

WHAT WE HEARD

Forest Act

Department of Environment and Natural Resources



Table of Contents

Introduction 1

Summary of Comments Received 1

 1. Combining the *Forest Management Act* and the *Forest Protection Act*..... 1

 2. Interaction with treaties, land claims and land use plans 2

 3. Sustainable forest management 2

 4. Management of non-timber forest products 2

 5. Agriculture 3

 6. Fire prevention plans 3

 7. Jurisdictional review and technical experts 3

 8. Engagement process 4

 9. General..... 4

Next Steps 5

7.2. ENR response

ENR completed jurisdictional reviews to identify best practices throughout the country with regards to forest, wildfire and enforcement legislation. ENR forest and wildfire technical experts were involved in the collaborative process with the TWG to guide the development of the Forest Act to ensure those best practices were reviewed and, where appropriate, adapted to include local and traditional knowledge and input, thus ensuring the Forest Act is a made piece of legislation made in and for the NWT.

8. Engagement process

8.1. What we heard

Comments were received from the public questioning ENR's engagement process. In particular, questions were asked pertaining to who was engaged and how the timeline for engagement was communicated. Additional questions were related to how individuals can participate in the future development of regulations for the Forest Act, the need for engagement with Indigenous governments and organizations, as well as other GNWT directorates, and how the Forest Act will address the values of NWT residents.

8.2. ENR response

ENR has been engaging extensively on the development of the Forest Act over the last two years, including through the meetings with the TWG who assisted in the collaborative development of drafting instructions for the Forest Act.

A Stakeholders Advisory Group consisting of non-government organizations, regulatory boards and industry representatives, was also established to facilitate discussion on the development of the Forest Act.

ENR conducted an intergovernmental review with other GNWT departments and provided an opportunity for those departments to provide comment, feedback and recommendations towards the development of the Forest Act.

Public engagement took place in November and December 2018. This What We Heard report reflects the comments and questions that came out of that process.

All feedback and comments were reviewed by ENR and carefully considered for incorporation into the draft legislation, where appropriate.

9. General

9.1. What we heard

An individual commented that the content provided during the public engagement on the Forest Act was too high-level, vague and general.

9.2. ENR response

The intent of the public engagement process was to seek input and feedback on the direction and high level concepts ENR was proposing to include in the Forest Act, so that feedback could be considered and incorporated if and when appropriate, prior to completing the drafting of the bill.

Next Steps

The Standing Committee for the Legislative Assembly will conduct its review of the bill following the processes defined by the Committee. That process may involve further public engagement.