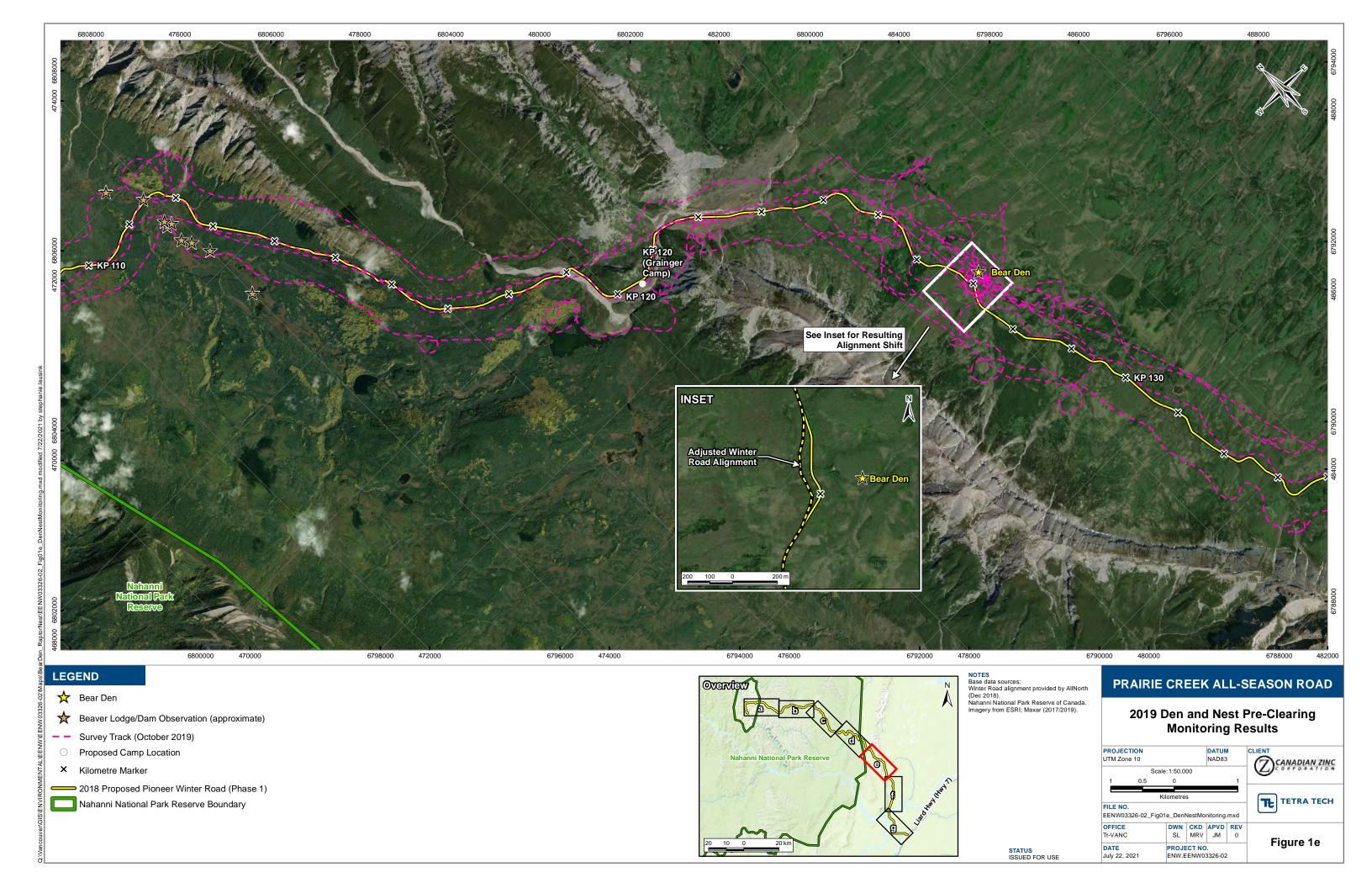
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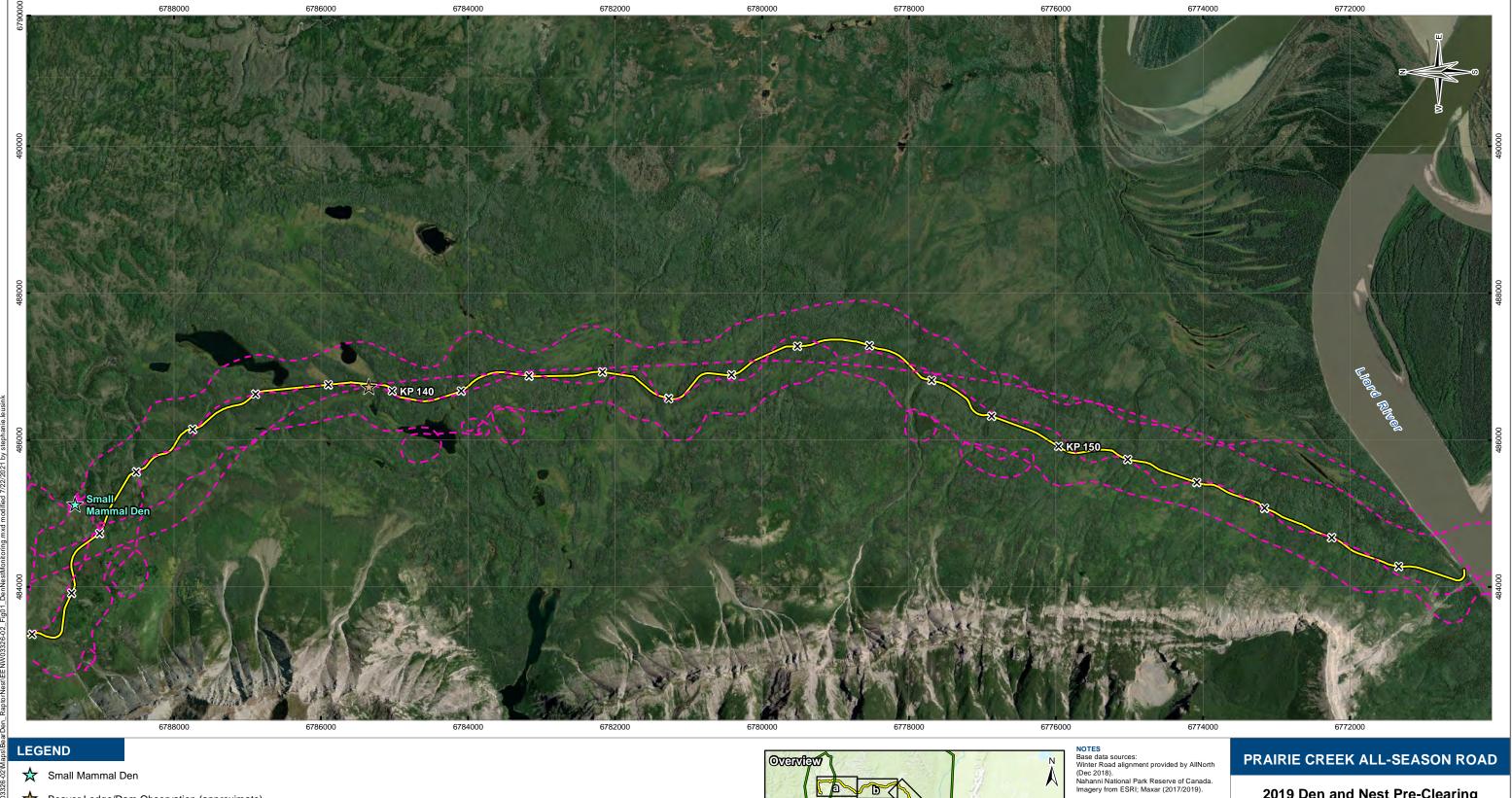
Figure 1a









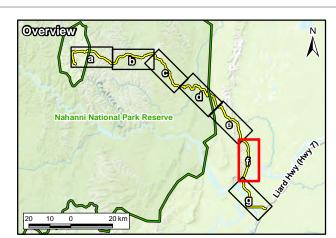


Beaver Lodge/Dam Observation (approximate)

Survey Track (October 2019)

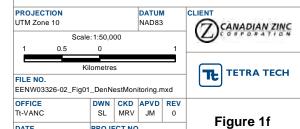
× Kilometre Marker

2018 Proposed Pioneer Winter Road (Phase 1)

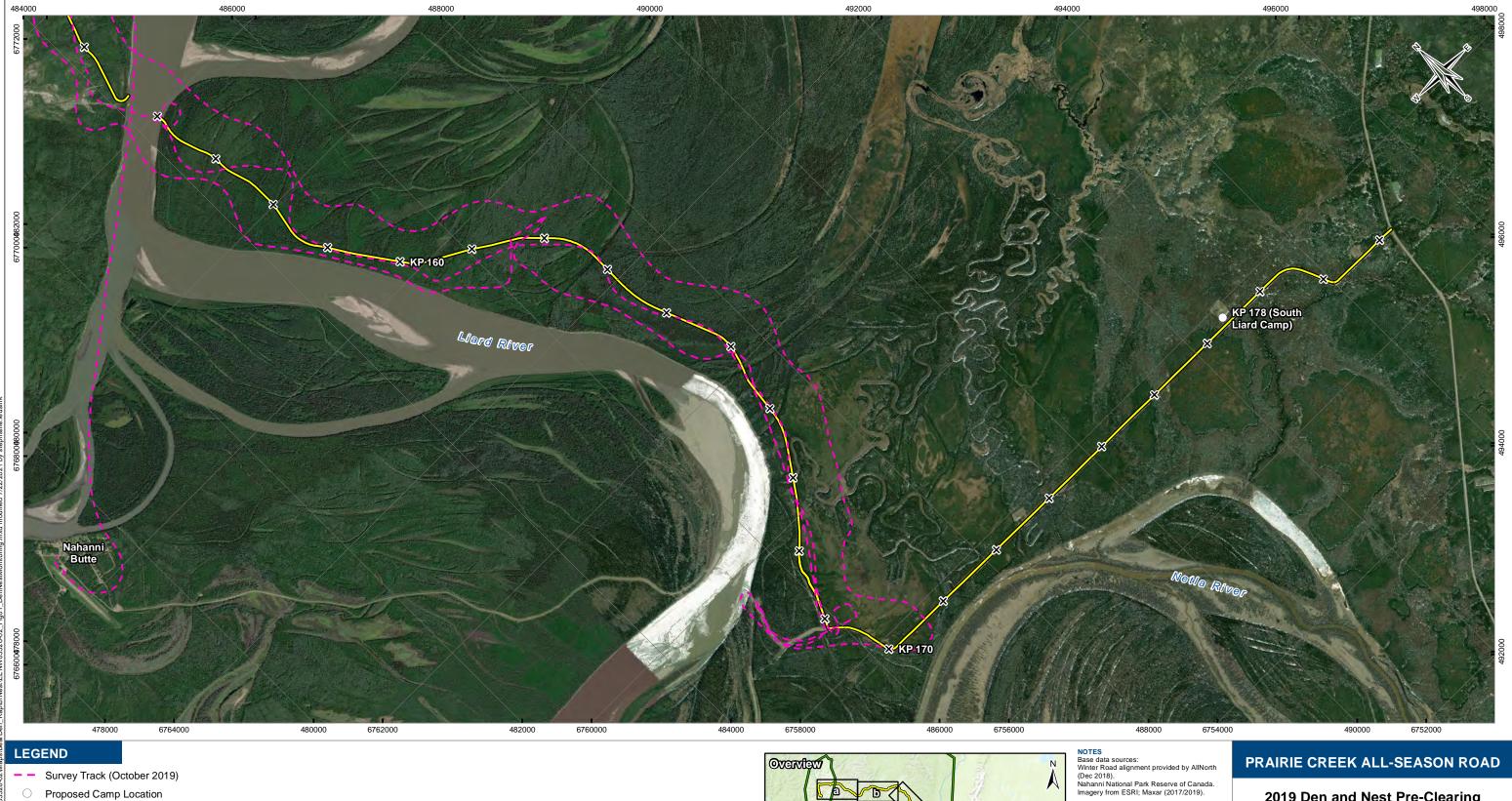


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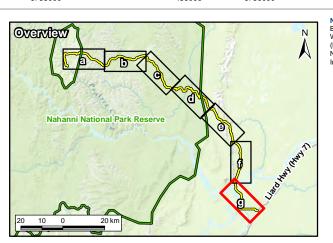
2019 Den and Nest Pre-Clearing **Monitoring Results**



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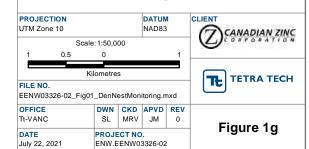


- Proposed Camp Location
- X Kilometre Marker
- 2018 Proposed Pioneer Winter Road (Phase 1)



STATUS ISSUED FOR USE

2019 Den and Nest Pre-Clearing **Monitoring Results**



PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo 1 The raptor nest observed during the pre-clearing aerial survey in October 2019

Photo 2 The active bear den observed during the pre-clearing aerial survey in October 2019 A well-defined trail leads up to the entrance of the den (shown with a red arrow)





Photo 1: The raptor nest observed during the pre-clearing aerial survey in October 2019



Photo 2: The active bear den observed during the pre-clearing aerial survey in October 2019

A well-defined trail leads up to the entrance of the den (shown with a red arrow)

APPENDIX A

TETRA TECH'S LIMITATIONS ON THE USE OF THIS DOCUMENT



LIMITATIONS ON USE OF THIS DOCUMENT

NATURAL SCIENCES

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Both electronic file and/or hard copy versions of TETRA TECH's Instruments of Professional Service shall not, under any circumstances, be altered by any party except TETRA TECH. TETRA TECH's Instruments of Professional Service will be used only and exactly as submitted by TETRA TECH.

Electronic files submitted by TETRA TECH have been prepared and submitted using specific software and hardware systems. TETRA TECH makes no representation about the compatibility of these files with the Client's current or future software and hardware systems.

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Services performed by TETRA TECH for the Professional Document have been conducted in accordance with the Contract, in a manner consistent with the level of skill ordinarily exercised by members of the profession currently practicing under similar conditions in the jurisdiction in which the services are provided. Professional judgment has been applied in developing the conclusions and/or recommendations provided in this Professional Document. No warranty or guarantee, express or implied, is made concerning the test results, comments, recommendations, or any other portion of the Professional Document.

If any error or omission is detected by the Client or an Authorized Party, the error or omission must be immediately brought to the attention of TETRA TECH.

1.4 DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION BY CLIENT

The Client acknowledges that it has fully cooperated with TETRA TECH with respect to the provision of all available information on the past, present, and proposed conditions on the site, including historical information respecting the use of the site. The Client further acknowledges that in order for TETRA TECH to properly provide the services contracted for in the Contract, TETRA TECH has relied upon the Client with respect to both the full disclosure and accuracy of any such information.

1.5 INFORMATION PROVIDED TO TETRA TECH BY OTHERS

During the performance of the work and the preparation of this Professional Document, TETRA TECH may have relied on information provided by persons other than the Client.

While TETRA TECH endeavours to verify the accuracy of such information, TETRA TECH accepts no responsibility for the accuracy or the reliability of such information even where inaccurate or unreliable information impacts any recommendations, design or other deliverables and causes the Client or an Authorized Party loss or damage.

1.6 GENERAL LIMITATIONS OF DOCUMENT

This Professional Document is based solely on the conditions presented and the data available to TETRA TECH at the time the data were collected in the field or gathered from available databases.

The Client, and any Authorized Party, acknowledges that the Professional Document is based on limited data and that the conclusions, opinions, and recommendations contained in the Professional Document are the result of the application of professional judgment to such limited data.

The Professional Document is not applicable to any other sites, nor should it be relied upon for types of development other than those to which it refers. Any variation from the site conditions present or variation in assumed conditions which might form the basis of design or recommendations as outlined in this report, at or on the development proposed as of the date of the Professional Document requires a supplementary investigation and assessment.

TETRA TECH is neither qualified to, nor is it making, any recommendations with respect to the purchase, sale, investment or development of the property, the decisions on which are the sole responsibility of the Client.



1.7 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The ability to rely upon and generalize from environmental baseline data is dependent on data collection activities occurring within biologically relevant survey windows.

It is incumbent upon the Client and any Authorized Party, to be knowledgeable of the level of risk that has been incorporated into the project design or scope, in consideration of the level of the environmental baseline information that was reasonably acquired to facilitate completion of the scope.

1.8 NOTIFICATION OF AUTHORITIES

TETRA TECH professionals are bound by their ethical commitments to act within the bounds of all pertinent regulations. In certain instances, observations by TETRA TECH of regulatory contravention may require that regulatory agencies and other persons be informed. The client agrees that notification to such bodies or persons as required may be done by TETRA TECH in its reasonably exercised discretion.

