

**Yukon Legislative Assembly  
Whitehorse, Yukon  
Thursday, December 15, 2011 — 1:00 p.m.**

**Speaker:** I'll now call the House to order. We will proceed at this time with prayers.

*Prayers*

**DAILY ROUTINE**

**Speaker:** We'll proceed at this time with the Order Paper.

Are there any tributes?

**TRIBUTES**

**In recognition of the Bare Essentials campaign**

**Ms. White:** It is with great pleasure that I rise on behalf of the Legislative Assembly to pay tribute to the Bare Essentials campaign, sponsored by the Women's Directorate of this government. This unique grassroots effort within our public service is now in its tenth year, and usually lasts from mid-November to early December.

Originally, the concept of the Bare Essentials campaign came from Yukon government employee Jennifer England. Much of that work has been carried out in recent years by another Yukon government employee, Brenda Barnes. We are glad to have this opportunity to extend our thanks to them for all their hard work and commitment. The campaign accepts donations in kind from Yukon government employees. This year, 60 Yukon government workplaces donated, making 100 baskets. Items donated are indeed essential. Everything from toothbrushes, underwear, shampoo and toiletries are gathered. The donations are forwarded to transition homes and shelters across the Yukon. Women seeking help in Kaushee's Place in Whitehorse, the Dawson shelter, Help and Hope in Watson Lake and the Margaret Thomson Centre in Ross River are all beneficiaries of the donations throughout the coming year. Sadly, it is at this Christmas holiday time that violence against women is at its highest. The baskets of donations are a tangible recognition of the fact that women have fled abusive homes, many with their children, to avoid violence. They often leave without any personal belongings in a frighteningly hasty move.

The Bare Essentials campaign is not only a source of items that are needed; it also brings public awareness to the fact that violence against women and the important role that transition homes and shelters play in keeping women and children safe from harm. It emphasizes that women from all walks of life are using these services and find themselves in need of support. On behalf of the Yukon Legislative Assembly, thank you to all the public servants who have donated to this campaign this year and in years past.

**Speaker:** Introduction of visitors.  
Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

**TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS**

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** I have for tabling a letter to the Official Opposition House Leader and the Leader of the NDP regarding whistle-blower protection and establishing a select committee on that — or for that purpose, rather. I also have for tabling the Yukon Development Corporation 2010 annual report, which has already been released publicly, but must be tabled in this Assembly and also the Yukon Energy Corporation 2010 annual report — again, publicly available, but tabling as per requirement.

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** I rise to submit the 2010-11 Public Accounts. This is fully audited by the Auditor General of Canada, giving us a clean bill of health. This, as well, has been available in the public domain, but I'm submitting it today.

**Speaker:** Are there any reports of committees?  
Are there any petitions?

**PETITIONS**

**Petition No. 2**

**Ms. White:** I have for presentation a petition signed by 30 people regarding the protection of middle McIntyre Creek. The petition reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, strongly support the conservation and long-term protection of middle McIntyre Creek for the benefit of present and future Yukoners. We hereby petition the Yukon Legislative Assembly to designate middle McIntyre Creek as an environmentally protected area and to oppose any municipal proposals for roads, housing or other developments, which are inconsistent with environmental protection.

**Speaker:** Are there any further petitions for presentation?  
Are there any bills to be introduced?  
Are there any notices of motion?

**NOTICES OF MOTION**

**Ms. Hanson:** I give notice of the following motion:  
THAT it is the opinion of this House that:

(1) Yukon food banks are no longer a stop-gap measure to address the widening gap between rich and poor in the territory;

(2) that for many people in Yukon food banks have become essential to their survival;

(3) in the absence of a comprehensive anti-poverty strategy to eliminate the root causes of poverty, the Yukon government should provide appropriate financial support to the food bank to ensure that it is able to maintain this essential service; and

(4) the hard work and commitment of volunteers working for the food bank along with the generous personal and business donations given to the food bank deserve recognition and thanks.

I also have for filing a fact sheet prepared by the Food Bank Society of Whitehorse.

**Ms. White:** I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to provide security for the donation of perishable food to community organizations, charities and non-profits by bringing forward legislation that protects responsible donors and recipients from liability.

I also give notice of the following motion for the production of papers:

THAT this House do order the return of the Yukon government housing strategy and policy framework that: includes all Yukon communities; has performance and risk-management measures; is comprehensive, innovative, practical and achievable; will increase the housing supply; will improve housing affordability; and will support individuals and families in the greatest housing need.

**Mr. Elias:** I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT all Members of the Yukon Legislative Assembly urge the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada to ensure the proper implementation of the Nutrition North Canada program that delivers healthy foods to the citizens living in Old Crow, Yukon by:

(1) ensuring the Nutrition North Canada program includes a personal shipping transportation subsidy from Whitehorse to Old Crow of “nutritious perishable foods”, “non-perishable foods”, “non-food items” and “essential non-food items” by the residents of Old Crow via Air North at a cost of \$.80 per kilogram for level 1 foods and \$2.15 for level 2 foods;

(2) ensuring that any surcharge or tax associated with the shipping of personal orders be incurred by the Nutrition North Canada program and not the citizens of Old Crow; and

(3) maintaining a transportation subsidy that is administered by Air North with the company being accountable directly to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada.

**Speaker:** Are there any further notices of motion?  
This brings us to Question Period.

## QUESTION PERIOD

### Question re: Political party cooperation

**Ms. Hanson:** Mr. Speaker, today I would like to talk with the Premier about how we — all members of this House, whether in government or on the opposition side — can constructively work together in the interest of advancing the Yukon public’s business. We will be sharing space in this Legislative Assembly for the next five years and we are all extremely passionate, committed people who care deeply about protecting the land and the people who make up this territory. I was encouraged by the Premier’s remarks yesterday that we all have a role to play and a mandate given by the people of Yukon to deliver for Yukoners.

I am looking for commitment from the Premier that we will increase the opportunity for working collaboratively to advance the public’s business.

Can the Premier outline his views on the next steps to be taken in order to build a collaborative working relationship?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** As I mentioned yesterday, I do believe that what is occurring right now is exactly what should be happening — the fact that the opposition is fulfilling their role and obligation to oppose the government, while the government’s responsibility is to proceed to implement a platform in which we were given a mandate from the people of the Yukon. There are already numerous examples of working together, such as the Standing Committee on Appointments to Major Boards and Committees. The first time we met, there was a consensus on all of the positions and all of the appointment that were put forward. Numerous meetings and correspondence have occurred between opposition MLAs and ministers, in terms of moving forward on issues for constituents. So I think there has been a lot of cooperation, and we look forward to continuing to work together with the opposition.

**Ms. Hanson:** The opposition is not simply to oppose. That is not our role. We were elected by Yukoners to hold the government to account, and we do it collaboratively and constructively, and that is the intent of my questions today.

Mr. Speaker, I believe there were some missed opportunities during this truncated sitting for all sides to better work together.

I really hope we can learn from these, set a new course and elevate our collective game for the spring sitting. One aspect that I have written to the Premier about is how we can together increase financial accountability. It is so important that members get financial briefings and have enough time to debate all departments. We were not able to achieve this during this shortened sitting.

Mr. Speaker, my question for the Premier: can we agree that we will, together, achieve this goal of thorough budgetary debate and timely briefing for all members?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** Again, I would like to say that there are a lot of things on which we have already been working together. In terms of yesterday as well, we put forward a friendly amendment to a motion by the opposition — a comprehensive motion — and what we had amended were two words, Mr. Speaker, at a time when we could have politicized it by adding a bunch of things from our platform, but we didn’t. What we did was just change two words; however, that apparently was not deemed as something we could be doing together.

This government has the record, by far, in terms of the creation of motions that have been unanimously supported in this House. There is a long history of this government creating those motions that have been put forward and supported by the entire House. I think we have worked together on a lot of things and we continue to work together.

**Ms. Hanson:** Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed the Premier doesn’t get it. Simply telling the opposition that their platform is a Yukon housing strategy was not the intent of the debate yesterday. That’s why we suggested we work collabora-

tively to develop that strategy. That is part of our role as the Official Opposition.

All parties made pledges to work cooperatively to advance the public interest and we have seen — we saw it yesterday — that sometimes debate can get nasty. I am always impressed at the level of exchange when witnesses come before this House. The exchange between members and witnesses of the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board was flowing, insightful; there was a lack of evasion and there were real answers. It didn't bog down in needless repetition.

I think we could set this as the bar for debate in this House. To get there we need some measure of legislative reform. I have written to the Premier about this, and I am asking him today: is the Premier willing to make a commitment that we work together on improving how the Legislative Assembly, the people's House, functions?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** This government does in fact have a comprehensive housing plan. There was considerable public consultation for that housing plan, and it occurred between September 9 and October 11.

We need to make sure that we don't confuse collaboration and cooperation with the government's unwillingness to implement the NDP's platform, because I think there is some confusion between implementing what they put forward — that they want to accomplish in their platform — and confusing that with collaboration and cooperation. So I think they need to have a look at that.

I just have to look at SCREP in terms of the opportunities and what is going forward. We are working together; we're waiting for the Official Opposition to submit their name for the whistle-blowers —

**Some Hon. Member:** (Inaudible)

#### Point of order

**Speaker:** Leader of the Official Opposition, on the point of order.

**Ms. Hanson:** With respect, the Premier had made a factually incorrect statement.

**Speaker:** Government House Leader, on the point of order.

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** On the point of order, the statement just made by the member is not a point of order. It's a dispute between members.

**Speaker:** Leader of the Official Opposition, on the point of order.

**Ms. Hanson:** Mr. Speaker, I may not have the correct references from the Standing Orders, but it's my understanding that when something is said in the House that is not true, then one is able to say so.

The point I'm trying to make is that the Official Opposition has provided a name in response to the request from the Premier. We have sent a letter to the Government House Leader. It is on record, and I'm simply trying to correct the record.

#### Speaker's ruling

**Speaker:** There is no point of order. If the member wishes to correct the record, she should do so the next time she has an opportunity.

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** Mr. Speaker, I have just become aware that as of this morning when the House Leaders met there was still no name submitted, but apparently they just submitted a name before we convened this afternoon.

I will acknowledge that, and also say that I am looking forward to that. I am excited they have actually put their name forward so that we can start to work on this important legislation, as well as with other legislation, like the *Landlord and Tenant Act* that will be coming forward.

I'd like to take this opportunity on the last day to wish everybody a Christmas wish, in terms of good health and happiness as well for 2012 — to all members of this House and their families, the people who work for the Legislative Assembly, all Yukon government employees and certainly all Yukoners as well.

#### Question re: Food donation legislation

**Ms. White:** I'm going to change the direction we are going right now.

Sadly, at this time of year there are record numbers of people in the Yukon going to the food bank, to Sally and Sisters and to other organizations. As a caterer and past cook in mining camps, we in the business world struggle with the waste of perfectly good food. All too often safe, quality food is wasted because we cannot donate it to nearby communities or organizations for fear of liability. This situation puts the grinch on Christmas, Mr. Speaker. People in the business world want to step forward and do the right thing. Will this government support them?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** I have to express my bewilderment. I'm not quite sure what the member opposite is talking about, so I'll sit down and listen perhaps to a supplementary question that I can answer.

**Ms. White:** Mr. Speaker, that is a fair statement; I will remember that for my order next time.

In this season of giving, of open houses and Christmas parties, there is a serious impediment on the donation of perishable food items to those in need. This sad state of affairs is because we currently do not have any legislative framework to protect good-faith donors of perishable food, nor do the laws protect the recipient organizations. Currently, both parties are liable for any unintended harm as a result of the donation and the redistribution of perishable food.

In the Northwest Territories, they recently passed legislation, the *Donation of Food Act*, for exactly this reason. Will the government bring forward legislation to protect good-faith donors and recipients of perishable food?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** Mr. Speaker, I will have to take the question under advisement.

**Question re: Liquefied natural gas**

**Mr. Elias:** I'd like to return to the topic of the future of Yukon's natural gas industry because we didn't get any answers yesterday.

The minister thought he could get a pat on the back for announcing that he "planned" to do some work on getting our natural gas regulatory house in order.

I will remind the member that this Yukon Party government has had nine years to prepare and develop policies, regulations and legislation for the oil and gas industry to be successful in the territory. They have failed on all counts. The minister has committed to finally doing some of that work now, and I will give him credit for that. He said yesterday that the government was looking at new regulations. Can the minister tell Yukoners that the government is also looking at changes to the Yukon *Oil and Gas Act*?

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** What I would point out is that the member is not reflecting the facts as fully as he should in this context. As the member should be aware, consultation has occurred on possible amendments to the Yukon *Oil and Gas Act*. Work has been underway on changes to the oil and gas regulations. Steps have been taken to date. Officials have done a significant amount of work in this area, which the member should appreciate rather than diminishing, in my opinion.

I would point out that since being sworn in as Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources on November 5, I have been diligently working on this area and with others — with the staff at the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. But it is really a refreshing change to hear the Liberals change from their previous position of opposing this type of development to suggesting that the government needs to do more. We are doing more, and we will do it in as timely a manner as is appropriate within the scope of consultations with the Yukon public and ensuring that the end product is the right one.

**Mr. Elias:** "Refreshing", the minister says. Well, we in the Liberal caucus recognize that we have a new leader, a new caucus, a new era and a new Liberal vision, so the minister should put his political seat belt on, because we are just getting warmed up.

One of the Yukon Party's own candidates, who is now the Minister of Economic Development, pointed out in the election campaign how his government failed to lay out the ground work for a successful oil and gas industry. I quote: "As it stands right now, we don't have the regulatory framework to allow for the processing of natural gas or the piping of natural gas. We know we have got a significant resource here in the Yukon in terms of natural gas. We know that natural gas is cleaner and cheaper than diesel, and we know that, as a resource, we should be exploiting it more." We couldn't agree more, Mr. Speaker. When does the government anticipate having this work completed?

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** The Member for Vuntut Gwitchin spoke to a new Liberal vision, and I think it would be more accurate to say that perhaps the Liberal Party is getting a vision, because what they had before certainly was a vision to go backwards, in terms of the Yukon's development. They op-

posed everything for the sake of opposing it, rather than engaging with constructive input on policy matters.

Again, as I pointed out to the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin, this is an area both in terms of the Yukon's *Oil and Gas Act* itself and development of regulations under the oil and gas regulations that significant work has been done by officials of Energy, Mines and Resources. I think that it's not really appropriately respectful toward those officials for the member to diminish that work.

There is significant work and the Yukon has a relatively small policy branch compared to other jurisdictions — work that has occurred and the participation of our officials in engaging with other regulatory bodies to try to ensure that the Yukon's regulations are the best in the country; where we are taking new steps; where we are reviewing existing regulations to ensure that best practices are reflected as outlined in the energy strategy. That work has been ongoing. This is a priority matter and as the member knows, it is a priority we identified in the election platform. The new Yukon Party team is certainly focused on delivering that. It is nice to hear the Liberals not oppose for the sake of opposing, for a change.

**Mr. Elias:** The member opposite has been a part of two majority Yukon Party governments over the last nine years and they have done nothing for the oil and gas industry. The minister should either lead or get out of the way. Developing natural gas and liquefied natural gas is better for our environment than burning diesel. It's also good for our business community and it has the potential to bring huge new investments to the Yukon. It has been nothing but ignored by the Yukon Party government for the last nine years.

Before any of that can happen, the Government of Yukon needs to get its policy and regulatory house in order. Again, I implore the minister to answer the question in some greater detail. Is there any deadline for the completion of this work?

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** Well, Mr. Speaker, again it's a refreshing change to hear the Liberals go from having no vision and opposing everything the Yukon government does for the sake of opposing it, to what appears to be the new approach of — in addition to the heckling while they talk about collaboration — taking the Yukon Party platform and the commitments we outlined in our priorities that we identified to Yukoners this fall, and demanding that we implement our platform. That is exactly what we are going to do; we are going to fulfill the commitments we made to Yukon citizens. That includes taking the next steps to build on the good work done by officials in Energy, Mines and Resources with oil and gas regulations that allow the use of natural gas for energy production and facilitate that, as well as providing appropriate context around development. We want our regulatory structure to be the best in the country. It is nice to see the Liberal Party, for a change, standing up and encouraging the Yukon Party to fulfill our election platform. That's exactly what we will do.

**Question re: Housing shortage**

**Mr. Silver:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker — another question on our new vision. I have a question for the Minister of Finance.

Between 2006 and 2010, the Government of Yukon received \$50 million from the Government of Canada through the northern housing trust fund. It was designed to help northerners meet affordable housing needs. For example, funding could be used for rental, transitional and/or supportive housing.

\$32.5 million was allocated to the Yukon First Nations for their housing priorities and the Yukon government retains \$17.5 million to be spent on affordable housing issues. The money was never spent. Despite the housing shortage unfolding all around it, the government held on to that money.

In May of this year, the Deputy Minister of Finance confirmed the money still remained unspent, and I quote: "That's still sitting there." Where is that money today and does it in fact remain unspent?

**Hon. Mr. Kent:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I'll answer this, as you introduced me in my role as the Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation. I would remind members in this House of a number of accomplishments that were fulfilled by the Yukon Party government over the past number of years. We've spoken of them on a number of occasions here, including of course \$100 million spent on a number of initiatives when it comes to affordable housing. I know we have talked about the 19-unit affordable housing building built in the member's riding of Klondike.

That is just one of the projects that has been completed. When the stimulus money arrived, obviously it was time-limited funding and we look forward to carrying on with our platform commitments to build other — to expend that money on the important initiatives that Yukoners entrusted us with on October 11.

**Mr. Silver:** Yesterday we had a very long discussion in the House about housing shortfalls in the Yukon. Three different members on the department side outlined some of the initiatives that have been undertaken to address this housing problem. There is no doubt several worthwhile projects have been accomplished. However, the fact remains that \$17.5 million of federal money sat in the bank for several years. There was no mention of the \$17.5 million this government held back from the people who need it. Two members spoke yesterday and they had a good excuse. They were not part of the government at the time. The third member simply did not mention it. There was never a public explanation for why this money wasn't spent and no indication was given yesterday as to what the government plans to do with that particular money right now.

Can the Minister of Finance tell Yukoners what happened to this particular money?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** I think all we have to do, again, is go back to look at what part of our comprehensive housing and land strategy it is, and it's right in there.

For example: a commitment to build a seniors complex in Mayo; replacement of McDonald Lodge in Dawson City; Kaushee's Place, where we already committed \$1 million to move forward to build second-stage housing; options for independent living are being considered for adults living with FASD; Abbeyfield complex; duplexes in Takhini subdivision; new housing in Carmacks and Ross River — not to mention

also working with the Salvation Army in terms of expanding or renovating or creating more space for homeless people — working with Skookum Jim as an NGO working for a youth shelter. It's all part of a comprehensive housing and land strategy that this government has and we are moving forward with it.

**Mr. Silver:** I have no doubt that the government is working in housing; I have no doubt on that, but I am asking a very specific question about very specific funding.

The main item on the agenda for this first sitting of the new government is the budget update. The budget update contains no mention of the words, "northern housing trust".

I think many Yukoners thought the government would put the \$17.5 million to use at the very first opportunity they had. Instead, it continues to sit in the bank, helping no one.

My final question is once again to the Premier. Why has the government chosen to sit on this money, instead of helping Yukoners who are in need?

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** I have to be excited about this, because it's very refreshing to see that the Liberals are again supporting and encouraging the Yukon Party to move ahead with their platform and that's exactly what we intend to do. I've just listed a number of projects totalling well over the \$17.5 million that we will be investing in Yukoners throughout the territory, so we're really looking forward to moving forward on our comprehensive housing initiative and dealing with this issue.

#### **Question re: Housing strategy**

**Mr. Tredger:** Yesterday the Yukon Party government urged itself to implement its Yukon housing strategy. It sounds like a wonderful idea. The government says their strategy is comprehensive, innovative, practical and achievable. They say their strategy includes all Yukon communities, has performance and risk management measures, will increase the housing supply, will improve our housing affordability, and support individuals and families with the greatest housing needs.

Yukoners would love to see the government's comprehensive housing plan, and Yukoners in all communities would be most interested in seeking solutions. Can someone tell me where I might find a copy of this housing strategy?

**Hon. Mr. Kent:** Absolutely. Our plans for housing were laid out in our document *Moving Forward Together*, which is the Yukon Party platform we ran on and were successful in being re-elected on, on October 11. All parties, as housing was an extremely important issue to Yukoners during the election campaign, had housing strategies. Yukoners clearly, on October 11, voted in a Yukon Party majority government, and we look forward to implementing our plan for housing and other initiatives that were laid out in our *Moving Forward Together* document.

**Mr. Tredger:** That doesn't sound like a strategy to me. It sounds like a laundry list and note scribbled on an election platform. You can ask the children at F.H. Collins what happens to political promises that are in platforms.

This government likes to spend money, but to spend it wisely requires planning and a well-thought-out strategy. This government tables \$1-billion budgets but doesn't present much

strategic thinking; it doesn't set short-, medium- and long-term goals and it doesn't set timelines. It's the same old, ad hoc approach.

I dare say that the lack of planning has taken us down a familiar path. We just have to ask the folks at Fort McMurray who cannot find accommodation. When will this government table a comprehensive housing strategy?

**Hon. Mr. Kent:** I did mention it and it is in our platform document *Moving Forward Together*. All parties took their plans to the Yukon electorate in September and early October. On October 11, Yukoners chose a third consecutive Yukon Party government to represent them for the next five years. I think a lot of that can be attributed to the plan that we put forward and put in front of Yukoners. They chose us based on that plan, but they also chose the Yukon Party based on a lot of the work of the last two mandates — the last nine years of Yukon Party government — where significant investments were made in social housing.

As I mentioned yesterday, the stock has gone up by 40 percent — an incredible amount in the last five years — as well as 300 additional social housing upgrades. The work of the previous Yukon Party governments and the plan that was put forward by this Yukon Party government is the plan that Yukoners endorsed and the government they elected to a majority position on October 11.

**Mr. Tredger:** The Yukon Party government has talked about the U-Haul economy and that it was due to their economic stewardship that our children could get jobs in the Yukon. Now we've got a no-room-at-the-inn economy, where our children can't afford rental units and sure can't afford the nearly half-million dollar average price tag on a house in the Whitehorse area. The lack of a housing strategy under this government's watch has brought us to this place where the price of homes has skyrocketed 100 percent in six years; where there are no vacancies; where there is no progress on landlord and tenant issues; where there is little progress on addressing the hard-to-house and supportive housing files — still no strategy. When will the public see a Yukon housing strategy that deals with this current housing crisis?

**Hon. Mr. Kent:** Again, Mr. Speaker, I know that, as all members in the House were engaged in the campaign this past fall, all parties laid out a number of plans, including plans for housing. The Yukon Party housing strategy was clearly laid out in our platform *Moving Forward Together*.

The member opposite referenced the strong economy of the past nine years. It is for that reason that I chose the Yukon Party team as the team to run for in this past election. I am very proud to be a member of this team, just given the record.

We were in very difficult economic times nine years ago when I wished the party well in moving forward to create a strong economy, and that's exactly what has been accomplished. Obviously, the housing issue isn't something that's unique to the Yukon. I know our neighbours in the Northwest Territories have significantly longer wait-lists for social housing and a number of other issues. I mean, we can look across the country for the types of concerns that are there for housing. It's not strictly a Yukon issue, but we have made significant

investments in addressing that issue and we look forward to continuing that hard work throughout this mandate.

#### Question re: Second-stage housing

**Ms. White:** I was glad to hear the minister opposite say yesterday, and I quote: "...we should absolutely build a structure with design done first." When it comes to building second-stage housing for women fleeing abuse, there are critical safety and security features that must be incorporated into the design to save women's lives. Women are most at risk of homicide by their violent partners at the time when they leave. Second-stage housing is not a project for the fast-track design-while-building approach. That could be disastrous. Will the minister commit to completing design of second-stage housing before building this promised new facility?

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** I'll take this opportunity to respond. We fully intend to go ahead with this project and under no circumstances will it be done in a rush and be done incorrectly. Therefore, we will make sure that all of the planning is done up front and take as much time as is necessary to get this project done correctly.

**Ms. White:** The Yukon Women's Transition Home Society Board and administration have demonstrated the need for second-stage housing for a decade. With funding support from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the board has already completed a business plan and architectural schematic drawings for a 10-unit second-stage apartment building for women fleeing abuse. Yukon Women's Transition Home Society is expected to own and operate this new building. They need money for professional consultation services to enable them to work with government officials on the project as an equal partner.

Will the minister assure us that this government will provide Kaushee's Place with the funds that they need to be an equal partner in planning for the second-stage housing?

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** I just want to make full assurances for the members opposite that this government is in fact very much committed to working with Kaushee's Place, our women's transition home, on second-stage housing. In fact, our election platform, which we were just elected on, committed to \$4.5 million toward this very project, of which the first \$1 million is actually before the Legislature, housed within the supplementary budget.

I just want to make every assurance that we will be working with Kaushee's Place, and we are working with Highways and Public Works as well, to develop this housing initiative. We are working on a request for proposal, which will outline the specifications for a proposal for land, design and construction of up to a 10-unit second-stage facility.

We're very pleased with the progress that is being made and are very committed to ensuring it is done right the first time around.

**Ms. White:** So far I'm the luckiest question-asker, because I've had two ministers answer, so I feel very fortunate.

Kaushee's Place needs to be funded to ensure the government gets the planning done right the first time. The Government of Yukon promised to build the second-stage housing for

Kaushee's Place in 2009, again in 2010, and yet again in 2011. We're still waiting.

Will the minister make a commitment today to have the second-stage housing design completed so that construction of this necessary and long-awaited project can begin in the spring of 2012?

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** Mr. Speaker, perhaps I'm a little bit confused because the member first of all asked for us to take our time to ensure that consultation design is appropriately done in a timely but measured response. On the other hand, the member opposite is now calling for, perhaps, a rush on getting the project going before the next spring.

I just want to ensure that it is this government that has been put \$4.5 million toward the completion of this project that is very much needed. In fact, it builds on the second-stage housing that this government has also put in communities such as Watson Lake. It is that government that continues to enhance dollars available for the operation and maintenance of women's shelters throughout the territory and it's this government that will continue to make money available to women's equality-seeking organizations on many fronts — continuing to address violence against aboriginal women, continuing to address women's equality-related issues throughout the territory. So we are very much committed to addressing this very important project, and we are committed to working with Kaushee's Place as well as Highways and Public Works.

**Speaker:** The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

We will proceed to Orders of the Day.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

#### Motion No. 67

**Clerk:** Motion No. 67, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Nixon.

**Speaker:** It is moved by the Minister of Justice

THAT the Yukon Legislative Assembly, pursuant to section 22(2) of the *Human Rights Act*, appoint Elaine Cairns, Michael Dougherty, Barbara Evans and Suzanne Tremblay to be members of the Yukon Human Rights Panel of Adjudicators for a term of three years.

**Hon. Mr. Nixon:** I would like to thank all those involved in these important boards and committees. We do very much appreciate their contribution to our territory. I would like to provide a brief overview of the four individuals in this motion.

Ms. Elaine Cairns has practised law in the Yukon since July 2001. She was initially called in B.C. in May 2001 and currently called in both Yukon and Northwest Territories. She has practised between 2001 and 2009 as a staff lawyer for Yukon Legal Services Society.

Since 2009, she has been employed by Cabott and Cabott Barristers.

Mr. Michael Dougherty has been a member of the Yukon Human Rights Panel of Adjudicators since 1998. He has a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts in Political Science. He has also worked in communications and is active in his community.

Ms. Barb Evans has been in the Yukon since 1980. She has taken advantage of many opportunities for skill development and training in human resource management, and personal and advanced communication skills. She earned a certificate in Administrative Justice in 2009 and Canadian Institute training.

Ms. Suzanne Tremblay arrived in the Yukon in 1983. French is her first language. She currently works as a border officer in Beaver Creek and has worked as a bilingual clerk offering administrative support for the Motor Vehicle branch. Ms. Tremblay also has volunteer experience with organizations such as the Canadian Rangers, Yukon Search and Rescue, and Yukon Emergency Medical Services. Thank you.

**Ms. Stick:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak to this Motion No. 67, presented by the Hon. Mr. Nixon.

**Some Hon. Member:** (Inaudible)

#### Point of order

**Speaker:** Government House Leader, on a point of order.

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** I know that the Member for Riverdale South is new to this Assembly, but she just referred to the member by name, which I believe is contrary to the Standing Orders.

#### Speaker's ruling

**Speaker:** I agree.

**Ms. Stick:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to speak to Motion No. 67 as presented by the Minister of Justice. The NDP is unable to support this motion, as the Official Opposition has received no information on these appointments until right now. We were given a list of names of those already chosen. We were not told of any background or of any other nominees who might have been interested in these positions or people nominated by other groups.

Yesterday I had the great privilege of sitting down with other members from all parties to review and recommend, unanimously, appointments to four public boards. This was achieved in an open, collegial and cooperative manner. It was a pleasure to have accomplished something so quickly. I believe that the success of this work was based on the fact that we were all given the necessary information to make good decisions and good recommendations. Today we were asked to approve a list of names. As I pointed out earlier, we had no information until just now from the minister.

The Minister of Justice was reminded two days ago that, previously, the minister would have met with the Justice critics, provided a list of individuals being considered and their qualifications. There was no response to our request for this. The members of the NDP Official Opposition will not be able to support this motion.

**Mr. Elias:** I, too, would like to speak to the motion on the floor of the House today — Motion No. 67. We in the Liberal caucus do not have a problem with the people being appointed. However, what I do have a problem with is the process in which this motion was brought to the Legislative Assembly. I want to reiterate the points made by the Member for Riverdale South with regard to how the Standing Committee on Appointments to Major Government Boards and Committees was very well run. We selected a chair and vice-chair and it went very well. So, I'm a bit — what's the word I'm looking for, here — behooved. We were given three hours' notice with regard to this motion.

I think the process is what we have a problem with. However, in listening to the Justice minister provide his justification, we in the Liberal caucus are going to bite our tongue and vote in favour of this motion. We do want to express our issues with regard to the process, because I'm aware that there were other nominees and we would have liked to see the qualifications, skills and abilities of those other Yukoners who wanted to serve on the Yukon Human Rights Panel of Adjudicators. There are other people out there.

I know that the Minister of Justice is aware of emails that have been sent to all parties. Again, we're going to bite our tongues and vote in favour of this motion, but in the future, I would hope that issues and matters of this kind are given a little higher priority and a lot more information and notice will be given to the members of the opposition. Again, we are going to vote in favour of this motion, but we in the Liberal caucus have a problem with the process and not the people who are being appointed to the Yukon Human Rights Panel of Adjudicators.

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** I'll be very brief in speaking to this as Government House Leader. I appreciate the comments from the Interim Leader of the Third Party.

As the member knows, as I informed House leaders, this was an issue where the minister — only just being sworn in and transition occurring — was informed of a need to make appointments to the panel of adjudicators so they could function and fulfill their obligations under law. Once he became aware of that, notice was provided to the opposition caucuses, and that process was shorter than normal. As has been indicated, the reason is that it is very time sensitive, and the government will certainly endeavour to provide greater notice for future appointments of this type. Again, as explained, for operational reasons, it is necessary. We had an election this fall, ministers being briefed on issues and departments were bringing forward information. The minister acted as soon as he became aware of the need to make the appointments and to consult with the opposition.

Again, the member's point is well taken, but I want to express on behalf of the government, the government's appreciation for those who serve on boards of the Yukon government and for everyone who puts their name forward. We appreciate their dedication to making a contribution to this territory.

**Mr. Tredger:** This isn't about the people whose names stand there. They are good people. This is about the process.

It was brought forth at the House Leaders meetings. We did recognize the need for expediency. We said that we would go along with it. All we asked was that the Minister of Justice meet with the critics in both parties and spend 15 minutes going over it. I clearly stated we would then support it. That did not happen. It puts us in a very awkward position, and it's not appreciated.

**Speaker:** Before the member speaks, are there any other members wishing to speak to the motion?

**Hon. Mr. Nixon:** In closing, I want to thank my colleagues on this side of the House, and I would like to extend our gratitude to the Third Party for supporting this motion. I will also take the opportunity to wish everyone in the House a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

**Speaker:** Are you prepared for the question?  
*Motion No. 67 agreed to*

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** I move that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

**Speaker:** It has been moved by the Government House Leader that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve into Committee of the Whole. Are you agreed?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.  
*Motion agreed to*

*Speaker leaves the Chair*

## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**Chair (Ms. McLeod):** Order please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before the Committee today is Bill No. 3, *Second Appropriation Act, 2011-12*. We will start with the Department of Environment. Would members like to take a break?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Chair:** We will recess for 15 minutes.

*Recess*

**Chair:** Order. Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

### **Bill No. 3: Second Appropriation Act, 2011-12 — continued**

**Chair:** The matter before the Committee is general debate on Vote 52, Department of Environment.

#### **Department of Environment**

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** I'm going to be introducing this supplementary budget with a few notes. The members opposite will benefit from learning some of this stuff, which I'll explain in my initial comments, and then we can go into questions as per usual and discuss this line by line. This supplementary



budget is a good one; it's well in line with our platform, *Moving Forward Together*, which is now also the Liberal Party's platform, I understand. So they should have very few questions about that.

I'll move on. Madam Chair, this supplementary budget represents a modest one-percent increase over the Department of Environment's 2011-12 main estimates approved last spring. On the capital side, the most significant change is for one-time funding to outfit the recently established conservation officer services in Carmacks. This area had been serviced out of Whitehorse and Faro over the years, and this new office responds to an operational need and the interest of Carmacks area residents and the Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation.

This investment will support two new staff positions and help provide enhanced conservation management and environmental monitoring capacity in central Yukon.

Capital funding includes \$85,000 for central equipment and \$10,000 for minor office renovations. We anticipate further funding will be required during the next fiscal year to complete the required office renovations. Other capital items include approved revotes for \$27,000 for information systems development and computer equipment, and \$25,000 for Herschel Island Park equipment that is 100-percent recoverable from Canada under the new *Inuvialuit Final Agreement*.

The \$49,000 revote for completion work of the new Tombstone Territorial Park Interpretive Centre is to cover repairs to the centre's cement floor. There was some shifting since the centre opened two years ago. In addition, work will include applying fire retardant paint in the crawl space under the floor. The interpretive centre is a major achievement and a positive partnership between Holland America Line, the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and the Yukon government. The centre is a focal point for visitors venturing into the park, and for travelers to have an appreciation and understanding for the cultural, historical and natural values of the region.

As well as being a destination for the promotion of tourism to the region, it also provides training and employment opportunities for Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in citizens, and an economic opportunity for the Holland America Line to offer a range of travel options to its customers.

In a year when many jurisdictions report a decline in visitor travel, we saw a 30-percent increase, from 10,000 in 2010 to 13,000 in 2011, in Tombstone visitations.

On the operations and maintenance side, the most significant change covers approved revotes carried over from 2010-11 to complete projects identified in last year's workplans for the *Inuvialuit Final Agreement* of \$132,000 and the Canada-Yukon Marwell tar pit agreement of \$69,000. These amounts are fully recoverable from Canada, and this includes all the money that we will be spending for the Marwell tar pit remediation. This year's \$69,000 revote is not a large amount of money, compared to the \$6.8 million we estimate to be spent over the next 10 years. Of that \$6.8 million, Ottawa will be paying \$4.76 million toward the cleanup. The Yukon government will pay just over \$2 million out of funds we obtain from the northern strategy trust fund.

This year's expenditure is significant because it's the first expenditure aimed directly at the Yukon government's efforts to clean up the largest single-source, hydrocarbon contaminated site in the Yukon. Environment Yukon is managing this project, and our activities for the fiscal year have included planning, additional investment, YESAB screening and permitting.

Environment Yukon has hired a project manager whose tasks this year include bringing in contractors for the preliminary site investigation work. This revote supports contract work to review all information related to this site; provide a summary of the previous work done; go on-site to do some minor subsurface investigation; and conduct a legal site survey to identify property boundaries and other identifiable landmarks related to the project.

Other operation and maintenance items include \$21,000 for the Whitehorse groundwater data compilation project in partnership with Yukon College, and \$5,000 for the *Environmental Occurrences Notification Agreement*, in partnership with Environment Canada. Both amounts are fully recoverable from the partners. The remaining \$61,000 in rebates to recoverable costs from the delegates who attended a fur-bearer conference held in Whitehorse earlier this year and inflationary increases for fuel.

That is the conclusion of my introductory notes. I will open it up to members opposite for questions.

**Ms. White:** I thank the minister very much for that. He answered a lot of my questions before I even got a chance to ask them. I am just going to draw his attention to something. We are going to go back a bit because other people have referenced back, so I am going to give it a go.

In the budget for 2007-08, the Environment budget was just over \$22 million and the Energy, Mines and Resources budget was just under \$37 million.

In 2008-09, the Environment budget was nearly \$19 million and the Energy, Mines and Resources was nearly \$40 million. In 2009-10, Environment was \$27 million and the Energy, Mines and Resources budget was \$52 million. In 2010-11, the Environment — sorry, and its operation and maintenance — I should have said that — was \$33 million and Energy, Mines and Resources was \$68 million. Then we've got the 2011-12 and our O&M was at \$28.296 million and the Energy, Mines and Resources department was at \$59.929 million.

So, in that last five years, what I can gather is that the Environment budget has gone up 27.6 percent, but the Energy, Mines and Resources budget has gone up by 62.3 percent. So, when we talk about how important the environment is in the Speech from the Throne and in the platform, my question is how can Environment keep up with the Energy, Mines and Resources budget when there's such a disparity? I understand that there has been a streamlining of processes and some things have been taken out of Environment and put into Energy, Mines and Resources. But my concern is that, with that disparity in funding, how is Environment able to keep up with the stewardship of the Yukon?

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** I think the Department of Environment does a phenomenal job doing the good work they've been

tasked to by us, to act as stewards for the environment for Yukon.

Outlined in the vision, mission, values and strategic goals of the department, they explain exactly what they do: the department, with broad public support and participation, carries out environmental management for the preservation and maintenance of a biologically diverse natural environment and for the sustainable use and conservation of natural resources. The primary responsibilities of Environment Yukon include managing, regulating and enforcing sustainable use of fish, wildlife and water; establishing and managing a system of wilderness preserves, natural and environment parks, ecological reserves, Canadian heritage rivers, campgrounds and recreation sites.

The Department of Environment also monitors, inspects and enforces the activities permitted pursuant to the *Environment Act*, *Wildlife Act*, *Waters Act*, *Parks and Land Certainty Act*, and the *Wilderness Tourism Licensing Act*. We also lead the Yukon's action on climate change, and we do that now in collaboration with the Climate Change Secretariat which of course is housed within Environment, but serves the Yukon government corporately.

We're the lead on the development and implementation of Yukon's comprehensive animal health program. The Department of Environment: promotes safe and ethical participation in both consumptive and non-consumptive uses of fish and wildlife; protects and maintains Yukon's biological diversity; oversees the remediation of Yukon's contaminated sites, pollution prevention programs and regulation of waste and recycling programs, helps ensure effective mitigation of environmental impacts from resource developments, leads the development of Yukon's environmental legislation, regulation and policies; and also, helps to meet the Yukon government's obligations in respect to the rights of Aboriginal people and relationships established through land claims, final agreements and self-government agreements.

I think they've done a tremendous job. I would remind the member opposite that the size of the budget is not a reflection of the good work done in those departments. We allocated funds based on project needs. I would remind the member opposite that a significant portion of the Energy, Mines and Resources budget is funneled from federal dollars, which includes a significant amount toward the reclamation of abandoned mines and type 2 sites. This is some phenomenal work done by the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, but is very much in line with the Department of Environment.

I don't think it's fair to say that because one department's budget is larger, it gets more attention. I think all the departments in the government do very good work, from the small ones to the very large ones. Those fluctuate — I think Highways and Public Works has a massive budget. That doesn't mean that we care more about highways than the environment.

It means that it costs a lot of money to maintain this extensive highway network. We budget based on demonstrated need on projects. I think that the Department of Environment staff has done a phenomenal job implementing their strategic plan as a department and acting as stewards of the environment on behalf of Yukoners.

**Ms. White:** There was no criticism toward the employees of the Environment department.

Can the minister explain the programs that are found under the title "environmental sustainability" — just to help me out because I have idea where to find that stuff?

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** Under that branch of the Department of Environment are all the operational services in the Department of Environment. A CO services office, as I mentioned in my opening comments, is a component of the supplementary budget. That falls under that branch. The Parks branch is under that; the Fish and Wildlife branch falls under that branch; Animal Welfare and Water Resources all fall under the Environmental Sustainability branch of the Department of Environment, as well as other environmental programs.

In general, that's the operational arm of the Department of Environment.

**Ms. White:** If I were to try to find something in the budget, where would we have the programming or the funding for things like a wetlands inventory, or a species-at-risk inventory? In the Speech from the Throne, the Yukon Party talked about its commitment to developing a water strategy. Where would that be in the budget? The minister also spoke of baseline work being an investment when he responded to the Speech from the Throne, and I'm wondering where this investment would be or where it would be in the future, to fund these important works?

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** Thanks to the member opposite for the good question. The baseline assessments and information data collection falls into the Fish and Wildlife branch, which includes wetlands protection and species-at-risk — that sort of thing. The water strategy development will be handled by the Water Resources branch. Of course, that will be an endeavour that will involve a number of departments. We anticipate that the Department of Environment will lead that process and the Water Resources branch of the Department of Environment will have a significant role. But also, the departments of Community Services, Energy, Mines and Resources, Executive Council Office, with the Water Board, and municipalities and First Nations will all have a role in that development. I guess to answer the member's question, the inventory and baseline data that we're talking about here is under the Fish and Wildlife branch, but the water strategy planning and going forward with that will primarily fall under the work done by the Water Resources branch.

**Ms. White:** Just one more question. With the identification that wetlands are important and that species-at-risk are important and these other things, will we see a budget that reflects that in the next year?

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** Obviously the Yukon government does recognize the importance of wetlands in Yukon and considers these values in resource planning and environmental assessment. As I mentioned, Yukon is working with other agencies to maintain a wetlands inventory and an update to the inventory of important wetlands was recently completed.

Yukon continues to expand on the protection of wetlands in Yukon, including recent designations of Devil's Elbow and Big Island as habitat protection areas. We've also endorsed

applying the Canada wetland classification system to describe wetlands. We've done a significant amount of work on wetlands protection to date. Talking about some of the previous accomplishments just a little bit, there are several significant wetlands that have been protected already: Old Crow Flats, the Nordenskiöld, Lhutsaw, Horseshoe Slough, Tatmain Lake, and the most recent area we have protected is Devil's Elbow, as I mentioned, and Big Island near Mayo.

Of course there is ongoing public consultation with regard to the Pickhandle Lakes in the Member for Kluane's riding. So there are a number of initiatives going on. I would also note that in the north Yukon, some of the wetland protected areas there are some of the biggest in the country. These wetland complexes that came out of the *North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan* represent a significant investment in the protection of wetlands in the Yukon. In terms of the next budget, I do anticipate there will be funds allocated for the Water Resources branch.

**Ms. Moorcroft:** I heard the minister in his opening remarks speak about third party recoveries. So if he answered this question already, I am sorry, but I missed it. Could the minister please explain the \$62,000 reduction in the line item that says International Polar Year, University of British Columbia?

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** Happily, Madam Chair. Under that item, the International Polar Year, project funding recovered in prior years and unspent as of 2010-11, is to be returned to the University of British Columbia in 2011-12. That is because the recoveries exceeded expenditures on this project. The return of the unspent funding will reduce recoveries. Basically, UBC gave us money for the project and it turned out that the project didn't need that much money, so we returned that money to UBC.

**Mr. Elias:** It is once again an honour to rise on behalf of the Liberal caucus to engage in a general debate with regard to the Environment department. As always, I recognize the leadership and staff within the Department of Environment for their years of dedication and hard work in fulfilling the objectives of the department.

I did have a laundry list of questions for the new minister, but I was out of the Legislature when he made his opening comments about platforms, and I have been hearing lots about platforms over the last few days. Madam Chair, as far as I am concerned, you have your leaders and then you have your followers. If you are going to be a leader — and I have actually printed out all political parties' platforms — and represent all Yukoners who voted for all of the political parties' platforms, I am not going to stand on the floor of the House and be so bold as to say that the Liberal Party has all of the answers for the betterment for this territory — or the Yukon Party for that matter, or the New Democratic Party for that matter.

If I see something in any platform that is going to bode well for this territory, then I'm going to get on my feet and advocate for it. It matters very little to me whose piece of paper or banner it's under, if it improves the day-to-day lives of Yukoners in this territory. That's leadership. You have your lead-

ers, and then you have your followers, and that's the way I look at the platform matter. I'll move on.

I just attended — and I understand the minister did as well — the Porcupine Caribou Management Board was in town and had a public meeting last night. It was a pleasure to attend and get the most recent update on the goings-on and good work of the Porcupine Caribou Management Board. I got to meet all of the members, except for a couple who couldn't make it down because of the Dempster Highway being closed and things like that.

I did attend the public meeting last night, and I wasn't aware of a couple of matters: that was the reinvigoration of the International Porcupine Caribou Board. They actually had a meeting during the election campaign. I believe it was in October or late September. This was very good news to hear from the Canadian Porcupine Caribou Management Board.

I asked the board a couple of questions and I'd like to hear some feedback or thoughts from the minister on these two questions. I asked the Porcupine Caribou Management Board about the overhauling of the *Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement*. If the minister is not aware, I've been advocating for this for a long, long time. The document is outdated, and it doesn't represent the political climate within the territory, as it exists today. Back in 1984 or 1985, when the agreement came into effect, there weren't any self-governing First Nations, in terms of self-government agreements or the *Umbrella Final Agreement*, or the final agreements within the territory.

Now the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, the Na Cho Nyäk Dun First Nation, the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation, and the Tetlit Gwich'in Tribal Council have jurisdiction and lawmaking authority over their citizens and vast tracts of land and have responsibilities in chapter 16 that play an important role in the protection of the Porcupine caribou herd today in the territory.

First of all, I just want to, again, thank the former ministers of Environment for showing leadership in navigating through some troubled waters that we had for about a decade — nine years — when we couldn't get a population census of the Porcupine caribou herd. I really appreciate the hard work and diligence not only of the ministers, but the senior staff and the civil servants, that helped navigate through those troubled waters. Having a population count of 169,000 — the Porcupine caribou herd — is just great news.

Anyway, moving on to the topic of the *Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement*, I asked the board what the holdup was in terms of opening this up with the parties to get a new agreement.

I'm thinking that 20 years down the road, should we ever be navigating through troubled waters again, if we fix the issues and problems within the *Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement*, it's going to make managers 20 years down the road — you never know — the minister might still be in the Legislature 20 years down the road. He's crossing his fingers. Anyway, that was one question.

The other one was the longevity of the participation of the Government of the United States in the International Porcupine Caribou Board. It's great to see that they had their meeting; I think it was the first one in a decade — for over a decade. So

that's a good step forward. I just need to know what the minister is doing to ensure that the international board continues to function and what his thoughts are or what he sees as a hindrance to opening up the *Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement* and fixing it, because there are lots of troubles in it. So I'll begin with those two questions and I thank the minister.

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** I thank the member opposite for the questions there; they're good and relevant questions. I know the Porcupine caribou herd is important to the member's riding and his constituents and the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, so I will be happy to answer these questions as best I can.

When we developed the harvest management plan, it was the priority — to develop a plan. It is a historic plan with eight parties. It's one that took a lot of work and a lot of willpower to get through. I can't take very much credit for it; it was something that was done previously, but it is something that I think this government should be proud of corporately. The next step there was to develop the implementation plan, and that now has been approved by the eight affected parties.

The agreement all along was that the priority was to get this management plan in and get an implementation plan and then we could look at the agreement. There are issues in the agreement — well; it is little bit stale-dated. It doesn't recognize in a lot of cases the First Nation final agreements, and there are aspects of the agreement itself that need to be looked at, as the member alluded. That's something that requires the parties to sit down and work on it. It's something I anticipate that we can do that work on now that we have a management plan and an implementation plan. Now we can go do the work that the member is talking about. That is something that I can see happening in the future, now that we have a management plan.

As he said, based on the harvest management plan, the current population is approximately 169,000 animals. It's a strong number and it places the herd in what we call, in the management plan, the green zone. In the green zone, of course, all hunters must report their harvest. Subsistence hunters voluntarily harvest bulls only, but with no limit on the numbers harvested, and licensed hunters are allowed to harvest two bulls each. The last census done back in 2003 — there was an estimate that the herd was about 123,000 animals. The herd was thought to be between 90,000 and 100,000 at one point, but then when we got the aerial census done by the department or by the Government of Alaska, we were able to determine that it was at a very healthy number 169,000.

The member referenced the international board. As he mentioned, they met earlier this year in September during our territorial election. It's the first time they've met in decades, so it's very positive. Of course we support and are confirming our nomination of a member to the board for Canada's appointment. So that's something I'll be working with the federal government on and encouraging them to appoint a member. We're interested to work with Alaska through this international board and to address management on both sides of the border. So I hope that answers the member's question.

**Mr. Elias:** I appreciate the comments from the new minister. Yes, it was good to see the harvest management strat-

egy signed — I believe it was last spring, at the Westmark Hotel. It was a long time coming and took a lot of hard work to actually get to that point. It is an interesting thing to note that it was actually one of my constituents, Esau Schafer, who brought up the idea of the colour-coded system. It actually solved a lot of problems with the negotiating of the *Harvest Management Plan*. It is important to recognize people who are out on the land and who understand what works with people in the communities. That simple model — it was from the fire system model — when it's in the red it's dangerous, blah, blah, blah. You know what I mean. Gee, *Hansard* staff are going to put "blah, blah, blah" in there, aren't they?

That was an excellent idea and it came from my constituent, Esau Schafer, at a meeting. That's just an example of people paying attention. You know, this came from a meeting too, and I will quote one of my elders. They said if you don't fight hard enough for the things that you stand for, then at some point in time you have to come to the realization that you didn't stand for them at all.

I think that is a good example of how far we have come with the protection of the Porcupine caribou herd in north Yukon.

Back to the *Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement*, — there is a lot over the years that I could pull out of here that didn't work. As a case in point, it still says one of the parties in the agreement is the Dene Nation and the Métis Association. It does not have the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in or the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation as parties to the agreement. It still has the "Council for Yukon Indians" as a party to the agreement — and that is not even getting into the contents.

I am not sure if I have said this before on the floor of the House, but section L has no place in this agreement. I don't know if I have said that before, but I will go on record that section L, with regard to commercial harvest of the Porcupine caribou herd, has no place in the actual agreement itself, so I will put my neck out and say that on the floor of the House.

Some of the other things I would like to move on to regard the outstanding goal, and it would be my pleasure to sit down sometime and have a coffee with the new Minister of Environment and explain the battle that the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and the Gwich'in Nation has had with regard to the protection of the calving grounds within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, the coastal plain of the Porcupine caribou herd. It's a tremendous story. I'm encouraging so many people to actually write a book because I think this is just a phenomenal story. If the minister needs to get briefed for a couple of hours, please send me an e-mail and we can provide some detailed history.

With regard to the permanent protection of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, I would like to experience one day maybe the minister and me going to Washington and for him to see the grassroots effort and especially our people from Old Crow, who have taken the leadership with regard to this mandate from the Gwich'in Nation.

As far as I am concerned, they have been successful. I would like to see one day when the Minister of Environment and I actually do that effort down in Washington, so that he can

see, first-hand, what happens in the congressmen's and senators' offices and how we do that grassroots effort.

The question with regard to the protection of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is — right now there is a public consultation and review going on within the State of Alaska, asking the citizens of Alaska and the citizens of the United States whether or not they see it necessary to permanently protect the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. I believe it was last week sometime that there was actually over one million respondents — citizens of the United States who were in favour of protecting the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge permanently. Senator Salazar and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton have been supportive of the mandate to do so. I'd like to get an update as to the vision and direction or the tasks associated within the Department of Environment under his leadership as to how he can help to achieve this mandate. So it's a pretty broad question, but it's a new minister, new leadership; I'm sure he has some fresh new ideas.

I hope that I can hear something substantial from the minister on that question. Thank you.

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** I'll try to respond to the member's question as best I can. There were a few different elements in there, so I'll try to address them all.

First, the member mentioned his constituent, Esau Schafer, who I believe is a former member of this Legislature. The point I want to make here is that the member mentioned that it's important that we listen to those who are on the land and understand the issues on the ground. That's a message I conveyed to the Management Board yesterday when I met with them. I'm not a biologist. I rely on experts in biology to tell me things about biology and I also rely on experts in terms of issues that happen on the ground with regard to the Porcupine caribou herd, like the members of the VGFN and the member's constituents. So I appreciate hearing from folks who have to deal with these issues on the ground.

With regard to the lobbying efforts, I suppose you could say, toward the American government —

**Some Hon. Member:** (Inaudible)

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** Yes, education of the American government, whether it be Alaskan or federal — I am aware that the Executive Council Office provides funding to the VGFN to advance their lobbying efforts with regard to the Porcupine caribou herd in Alaska and their interests, ensuring that their interests are reflected in the decision-making process in Alaska at the state level and the federal level.

So this government does undertake to ensure that voices are heard. But the important mechanism through which we engage with the other governments in the United States — particularly Alaska — is the international board, which we were discussing before. As I said before, we support and are confirming our nomination of a member to the board for Canada's appointment, so that is the primary mechanism through which we deal with the Alaskan government. It's important that we have a positive relationship and that the best interests of the Porcupine caribou herd are reflected in decisions that are made. So I hope that answers the member opposite's question.

**Mr. Elias:** I was hoping for a little more from the minister. He mentioned that he's not a biologist, but I understand that he has a master's in political science, so you know, hopefully, he can pull that master's out of his back pocket and provide a little bit of a stronger vision for moving forward. I'm saying that with a smile on my face, for *Hansard's* purposes.

I'd like to move on. It's good to see that the Yukon Party government is moving toward a water strategy and also, for the Member for Lake Laberge's benefit, that net metering was actually a Liberal Party initiative.

You know, it's just wonderful to see him advocating for net metering — something that is directly related to the platform of the Yukon Liberal Party. I just want to commend him on implementing something of such importance in this territory. It's good to see that the territorial water strategy is moving forward.

I'll be honest. I haven't had the time to actually delve into the details of what's on the website, but I have advocated for this for a couple of years — maybe. The way that I see this water strategy happening — and there are other jurisdictions nationally and globally that address this on a regional and national level. I'll use the Member for Kluane's riding. A lot of those glaciers, for instance, I understand have more freshwater than all the lakes in North America. That is a substantial resource within the boundaries of our territory. With climate change, with global warming, a lot of the water from those glaciers feed salmon spawning grounds.

That's just one instance and a part of the intricate web of the environment. I wanted to look at it at that level. It is not just simply potable drinking water or groundwater that I was talking about within this strategy. It would look at a plan and the territory's wetlands, the rivers, the lakes, the streams, the glaciers and how those relate to a healthy environment. Looking at this issue from 30,000 feet in the air is what I was envisioning as a territorial water strategy.

We had flooding in the Southern Lakes a couple of years ago — water data with regard to why, when and how that happened. Water is related to energy. Water is related to drinking water in every community. That is what I envisioned when I was advocating a territorial water strategy. It was to look at it on that broad a scope and get into the finer details of actions and responsibilities. I know he is well aware that in the *Umbrella Final Agreement* it says protection of the quantity, quality and rate of flow — I believe it says this in the water chapter in the *Umbrella Final Agreement*.

So including what we've agreed to in the *Umbrella Final Agreement* and that broader scope, is what I just mentioned. So what I'd like to hear is what direction or what participation is the Department of Environment having with the water strategy? I'm not sure if the Department of Community Services or maybe Energy, Mines and Resources — who's taking the lead on this territorial water strategy and what's the overall scope and vision of that water strategy for the territory? A big question, again — a new leader. Yukoners are interested to hear what he has to say.

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** Thanks to the member opposite for the question. He started off his question with a comment on net

metering, and of course my understanding is that the Yukon Party committed to that well before the Liberal Party ever thought of it. That's a matter for a different department and a different discussion, I'm sure. But I'll extend a hearty "you're welcome" to the Interim Leader of the Third Party, both for that and for his current position. I vacated the position for him.

We will move on to the water strategy. We are of course committed to developing a water strategy for Yukon. It's something we committed to in our platform. It's something we made an election issue. We issued a press release on it throughout the campaign. It's something we know is very important to Yukoners. Water is an important resource; it's important in our everyday lives. It's something that Yukoners value significantly. Part of the impetus for creation of a water strategy is the need for departments and stakeholders and various levels of government to work together. As I said in my response to the member from the Official Opposition previously today, it is an initiative I anticipate the Department of Environment leading. As I said, there are significant roles and responsibilities held by other ministers in other portfolios: the Department of Community Services, the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, and the Yukon Water Board through the Executive Council Office all come to mind, as well as municipalities, First Nations, stakeholders and the public.

We anticipate that any strategy we develop will include collaboration and consultation with all those stakeholders, hearing their voices and reflecting them in our strategy.

Requiring input from the public and other governments will be important, and the development of a water strategy will confirm the Yukon's key priorities for future water management. We want to ensure that we properly manage, with the tools we have available, Yukon's water resources. The member opposite was out of the Legislature when I answered the question before, so he may have missed some of this, so I'll take a chance and reiterate some of our actions on a different, but similar, file, which is for the protection of wetlands.

As I said before, the Yukon recognizes the importance of wetlands in Yukon and considers these values in resource planning and environmental assessment. The Yukon is working with other agencies to maintain a wetlands inventory, and an update to the inventory of important wetlands was recently completed. A key stakeholder in the wetlands discussion is a particular NGO — Ducks Unlimited. It's one I'll be meeting with tomorrow, so I look forward to that discussion with Ducks Unlimited with regard to wetlands. We take the recommendations of NGOs with a stake in water resources and wetland protection, like Ducks Unlimited, very seriously, so we'll be listening to that organization tomorrow.

The Department of Environment works with other departments to ensure adequate mitigation and avoidance of sensitive habitat during land disposition and resource development processes. So we do reflect the importance of wetlands in our decision-making. As I mentioned before for the member from the Official Opposition, the Yukon has a wetlands technical committee and they recently completed an update to the key wetlands for Yukon. They identified a number of wetlands and to date, several significant wetlands have been protected already:

Old Crow Flats in the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin's riding; Nordenskiöld; Lhutsaw; Horseshoe Slough; and Tatlain Lake — all examples of wetlands protected already.

So the previous governments have done some phenomenal work in identifying wetlands and protecting them. I plan on continuing with that good work and we do have some projects underway as it is. Typically, these wetlands are identified through the final agreements. In the case of the one that is ongoing right now, there is public consultation on the Pickhandle Lakes habitat protection area, which includes a significant wetland and the public consultation for that, I understand, is ongoing.

As I have said, the way we identify these wetlands is often through the First Nation final agreements, but it can also come up as a result of the regional land use planning. The example we have of that is the *North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan* that identified a number of areas of sensitivity that needed protection. We undertook to provide the protection for those as identified by the plan.

That is something that we have done some good work on in the past on; that is something I plan to continue to work on; and that is something that is important to Yukoners.

I will move back to the water strategy, which is what the crux of the member's question was really about. As we said in our platform, we intend on creating a Yukon water strategy to ensure that Yukoners have access to safe drinking water, that we increase data collection and information-sharing and continue to provide more water information on-line through sites, such as [www.yukonwater.ca](http://www.yukonwater.ca), and that we continue to upgrade drinking water and waste-water treatment facilities in Yukon to meet continuing standards.

The amount that previous governments invested in water resources and drinking-water facilities is significant. I will not get into the previous budgets but significant dollars have been spent on ensuring that Yukoners have access to safe drinking water. There have been a number of initiatives throughout the communities to enhance water protection and enhance our facilities.

In terms of the water strategy itself, as I said previously, we anticipate that the Department of Environment will lead this endeavour, with me as minister taking the lead, but there are important roles for other departments and other ministers. As well, we will be requiring input from the public and from other levels of government with water management responsibilities.

We are not building on nothing; we have some significant work done already. At the Western Premiers Conference in June, 2010, the premiers established a new strategy to conserve and manage Canada's freshwater supplies as set out in the *Water Charter*. That included making water conservation and protection a priority and cooperating and sharing information on water conservation and quality. At the commensurate Council of the Federation, in August 2011, the Council of the Federation *Water Charter* was approved. The goals of the charter are to reduce consumption, increase efficiency, protect quality and adapt to the effects of climate change on water.

In addition, the premiers directed their ministers to use the *Water Charter* as a guide in their work. So I anticipate that the

Council of the Federation's *Water Charter* will inform us in some of the best practices and some of the actions being undertaken in other jurisdictions in Canada. We do have some work to build on and we've got some more work to do, but we do have a strong foundation in the work we've done around water resources in the territory, and I'm quite proud of the work done by the department so far.

I hope that outlines adequately for the member opposite our vision with regard to the development of a Yukon water strategy.

**Mr. Elias:** I thank the minister for his response. In looking quickly at the territorial water strategy again, I think the Yukon is actually beginning from a position of strength and can actually take a leadership role within our country if we address all the issues within our territorial water strategy.

In reading some of the other jurisdictions' water policies or strategies, they include things like water justice, which represents access for all citizens to safe, clean drinking water and sanitation, and to ensure that legal instruments are there for individuals and organizations and governments to participate in. They address things like water security, water democracy, water knowledge, obviously water biology and recognition of First Nation water rights, water rights within Canadian law, water infrastructure and a strategy to address pollution. Those are just some of the headings with regard to one jurisdiction's water policy in our country.

I'd like to move on to the issue of climate change. If I could be so bold as to quote the minister, I believe it was in his response to the Speech from the Throne, that he said, "... I've had a significant amount of exposure and experience with this particular issue at the academic level in my previous academic work."

The question for me is that he should have an opinion as to whether or not the federal Environment minister has made the right decision in abandoning the Kyoto Protocol. It is the only agreement that binds Canada to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions. I'll begin the discussion on climate change with that very simple question: does the Minister of Environment agree with the federal minister abandoning Kyoto?

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** As the member opposite indicated, I've read a few books about it in my day. Obviously, I don't purport to be any sort of expert on the topic. I rely on department staff, with far more expertise than I have, to give me information about our activities here in Yukon. It's an issue that is very important to me personally as a young person and a person growing up in the Yukon. I've seen the effects of climate change throughout the territory and throughout my life. It's something I have a personal interest in and is something that I am very happy to be working on.

With regard to our territorial action plan around climate change, there has been a significant amount of work done to date on climate change.

We have really done a great job with this — and for the *Hansard* staff, I'm holding up the Yukon *Climate Change Action Plan*. I think this is an excellent body of work that a lot of work went into by the department and government staff across departments. It's something that was developed in collabora-

tion with Yukoners, NGOs, and a number of stakeholders. So I think it's something that is a good guide for us going forward.

It's also noteworthy that it was developed in collaboration with the *Energy Strategy for Yukon* because the two issues, as we all know, are very much linked. The idea that you can develop one without the other is simply false; you have to develop them together. So it's a positive development that we developed our *Climate Change Action Plan* along with our *Energy Strategy for Yukon*.

The *Climate Change Action Plan* outlines four particular goals: to enhance knowledge and understanding of climate change; to adapt to climate change; to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions; and to lead Yukon action in response to climate change. Under each of those goals are a number of action items — I believe the total is 33. To date, of the 33 projects identified as priority actions, 16 have been completed, two more will be finished later in 2011, and 15 are ongoing.

So not only have we created a good action plan to guide our actions going forward, but we've begun to implement that plan and take some considerable action on this file.

With regard to the federal developments on this file, we of course sent a delegation to Durban, South Africa, to participate in the international negotiations around the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. It was the 17<sup>th</sup> meeting of the parties, happening this time in Durban, South Africa.

The Yukon government has been actively participating in the federal, territorial and provincial round-table meetings leading up to the international climate change talks in South Africa. Our delegation recently returned from there to report back on the activities at Durban. I look forward to hearing from those officials and hearing their perspective on the development of issues in Durban, particularly how they relate to Yukon and our policy future and our future with regard to climate change.

With regard to Canada's targets, obviously, as I've said, Yukon is a jurisdiction and a region that has been significantly affected by climate change. We see it every day. It affects our infrastructure, it affects our way of life, and it affects our everyday lives. So it's something that we encourage all jurisdictions — territorial, provincial, subregional, national and international — to take action on. Through the *Climate Change Action Plan*, we are beginning to get our house in order on the climate change file. We have done some great work, and we can make a real case, I think, to other governments that we have done a good job in managing our own affairs when it comes to climate change.

I think there is a tremendous opportunity, though, in the Yukon when it comes to adapting to climate change and adopting the necessary technological opportunities to deal with climate change. Of course, I'm speaking about things like the Yukon Cold Climate Innovation Centre, which provides a hub for knowledge about climate change and climate change technology. In many ways, the kinds of initiatives that are being undertaken at the YCCIC and the Yukon Research Centre related to finding what I would call Yukon solutions to Yukon problems. One example of research being done on the effects of climate change is the work being done by researchers around

permafrost and the effects of permafrost on our highway network.

So in that case, I believe researchers from Laval University are doing some pretty progressive research on that front. There are a number of other opportunities, especially on the technology side. We've seen the innovation of new ideas and new technologies coming from the Cold Climate Innovation Centre and the research centre. Recently Northerm Windows and Glass developed a very innovative technology, which has a role in insulating houses to an increased standard.

One of the actions under our climate change action plan is to cap and reduce our own internal greenhouse gases within all the departments of the Government of Yukon. We've since undertaken a number of initiatives to collect that data, as to what we actually emit, because you have to know what you are currently emitting before you can cap it. We've done a good job of collecting that data so far. The staff at the Climate Change Secretariat, which I had a chance to visit two weeks ago, offered me an update on that, and I'm happy to report they've done some very good work and sent their data on to an independent third-party organization to verify the data: the Climate Registry. It is a third-party verification organization that reviews data from jurisdictions and confirms that it is accurate and is collected in an accurate way.

We have confirmed that our data appears to be strong, so I look forward to reporting back soon in the new year as to what that data tells us. That is just one of the many actions we are taking under the Climate Change Action Plan. If the member has any more questions about the climate change action plan, I would be happy to field them today. It is an issue that is very important to Yukoners, and I have the privilege of acting and working on behalf of Yukoners.

**Mr. Elias:** I asked a very, very simple question on the floor of the House today and I believe I did not hear an answer to whether or not the Yukon Environment minister agreed with the federal Environment minister pulling out of the Kyoto Protocol. I did not hear an answer to that today, but I will move on, because I think that is probably the tenth time that I have actually asked that question over the years, and I haven't gotten an answer.

The minister has asked me to ask again, but I will move on because we've only got two hours left in this shortened sitting. The minister said Yukoners are recognizing how climate change is affecting their lives. I want to put this on the record again, because there are a lot of new members in this House. There was a lake my family lived on for years, for generations — it's called Zelma Lake in the Old Crow Flats. It's where we traditionally lived from sometimes December until June, sometimes March until June, and all parts in-between. On June 6, 2007, I was going up to visit the camp and we knew something was wrong because we were going up the creek into the Old Crow Flats that lead to Zelma Lake, our traditional area, and we noticed the tremendous amount of water in the creek. It was overflowing the banks and I knew something was wrong. We got to the camp and we walked straight to the lake and it was almost gone.

That spring, there was a record amount of precipitation and it overflowed the actual banks of the lake. The lake that I'm talking about is 4.5 kilometres north-to-south and 5.2 kilometres east-to-west and it's approximately 2,000 Olympic-size swimming pools in the quantity of water.

So our family has lived by this lake as I've said; we've trapped, hunted, fished for generations, and we watched that lake drain. It was because of the changing climate that the banks broke through and released all of that. But we never abandoned it as a family; we kept going back year after year. As we look at Zelma Lake now, it has changed, but it's still being used by the wildlife. There are thousands and thousands of geese, ducks and swans that didn't usually occupy that area that now go there; it's deafening in the spring in the breeding season. So that's wonderful to see, but it's terrible to see the climate change and how it's affecting a traditional family's way of life.

I'll put that on the record today. I have done so before but that's a real example of how climate change is affecting the Yukon.

I've got a lot of questions in this department. There are a couple of — I'm going to have to cut this short, because I know there are other members of the House that want to discuss other important departments.

I attended, on May 19 at the Westmark, a meeting with the National Energy Board and it was with regard to the public review of Arctic safety and environmental offshore drilling requirements. They were doing their public consultations. At that time, I asked the Energy Board if they had taken the time and the courtesy to talk to all the Yukon First Nations — not only self-governing First Nations, but all Yukon First Nations — about the issue of offshore drilling. What dominated the discussion at that time was that the world was dealing with the disaster in the Gulf of Mexico and the spill that was happening there. People had a visualization of what an oil disaster can do when it happens in water.

One of the questions that I have: is the minister's department participating in any of the decision-making processes with regard to having a plan for an Arctic spill off our northern waters? If so, what level of participation is that? Is it at the Premier's level? Is it at the minister's level? Dealing with the Arctic and dealing with British Petroleum, ConocoPhillips — these oil companies that have more disposable money than the Government of Canada. On our offshore, we have Exxon Mobil. These guys are right next door. The potential and the possible catastrophe that would happen if we have an Arctic oil spill is real and it's of concern. That is part of my riding, and so it is in regard to spill response in the Arctic Ocean. If there is any exploration or development of the oil and gas resources offshore, what participation is the minister having?

I've also got questions with regard to the wolf management strategy. At what stage is it? Are we going to see documents tabled within the Legislature?

I've actually got a story and I'm glad the Member for Kluane is here, because I didn't get a chance yet, but one of his constituents, I believe, Bob Hayes, wrote a book about wolves. I've got a top-10 list of some of the most beautiful things that



I've seen in the Yukon environment. I won't say what number this one is, but one time Mr. Hayes and I were flying over Kluane National Park when I was a park warden for Vuntut National Park. In Kluane, they have these crystal-blue lakes; they're just absolutely beautiful. We were flying over with a helicopter and there were six pitch-black wolves swimming across this crystal-blue lake. We had to circle around twice and that's etched in my memory forever. That's one of the most beautiful things that I have ever seen in this wonderful territory of ours. I just wanted to let the Member for Kluane know that I appreciate his riding and living and working within his riding and the people there — it's a wonderful place to live and work.

Update on the wolf management plan — I've got the state of the environment report questions; I've got trapping questions; I've got bison management questions; I've got elk and tick questions; I've got special management area questions; and I've got spruce bark beetle question.

But, you know, we're running of time, honourable member and Minister of Environment, but we'll have to leave that for another day, because I haven't heard any answers to these issues in seven months.

I'll conclude my remarks by, once again, wishing the new minister well. If there is anything that I can do to help in advancing the department's goals and objectives, I'm a phone call or a text away. I wish the minister well in leading his department and making our environment in this territory continually beautiful, especially within the grandeur of north Yukon, which I and the Member for Klondike represent.

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** I won't — of course, recognizing that members of this House, I'm sure, wish to debate other departments and other matters, I will be brief here in my response to the member opposite, because he raises a number of points, ranging from climate change impacts and adaptations to wolves, bison, wildlife matters and water — any number of things that I could talk about for the next 20 minutes, but I will try to be brief and answer a few of his questions in regard to offshore drilling.

Madam Chair, it is an issue that the Energy, Mines and Resources is the lead; Environment provides support wherever we can.

There are some interesting dynamics in terms of the Beaufort Sea, and the relationship between Canada and the United States. There is an ongoing border dispute about the nature of our border between the United States and Canada. In the Beaufort Sea, it is based on an interpretation of a treaty from 1825, which describes the border between Canada and the United States, then Great Britain and Russia, as extending as far as the frozen ocean. That has been interpreted very differently vis-à-vis the recent United Nations treaty on the Law of the Sea. The debate is over a pie-shaped region in the Beaufort Sea. Basically, the dispute is that Canada argues, and Yukon supports Canada, that the border extends north from the 141<sup>st</sup> parallel all the way north, whereas the Americans argue the point that it is an equal distance between points. I will not get into that.

The wolf conservation management plan is a plan that was developed jointly by the Fish and Wildlife Management Board and Environment Yukon. The plan addresses concerns over the

management of wolves in Yukon through a small scale, local approach to management and inclusion of First Nation responsibilities. The old plan — the 1992 plan — was significantly outdated. It didn't recognize First Nation final agreements. It needed to be updated, so that was undertaken by the previous government, at the direction of the previous Minister of Environment, who is now the Minister of Community Services.

Some excellent work has been done by the Fish and Wildlife Management Board to date. I have met with them twice to discuss the matter. Its public consultation on this concluded this summer. It was extended twice, I believe, at the request of First Nations, for additional input. So we entertained that request and extended the period of consultation by one month on two occasions — so, by two months total. The 2011 plan is significantly different from the 1992 plan. It recognizes the roles and responsibilities of First Nations and the Inuvialuit, as set out in their final agreements. It calls for conserving and managing wolves using local involvement. It recommends against aerial control as a management tool, which is something that is quite outdated, in my opinion, but is something that can still be considered based on science.

A recommendation on the plan will be submitted to the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board. It has been submitted now. I can confirm that. It was submitted, I believe, last week when I met with the board, which now, as per the *Umbrella Final Agreement*, triggers a timeline, to which I as minister am bound to respond. From my interpretation of the *Umbrella Final Agreement*, I understand that's 60 days, with the opportunity for the minister to extend it by 30 days, if necessary.

In my opinion, having reviewed the plan, it's a good body of work, and it's one that is generally supported by RRCs and by many stakeholders. There is still some work to be done by department officials. Department officials will be meeting with technical staff from First Nations to discuss some technical matters. But I anticipate they will be able to address any issues. So it's something that I will be moving forward on within the prescribed time.

I'm trying to recall other questions the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin had, but they elude me. So if I've forgotten any, I would ask the member to ask again. He asked a lot of questions, so I kind of lost track. But I think that answers his question about offshore drilling, wolves — I believe he asked about bison, but I'm not sure what the question was. So if he could repeat the question, I could entertain a response.

**Mr. Tredger:** I, too, would like to congratulate the minister. Environmental stewardship is important to all Yukoners. I went door-to-door, and it was one of the most important things raised. I thank the senior staff for coming and helping us and I congratulate the Environment department for the great work that they're doing.

I share my colleague's concern that the funding for the Department of Environment hasn't kept up with what other departments are receiving, and we'll be following that and looking at it closely. I had a couple of questions around that. Have there been any services moved from one department to

the other, or a reorganization that would account for this drop in funding?

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** As I said to the member's colleague, the department budget allocations don't reflect a hierarchy of any sort. All departments do very good work, and we support them all. Because one department is funded more money overall than another has no reflection on the good work they do. We believe in integrated resource management. That means departments work together collaboratively; they are not competitive. The Department of Education doesn't butt heads with the Department of Environment. They work together. An example is through the Education budget, you will see some environmental stewardship positions funded. So there are examples where departments work together, and the same is with the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and my department. The same is with the Department of Highways and Public Works and my department — and all departments. They work together collaboratively to ensure that we are adequate stewards of the economy.

You noted the Energy, Mines and Resources increase in budget. Of course, that's due to increased reclamation for type 2 mines. That fluctuates and is the legacy of — well, this is why we had devolution, basically — for Yukon to take over the control of our own resources so that decisions aren't made in Ottawa about natural resources. Anyway, type 2 sites are a matter for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, and I'll let him explain that. I think it is important to note that the department is very capable of doing the very good work that they outlined in their strategic plan, and they have been very successful in a number of areas in implementing their strategic plan.

They do excellent work, and I'm very proud to be the Minister of Environment. I look forward to working with staff to implement our platform, which of course includes a number of items related to protecting the environment.

**Mr. Tredger:** I don't believe I mentioned EMR, but what I was getting at is — not that there was competition, but what I've seen of the Department of Environment and the personnel working there, I've been very, very impressed. One of the things, as a manager, I've noticed is often people who are very professional will come up with ideas. It's important that we as policy makers and that we as a government ensure that there is funding so that the ideas of our very professional staff can be expounded on and they can fulfill their departmental objectives. It certainly wasn't a slight on the department officials.

I had a further question. The Department of Environment is responsible, I believe — and you could correct me if I'm wrong and I'm sure you would — is for baseline data collection.

Where I see that working is when we are looking toward land use management plans. It is very important that we have a lot of baseline data collection, so that we are able to make these land use plans with some amount of foresight and planning. Can you tell me in what areas the Department of Environment is looking at the baseline data and how that is playing out?

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** Over the past few years, the previous government has significantly invested in increasing baseline data, in increasing dollars for inventory of fish and wildlife throughout the territory. The department has done a significant job implementing that work with the increased funding they have received over the years. Increasing the amount of baseline data is, of course, important for multi-year planning.

You have to know what you are dealing with in terms of wildlife and fish species populations in order to best manage them. That baseline data is of course integral and that's why I am very happy with the increases made by the previous ministers in this respect. It's enabled department officials to do significantly more work than they were able to in years past.

During the current fiscal year, Environment Yukon has conducted 26 inventory projects in support of fish, wildlife and habitat management planning. Inventory projects support Environment Yukon's ongoing population monitoring and harvest management programs. Summaries for projects done in the last three years and those currently underway are available on Environment Yukon's website. The Fish and Wildlife branch also produced a highlights report which provides an overview of activities. If the member opposite wants to review those online, he certainly can. To give him a bit of a brief overview of some of those undertakings with regard to caribou, we do a population-monitoring movements and habitat-use and impacts of the Aishihik wood bison herd. The Aishihik and Kluane caribou herds are considered in that; South Nahanni and Coal River caribou herds, which is of course done in collaboration with Parks Canada and the Government of Northwest Territories. We monitor the Finlayson caribou herd, Southern Lakes caribou herd, Ethel Lake caribou herd, Tatchun caribou herd, Chisana caribou herd, and Caribou fall composition surveys, which are essentially rut counts.

We monitor the Fortymile caribou herd. We do location monitoring of the Hart River caribou herd and the Porcupine caribou herd harvest monitoring and hunter education, which I went into at length previously when the member opposite was out of the room. I had an exchange with the member for Vuntut Gwitchin about the good work done to date on the Porcupine caribou management plan and implementation plan. With regard to moose, we have conducted the Mayo Moose survey and, recently, the M'Clintock moose census survey.

When I toured the department as a new minister, a number of the wildlife staff was not there because they were all out conducting the study of moose in the M'Clintock area. The Faro moose early winter census, which was, thankfully funded by the department of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources through the mine reclamation unit. The Burwash moose early winter Census was conducted in partnership with the Kluane First Nation and Parks Canada. With regard to sheep, there was a sheep survey in the Ruby, Aishihik and Sifton Ranges, which was in partnership with the Kluane First Nation. There was the Dall sheep survey in the Anvil Range, once again cost-shared with the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources mine reclamation unit.

We continue to monitor elk and manage issues around ticks. Overall, basically about \$1 million dollars is spent in

wildlife inventory work. So we've spent significant funds on providing the baseline data. This baseline data is important for us in terms of our multi-year planning and going into the future with plans, because we as a government need to understand population baseline data and species data to make adequate decisions. So I hope that's answered the member opposite's questions. If he has any more questions about ungulate management or any other species, I'd be happy to go into it in detail.

**Mr. Barr:** Congratulations to the honourable member opposite on his appointment to his position as Environment minister. The environment is, too, one area that is very dear to my heart. When I think of it — I hunt with my grandsons, and fish, and I grew up doing a lot of on-the-land activities.

Where I come from in northern Ontario, so-called experts of the day always said that lake — Nipissing, for example — “Don't worry about it; we're just going to keep pumping stuff into it and it's such a big lake, there will be no problems.” Well, within 20 years, you couldn't eat the fish. I came up to the Yukon and really see and hope that we don't make the same mistakes that I've seen happen in other areas of our country.

One of the issues in my riding is — the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin spoke of the flood in the Southern Lakes area in 2007. The last couple of years, there have been studies going on with the water levels there because they want to raise it another 30 centimetres. In the last couple of weeks I was at a meeting in the Southern Lakes/Marsh Lake area and listened to all the studies that have been going on about the Southern Lakes. As I understand it, at the end of the day, the studies that they've been doing — as you know or you may not know — in this Southern Lakes area you have Marsh Lake, Tagish, Taku, Windy Arm, Nares and Bennett.

At high water levels of the year, that becomes one system — one lake, one level. When the runoff starts, Marsh Lake drops and the other areas, they stay up. There is a sill effect that happens and the water stays in the back end toward the Carcross area, but empties out into Marsh Lake. One of my concerns is that in these last two years of studies — so they can best deal with the wetlands of the area, with the animals and with the people who use that system in all of the areas — they are not studying past the Six Mile River. They are studying around Marsh Lake and then they go to the Six Mile River at Tagish. They have not been studying the levels and the groundwater saturation levels that flow between Bennett and Nares, and the low-lying areas of the homes in Nares in the airport area.

Those particular areas are tourism and the White Pass building — where our tourist information centre was. They can't be in there now because of the water levels. There's mould in those areas. At the hangar — that residence there — they have had to put in their own berms to increase the protection of the property there. I would like this minister to commit, when we do a study of the Southern Lakes, not just to do one end of it. If we're going to do a full, informative study, to see how this is going to affect the plants, the people, the erosion, the drinking water levels — because the septic beds flood and

it affects the wells — will this minister commit to implementing a full study of that whole area?

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** Earlier today, I mentioned to the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin that I'm not a biologist, and I'd like to add that I'm also not a hydrologist. I don't have the significant technical understanding of hydrology the member opposite seems to have. But I do know that the issues surrounding the levels of lakes on the downside of dams as an issue that YDC/YEC deals with in conjunction with their water licence, which is distributed by the Water Board, which falls under ECO. Of course, the Water Board is an independent body and issues its licences independently. It's something that I can take under advisement. I encourage the member to comment on the next water licence application for YEC if he has concerns about the water levels.

In regard to the 2007 flooding of the Southern Lakes, particularly Marsh Lake, my family has a cabin in the area. I was affected; I share the member's concerns about the flood. It was a pretty terrible flood that caused significant damage to property, but it was one where I thought Yukoners did a good job of coming together and dealing with it. I know a number of folks from Whitehorse took time off from work or found time in their own time to go out and fill sandbags and create barriers to prevent property damage getting any worse. It was something where I was very happy with the response from Yukoners.

With regard to the member's question, I would relay to him that it's an issue between YDC/YEC and their water licence through the independent Yukon Water Board.

**Mr. Barr:** I am going to cut my other question short. I would like for us to be able to move on into other areas, and I would like that we could spend more time in the future to discuss our budgets more thoroughly.

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** I would like to just add that there is no Southern Lakes water study that we in the department are aware of, but of course the department does provide some information in regard to flood planning and predictions based on snow levels and forecasting of melt and runoff. That was the case in 2007 when we had a flood. It was based on significant snowfall and rapid melt and resulted in a flood. With regard to the member's earlier question, I just want to add to that as well.

I'm getting the signal from the members opposite that they would like to move on to different departments, so I'll take the opportunity to quickly wish my constituents in Copperbelt North a merry Christmas, and a merry Christmas to the members of the Assembly.

**Chair:** Is there any further debate?

Seeing none, we'll proceed line by line.

**Mr. Elias:** Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 52, Department of Environment, cleared or carried, as required.

#### **Unanimous consent re deeming all lines in Vote 52, Department of Environment, cleared or carried**

**Chair:** Unanimous consent of the Committee has been requested to deem all lines in Vote 52, Department of Environment, cleared or carried, as required. Are you agreed?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Chair:** Unanimous consent has been granted.

***On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures***

***Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$288,000 agreed to***

***On Capital Expenditures***

***Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$196,000 agreed to***

***Department of Environment agreed to***

**Chair:** Would the Committee like to take a break?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Chair:** We will break for 15 minutes.

*Recess*

**Chair:** Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before the Committee is Vote 54, Tourism and Culture.

**Department of Tourism and Culture — *continued***

**Hon. Mr. Nixon:** Before I do get started again, I'd like to wish everyone a merry Christmas, including my constituents and the hard-working people in *Hansard*, who may go unnoticed far more often than not.

As I said the other day, I'm very excited to be part of a team that does so much to promote Yukon. At this time, I would also like to wish every Yukoner a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

As I prepared for today, I reflected on how these budgets we vote on here in this Assembly translate into real-world results. The budget before us is a part of a larger package. I feel the context is important, as we prepare for the debate today. I thought back over things in previous budgets and how they influenced the tourism and culture sector of our society. I would like to offer a few examples.

Territorial tourism marketing campaigns: the pan-northern marketing campaign initiative was between all three northern territories during and after the Canada Winter Games. The campaign marketed to key gateway cities of Toronto, Vancouver, Edmonton and Calgary. The total investment was \$5 million: \$2 million from Yukon, \$1.5 million from each of Northwest Territories and Nunavut. It involved national television advertising, placement in newspapers and magazines and the development of the Look Up North website.

The pan-northern marketing campaign of \$3.5 million over four years through joint application to CanNor to market Canada's north into southern Canada. It secured additional overseas marketing of \$3.5 million over four years through CanNor to market Yukon to overseas visitors. It identified annual core funding of \$500,000 for "Destination: Yukon" marketing in the key gateway cities and to strategically leverage the success of events such as Hockey Day in Canada.

Olympics delegation and participation: our government made an investment in the Olympics as a contributing partner, which provided an opportunity to profile the Yukon during the games. The total investment of Tourism and Culture was \$2.6 million in the 2009-10 budget. As an incoming minister, it is

helpful for me to see how these funds were expended and to see the results that they have had on Yukon's tourism and culture sector. The Yukon delegation included over 100 participants, 91 of whom were artists and cultural performers. I am given to understand that this investment continues to pay dividends to Yukoners.

The Old Fire Hall project is a partnership developed between the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce, the Yukon Arts Centre and Yukon government. Following a one-year pilot project, the Yukon government made a three-year commitment in the 2009-10 budget for \$150,000 annually to the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce to provide O&M for the venue. The Yukon Arts Centre is providing the expertise to manage the facility. This project helps meet the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce goal of revitalizing the downtown core, and has become a centre for cultural events and meetings. It is well received in the community as a progressive and responsible partnership. Again, I think this is a good example of how government and this sector of the economy can work cooperatively.

The previous Yukon Party government provided an arts fund increase — a permanent increase — to the arts funding program in September of 2007. Total investment from Tourism and Culture was \$567,500, bringing the total funding to \$2.65 million annually. Specific increases include \$100,000 to establish a touring artist fund to provide support for artists to travel outside of the Yukon; \$150,000 to increase the Dawson City Arts Society, bringing their total funding to \$400,000 annually; an increase of \$75,000 to the artist in the school program — to fund artists to enter the schools and work with students; and \$242,000 to the Yukon arts funding program, which provides support for annual and ongoing programs in the Yukon.

This support was well received in the arts community and those supportive of the arts, as it has increased the investment in the arts to the highest amount ever in the territory. High-level artists, in particular, are benefiting from the specific investment in the touring artist fund.

Partnering with the Tourism Industry Association Yukon, the Yukon government adopted an industry-led approach to the marketing through the Senior Marketing Committee to provide strategic advice to Tourism and Culture on appropriate marketing expenditures. Earlier today I was able to meet with the Senior Marketing Committee, and I am grateful for the advice they generate. This advice has resulted in numerous initiatives that are beneficial to the territory's tourism industry, including the Tourism cooperative marketing fund, the Destination: Yukon campaign, the Travel Yukon website, and a focus on domestic marketing.

The other day, the Member for Klondike raised some matters with me after the debate, including why the government decided to leave out the internationally recognized brand, "the Klondike", out of the government's tourism model. Our history, including the world famous Klondike Gold Rush, remains a key attribute of Yukon's brand, along with our stunning geography, incredible wildlife, First Nations, and our people and culture.

Marketing “Destination: Yukon” remains industry-led, market-driven and research-based. As I work with the department, I find that I hear the phrase a lot — and I mean a lot, probably six times over lunch today. Let me just repeat it: industry-led, market-driven and research-based.

Our partnership with the Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon’s Senior Marketing Committee, on which the chair of the Klondike Visitors Association sits as a member, ensures that we position “Destination: Yukon” in a manner that reflects the expectations of our visitors, as determined through research, and delivers value for our industry and all stakeholders. Dawson City and the Klondike — always and always — will play a significant role in what the Yukon has to offer as a travel destination, as reflected in our promotions and tools, like the [www.travel yukon.com](http://www.travel yukon.com) website and *Yukon Vacation Planner*. These initiatives have been well-received by industry, as government has demonstrated in its responsiveness.

I want to turn my attention to the museum strategy and increase to museums funding, as I will mention it again in a few moments when we get to the \$21,000 revote in support of community museums through the museums assistance program.

In the first term, Yukon government developed a Yukon Museums Strategy with stakeholders to plan for sustaining and cultivating Yukon’s museums. One result of this study was the development of the museums advisory committee.

In May 2007, the Yukon government announced an increase of \$150,000 to the museums contribution program. A further adjustment of funds to meet needs — a total of \$240,000 — was added to the program. This brought a total funding support for Yukon museums to \$1.28 million. This increased funding to the museums contribution program was forwarded to the museums advisory committee for adjudication. The recommendations resulted in increases for all Yukon museums and a minimum threshold that allowed the retention of permanent staff at all venues.

This investment was well-received in the heritage community. The development of winter tourism is a fast-growing initiative here in the Yukon and, in fact, I do not think anyone has made note of it today, but the new chairlift at the ski hill opened today. Expansion of the tourism season is of huge importance to the development of the industry. Yukon government has placed strategic importance on this development and increased support to local icons for winter tourism in the Yukon Quest and Sourdough Rendezvous Society. In 2004-05, the total investment in Sourdough Rendezvous was raised to \$50,000 from \$15,000.

**Some Hon. Member:** (Inaudible)

#### Point of order

**Chair:** Mr. Silver, on a point of order.

**Mr. Silver:** I am sorry to interrupt, Madam Chair. I believe the minister had already made his introductory statements the last day and it was my turn on the floor.

**Chair:** Mr. Cathers.

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** On the point of order, the Chair recognized the Minister of Tourism, and he is, to my under-

standing, continuing his introductory remarks, which is very much in keeping with standard practice.

**Chair:** Mr. Tredger, on the point of order.

**Mr. Tredger:** On the point of order, I thought we had agreed at the House Leaders’ meeting this morning that Mr. Silver had the floor when we were talking about Tourism last time, and that he would be the first speaker.

#### Chair’s ruling

**Chair:** Based on *Hansard* from the last time we were in discussion on Vote 54, Mr. Nixon had the floor. We were not aware that there was an arrangement that was made at the House Leaders’ meeting, and that is why Mr. Nixon opened this afternoon.

In fact, Mr. Nixon, if you have already made these remarks, perhaps you could move on to new territory.

**Hon. Mr. Nixon:** Thank you, Madam Chair. These are indeed new remarks, but to humour the opposition, I will wrap up.

The initiative was developed jointly — and I’m actually talking now about the decade of sport and culture, which has become Culture Quest. The initiative was developed jointly with Community Services in the first term to provide support for the development of sports and culture leading up to Canada Winter Games. Due to the success of the program, Tourism and Culture has continued to invest in Culture Quest, looking toward the 2010 Olympics and beyond. The fund is separate, as it is a special project, and funding that is intended to cultivate new artists and projects that have difficulty accessing funding through the established funds. Over half of the projects funded through Culture Quest were showcased at the Canada Winter Games.

**Mr. Silver:** I thank the member opposite for his indulgence to the needs of our communities.

I’m new to this process, as are a lot of the members here today. I’m not here to play politics. I’m here to get results for my community.

I bring a new approach to this party as noticed today. I hope that it is appreciated that this can all change if we don’t see the results that we’re looking for. I’m not for the Liberal Party, but actually for the people of the Yukon. So in the spirit of working together, I made a decision earlier this week to give the Minister of Tourism my notes. I gave him my questions that I’ll be asking today, my intent being information sharing. I’m very interested in where the strategy is going to take us. I will caution the minister that these questions are from the people of the Klondike, not necessarily just from my party. They represent people of all political stripes. They don’t need a rundown of politics and procedures and policies; they want to know where we are and where we are heading. These questions are from professionals in the field of tourism and culture and they deserve the straight goods. So I just wanted to preface this and be on the record.

In general, my community worries about the dwindling numbers of summer workers. Take for example Dawson City Music Festival. Currently the promotion of Dawson City Music Festival is word of mouth, reference being given from previous

years, volunteers and performers who may be the only recruitment that exists. DCMF creates a strong media buzz through press coverage and also through the artists who play the festival and then go home and tell their fan base.

People come to town and work in the service industry because of a desire to be involved with the festival, or because they have heard that because of the festival, Dawson is a cool place to be. As all summer community sectors can agree, Dawson City Music Festival's volunteers have picked up the void left after tent city was closed. I would seek territorial assistance with the songwriter-in-residence program. Musicians from the international scene are promoting this program as they go on and perform in other cities, sharing their wonderful experiences, working their crafts in the winter in Dawson. It is sold as a magical experience. With a financial commitment from YTG, our community can produce more winter shows, which act as marketing engines for the tourism industry. A great example would be if you went on to [www.laurabarrett.exclaim.ca](http://www.laurabarrett.exclaim.ca).

Could the minister commit to promoting the songwriter-in-residence program?

**Hon. Mr. Nixon:** I do thank the member opposite for providing me with his questions in advance. I do appreciate the gesture, and while we sit on opposite sides of this House, it is possible to work in cooperation to achieve our shared goal of accountability to all Yukoners.

We do support a wide range of arts, culture and tourism programs and activities in Dawson and around the territory. It is important to be aware of that and be aware of the budgetary impact of taking on new commitments. Furthermore, there is a budgetary process to follow. In the interest of due diligence and fiscal prudence, I hope it's understood that I won't be making new spending commitments while we are here to debate the 2011-12 supplementary budget.

I will, however, always be willing to listen to any organization in the culture, heritage or tourism sectors and consider their thoughts and ideas. I won't always be able to provide new funding, but I am confident that we can achieve great success by working together. I will also point out that there are programs available to which organizations can apply. The community development fund is one. The federal government has the CanNor fund. There are other funding options out there as well, which I would invite the Dawson City Music Festival to consider, if they have not already done so.

**Mr. Silver:** I do appreciate the minister's answers to the question and those are the straight goods. As a past president of the Dawson City Music Festival, I know what the process is every year that we go through as far as funding. We do apply for a wide variety of different funding options. I look forward to working with the minister to kind of streamline some of these concepts. It takes an awful lot of administrative time to go through this process year after year, when we know that it's just a rubber stamp in the end. We pretty much hope that we're going to be getting this funding because this is a huge festival and it brings millions of dollars into the economy, so I assume that we're going to have a continued relationship with the minister as far as these commitments and grants. We would like to see, like I say, a streamlined process for that.

There are tons of good answers and good suggestions from the people working in the field in Dawson. Here's a great example: this is one of the first years that the festival had to be given permission to pick their own media in the Department of Tourism and Culture funded media proposal. The Department of Tourism and Culture wanted to spend money on sending up a writer from the bike touring magazine *Get Out There* Local Dawson City Music Festival producer at the time, Tim Jones, instead picked Sean Michaels from one of Canada's most popular mp3 blogs: [www.saidthegramophone.com](http://www.saidthegramophone.com). He also flew in Vish Khanna from *Exclaim!* magazine, CBC 3, and the *Kitchener Waterloo Record*. This has resulted in media coverage that is far reaching and targeted to music fans, as opposed to bike touring magazine fans — affluent people seeking cool cultural places to visit.

There are many people who questioned the support of the Department of Tourism in my community. There is little funding or support from the territorial government in developing authentic attractions. These are not my words, necessarily; these are from the industry. It seems most of the work needed to sustain festivals and other tourism-centred organizations is being done by volunteers and societies within Dawson itself. These big-draw festivals and events contribute financially and culturally to the community, but lack support from the government for production development.

The current tourism product development mandate is to work with the Yukon's tourism industry to meet emerging and existing market demands. Efforts are currently focused primarily on delivering awareness workshops to increase industry knowledge, and supporting industry stakeholders through their product development initiatives, including projects identified, best practices code of conduct and industry educational presentations with broad benefits to the Yukon tourism industry.

I suggest this sector would better serve the communities' existing institutions and festivals if, rather than reviewing and developing workshops, they contribute financially and allow local control over decisions that affect local communities. For example, the Palace Grand could be assessed by the federal agency CanNor, the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency. Someone needs to be hired to consolidate all of that information out there and develop a plan for this underutilized facility. Local institutes like KIAC would be happy to facilitate this process, but need the financial support of the Yukon government.

Other issues facing DCMF is the current government's approach to cultural tourism. There are currently no programs that cover not-for-profit organizations. Tourism Yukon's current product development partnership program does feasibility studies for project-ready funding, but does not fund not-for-profits that are not creating commercial, export-ready products in the traditional sense. I suggest capitalizing on monies already spent on things like First Nation artists who go down to Olympic Game programs.

By developing scheduled events showcasing these talented ambassadors or programming youth-drawn artists, if the Weakerthans can sell out a much larger Yukon Arts Centre in Whitehorse, think of the potential for the Palace Grand.

My question would be: what programs cover not-for-profit organizations?

**Hon. Mr. Nixon:** The member opposite asked a couple of different questions in there, so I'll respond to the last one first and then I'll get into the question he had about support of the Department of Tourism and Culture and funding.

He asked about what programs cover the NGOs. As the member is probably well aware, the NGOs are eligible for all of the Tourism branch's funding programs, tourism cooperative marketing fund and product development partnership program. As well, NGOs are also eligible for a number of funding programs available through the Department of Economic Development. Organizations would be advised to contact the departments directly for program details.

The department continues to work closely with the Klondike Visitors Association and the Town of Dawson City on several ongoing initiatives. The department promotes Dawson City and the Klondike as an iconic Yukon experience in its marketing collateral, consumer campaigns, trade marketing and media relations. Dawson City tourism-related businesses and organizations were approved by the tourism cooperative marketing fund for over \$102,000 in funding support for 2010-11 fiscal year, and over \$68,000 in year to date. The department is engaged in discussions with the KVA to strike a letter of agreement to work together on a number of marketing initiatives in the fiscal year 2012-13. The Dawson City Klondike region, including the Dempster Highway, benefits from the majority of travel, the media tours numbering 38 in this fiscal year alone. North American media have done 23 and international media 15. The deputy minister and/or the director of Tourism attend the monthly meetings as often as they can of the KVA Board of Directors.

Marketing unit staff has offered to attend the KVA's Marketing and Events Committee's meeting. The chair of the KVA currently sits on the Senior Marketing Committee of the Tourism Industry Association of Yukon, and you're well aware of that.

Specifically regarding Dawson attractions, the Department of Tourism and Culture is very open, as I've mentioned before, to hearing from KVA and all Dawson operators and residents, and we are always willing to listen to new ideas and perspectives. That was one of the reasons why I went to Dawson just a couple of weeks after I was appointed as minister. It was to get on the ground and talk to people and be able to put a face to the name, not only the person, but the organization as well. It gives me a better understanding of who I'm talking to and what their needs are. I think it just simplifies the process a little bit.

In recent years, we've been very responsible — well, responsible, but very responsive to ideas emanating out of Dawson, and have worked and continue to work with the people of Dawson on exploring. We have been very supportive of the work Dawson has done on the concept of world heritage designation for the Klondike. These kinds of initiatives require community consensus to move forward, but we've been fully engaged and would be ready to stay involved should the community agree that it is the right thing for Dawson. We have heard from the Klondike Placer Miners Association that there

is a real interest in establishing a facility to display some of the fascinating paleontology discoveries that have come out of the gold fields.

As I mentioned last week, I did have the opportunity to tour the paleontology and archaeology unit at 133 Industrial Road. It is absolutely fascinating. I do not know if you have been there, but I would recommend that everyone here get an opportunity to go and check it out. This could be a great attraction for local residents in Dawson and visitors alike, as well as a centre for scientific research and a means to recognize the contribution that the placer mining industry has made to the field of paleontology. While it is an idea, and it is in the very early stages, we have agreed to undertake an examination of the business case for a facility like this. Our record in working cooperatively in a partnership with the people of Dawson City is something that the department is very, very proud of. Thank you.

**Mr. Silver:** I only have one more question left for the minister, and I would like to start by just saying that I hope we're not sending the wrong message here — that we're not grateful for the funding that we do currently get in Dawson. We do get an awful lot of funding. I think we apply for an awful lot of funding, and we get what we deserve a lot of times. But at the same time all we're asking for is that opportunity to work for or with the minister and be able to share our vision of Dawson with the minister and his department.

I want to extend an invitation for the minister to come to the Dawson City Music Festival, and be my guest there next year. We probably have an opening for serving martinis on the deck, as the Hon. Larry Bagnell was the member who used to be the guy serving those martinis. I believe there will be a position open.

I'd like to also comment that we appreciate the work the previous minister has done, the Member for Whitehorse West. We've seen her face in our brochure every year, and we appreciate the funding she gave us. Once again, we're just looking for cooperation as we move forward.

This last quote and comment is from the Dawson City Music Festival — not the current producer, but the previous producer, Tim Jones. He's talking about the contributions, saying that DCMF's self-generated revenues were over 70 percent in 2009.

The government needs to spend less on feasibility studies and more on instituting funding for local programming. So I think that's one of my key issues that I'd like to work with you on. Staffing is the biggest need in Dawson City, quite obviously. The marketing budgets of KIAC and SOVA and Dawson City Music Festival are trivial. This is due to the fact that there is no staff to implement a marketing budget, even if it did exist, so this is just information sharing.

My wish list also includes YTG funding of a marketing/development coordinator for these community organizations. Three years of funding would be all that would be needed and the position could help find funding for many things, including the actual salary for that position.

So I would like to close with one last question: can the minister speak of a commitment to marketing and development coordination in the communities?

**Hon. Mr. Nixon:** I thank the member opposite for his question. The Yukon government has a number of programs and services available to communities to assist in planning. Organizations would be advised to contact the Department of Tourism and Culture or some of the funding programs in the Department of Economic Development for details.

I will mention again that my department currently makes a very significant investment in non-profit organizations in Dawson and around the territory. In Dawson we contribute \$400,000 annually to the Dawson City Arts Society, or DCAS, and \$100,000 to the Dawson City Museum, and \$100,000 to the Dänojà Zho Cultural Centre.

I was in Dawson last month, as I mentioned before, and met with a number of organizations. I am hoping to continue the conversation with them next time I am up there visiting, perhaps in the summer at the music fest. Sometimes needs can be addressed through better coordination and communication around existing programs. Of course, this isn't the answer in all cases. Regardless, I am completely open to talking with everyone in Dawson and hearing more about the marketing/development coordinator concept.

**Mr. Barr:** I do appreciate the comments of the honourable minister regarding the supplementary budget and acknowledging what has been done, but looking at what we are going to do and what we are moving toward.

That's what I'm really interested in too. There has been a lot of great work done, and I would like to acknowledge the past minister on a lot of great things that have happened. It has been a long time, as my personal involvement with the arts — through several governments, we've continued to build. I would like to say that that's my goal: working toward not only Dawson City — because Dawson City is kind of a given. It's a great place. We know that. It's a historical place. I love going to Dawson City. There are other communities, though, and so my thought is how we can work together to promote other communities in the Yukon. I know that there are a few that are looking forward to starting their own music festivals that will have the same benefits and create monies into the economy through the arts, that will have people who are coming to visit us stay a few more days. I know there's a project in Haines Junction that has a stay-an-extra-day at the bakery there. I know Carcross is interested in doing things, as well as different communities.

Just to keep my comments short, I look forward to spending some time with the minister and building on the successes we do have.

**Hon. Mr. Nixon:** I do thank the member opposite for the question. This is something that has come up, not only since we were elected, but also during the campaign. There are people who are very envious of Whitehorse and Dawson City for the amount of attention they get. As I mentioned to the member opposite, I am open and willing to sit down and talk to stakeholders, not just in Whitehorse and Dawson City, but throughout the territory as a whole. We have an incredible op-

portunity to promote the Yukon and everything it has to offer, including looking at the winter sports, summer sports, hiking, biking and camping. We can go on for hours and hours, but it is important for us to promote the Yukon as a whole and promote each community equally.

I am looking forward to meeting with Kluane and other ridings and areas to see what can be developed. We need to have those conversations.

**Chair:** Is there any further debate?

Having concluded general debate on Vote 54, Department of Tourism and Culture, Committee of the Whole will now proceed to line-by-line consideration of Vote 54.

**Mr. Barr:** Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 54, Department of Tourism and Culture, cleared or carried, as required.

**Unanimous consent re deeming all lines in Vote 54, Department of Tourism and Culture, cleared or carried**

**Chair:** Mr. Barr has requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 54, Department of Tourism and Culture, cleared or carried, as required. Are you agreed?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Chair:** Unanimous consent has been granted.

***On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures***

***Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$1,852,000 agreed to***

***On Capital Expenditures***

***Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$1,125,000 agreed to***

***Department of Tourism and Culture agreed to***

**Chair:** The next item for consideration by Committee of the Whole is Vote 53, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources.

**Department of Energy, Mines and Resources**

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** In the interest of time, we don't need to take the standard break for officials. If members are agreeable to beginning, I will also truncate my opening remarks from what I had originally intended to give, in the interest of providing the ability for members to ask questions related to the department. There are a few things related to an overview that I will mention to aid members, both in asking questions and perhaps in following up with any issues or questions after the sitting.

The supplementary budget for the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources reflects adjustments made to the 2011-12 budget, as Energy, Mines and Resources works to manage Yukon's natural resources and ensure integrated resource and land use. For this supplementary budget, Energy, Mines and Resources requests an overall \$949,000 reduction of operation and maintenance expenditures and an increase of \$39,000 for capital expenditures.

In addition, this supplementary budget reflects an adjustment of expected revenues that EMR will collect this year with



an increase of \$1.4 million in fees related to quartz and placer mining. Energy, Mines and Resources, of course, contributes to the Yukon government's goal of building a strong, diversified economy that benefits all Yukoners. One of the key areas supporting the Yukon economy, of course, is mineral exploration and development. We're proud of the fact that our mineral industry has helped make the Yukon economy one of the best in the country and has helped the territory survive the worldwide economic downturn with actually an increase in our economy, which is a very rare thing in the world as a whole.

The Yukon's domestic product growth rate in 2011 is expected to be between three and four percent. This would be the eighth, following seven previous years of growth in real GDP. The Yukon now has the fourth lowest unemployment rate in Canada at — actually, it has been updated since my notes. I believe we're now tied for the lowest unemployment rate in Canada at five percent. Retail trade has jumped 14 percent in the past year, largely due to economic activity related to mining: mineral production from three hardrock mines that have begun operating since 2007. The mineral production value is nearly \$420 million, compared to just zero five years ago and it employs more than 650 people.

Development expenditures at the three producing mines are expected to reach \$150 million. A few details of that include the Minto mine producing 40 million pounds of copper each year, along with 30,000 ounces of gold. The Bellekeno mine is Canada's only primary silver producer and, with up to 1,000 grams of silver per tonne, is one of the highest grade silver mines in the world.

The Wolverine mine is expected to achieve full production early next year, producing lead, zinc and silver. All of these, of course, have a great future in front of them and are important to the development of the Yukon economy. In addition to these three operating mines, we have another four major mines in the permitting stage, which, together, could employ an additional 1,000 people, providing additional economic growth and opportunity for Yukon people in businesses. There are also three more major mining projects in feasibility.

Clearly, the Yukon's mineral sector is having a positive impact on our territory and contributing to the quality of life of all Yukoners. As we indicated and emphasized in the election and in our election platform, that does, of course, create challenges associated with a growing economy and with a strong resource sector. But considering the situation that much of the rest of the world is in — looking to the United States or Europe as examples of the worldwide economic downturn — it is much better to be in the situation that the Yukon is in — to have the challenges associated with a strong economy rather than the challenges associated with a weak or collapsing economy or to be in the situation of some European countries, which are at risk of defaulting on their debt, and the European Union, as an entity itself, at risk of having the euro as a currency lose stability and have that entire structure fall apart.

Moving directly back to the budget itself, for the supplementary estimate, Energy, Mines and Resources operation and maintenance expenditures, as I noted, are \$94,000 less than the main estimates, bringing the revised budget to \$59.9 million. In

addition to reflecting some adjustments in each area to offset increased fuel costs, our O&M expenditures include some significant departmental initiatives. The \$412,000 O&M increase in sustainable resources includes a \$349,000 revote of funding for the Agriculture branch in anticipation of increased expenditures this year as implementation continues on a Canada-Yukon Growing Forward policy agreement. As part of the cost-sharing agreement, 60 percent of the funding, or \$209,000, will be recovered from Canada, and this adjustment has been reflected in the revenue section of the supplementary budget.

The Growing Forward program provides the means to implement programs and initiatives that support development of a profitable and sustainable Yukon agricultural industry and contribute to our goal, as emphasized in the Yukon Party election platform, of increasing local production of food and taking measures including supporting the developing of infrastructure that improves food security and facilitates access to markets.

With Growing Forward fully underway, project funding has been allocated in areas including agro-environmental initiatives, food safety, northern innovation and market and agricultural development. Growing Forward funding has been used to support the Fireweed community farmers market on the Whitehorse waterfront, develop market opportunities for farmers in the Klondike and develop community garden projects in both Dawson City and Old Crow. There are many more examples, but in the interest of time I am truncating my remarks. Individual farm operators have accessed funding to make food safety and environmental upgrades, including efficiency improvements to irrigation systems, water quality improvements, fencing to improve grazing of livestock and fencing to protect crops from predation by wildlife. These unique Yukon initiatives ensure that our sector contributes to Yukon society's priorities and is proactive in managing risks.

Another element that I would like to point to within the supplementary budget is within the sustainable resources area — an additional \$53,000 allocation for the Forest Management branch's work on forest pest management. The Forest Management branch and First Nations to mitigate the impact of the spruce bark beetle outbreak.

The funding in this budget in that area supports work by the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations to undertake clearing and regeneration work on a number of sites in the Haines Junction area. This important work reduces the risk of wildfire, restores access to areas of cultural importance and supports development of forest-based enterprises.

The largest O&M adjustment for Energy, Mines and Resources within the supplementary budget is an overall \$1.45 million reduction for the Oil and Gas and Mineral Resources division. This overall reduction includes a \$1.3-million budget adjustment for the Assessment and Abandoned Mines branch work at the Faro mine complex. Energy, Mines and Resources continues to lead efforts to address environmental issues at the Faro mine, including managing on-site operations and the long-term remediation plan development. This includes developing cost-effective approaches to protect the environment and human health and safety at the former Faro mine, while maximizing training, employment and business opportunities within the

Yukon. Based on a preliminary cost adjustment for some specific repairs on the site, the adjustment in this budget reflects an anticipated change to the Assessment and Abandoned Mines branch annual budget of approximately \$25 million. As my colleague, the Minister of Environment, noted to members earlier today, this area of money for remediation of abandoned mines is flow-through money from the federal government.

We perform that work pursuant to an arrangement with Canada so we do administer it; we manage it. The money is 100-percent recoverable from Canada and because of the nature of the different work going on at different projects, notably Faro and Mount Nansen, the actual budget allocations in this area fluctuate on a year-to-year basis, based on what projects are ongoing, when contracts start and when work is completed by contractors in this area. So this is an area that members, particularly new members of this House, will notice in future budgets. This area will be one that has significant change, both from year to year, on an annual and within yearly budgeting, depending on the work that's underway on the ground. Funding for the Faro mine complex, as I noted, is 100-percent recoverable from Canada.

Another area that I would like to point to for members in the supplementary budget is the operation and maintenance adjustment for Oil and Gas and Mineral Resources division budget also includes an increase of \$36,000 for the Yukon mining incentive program. This is a program that provides financial and technical assistance to support prospecting and grassroots exploration activities in the Yukon.

To support prospecting and grassroots exploration activities in the Yukon, this year the program made available \$570,000 to eligible prospectors and exploration companies to support a total of 34 exploration projects; 74 percent of these funds were allocated to individuals versus mining companies which had been the case in the past.

Again, what I would note is that this has been an important tool in the development of the Yukon's mineral resources. Many in the mineral sector — including Shawn Ryan, who discovered the White Gold deposit that led to a large part of our significant boom in the mining exploration activities — have credited support of YMIP for supporting the ongoing grassroots exploration or the early stage, I should say, grass-stage exploration. YMIP is administered by the Yukon Geological Survey branch.

Another area I would like to highlight is the opening of the H.S. Bostock Geological Core Library. Recently, myself and our Member of Parliament Ryan Leef and I announced the opening of that. That is a facility that will be used to provide geologists and prospectors access to rock and drill core collections in the Yukon and is a significant improvement on the facilities that existed prior to that. That money was provided through contribution from the federal government and will provide us benefit going forward, I am confident.

Moving on to capital allocations, the supplementary estimate increases the department's overall capital expenditures by \$39,000. In addition to a \$50,000 reduction in expected costs for Forest Management branch's forestry road engineering work, the adjustment contained in this supplementary budget

includes an additional allocation of \$99,000 for Corporate Services information and technology equipment and systems. This allocation is split between Forest Management branch and the Yukon Geological Survey. For both, the funding will enhance computer systems integration and allow and facilitate better utilization of current data bases in order to both provide better client services and to better enable us to manage our resources appropriately.

This supplementary budget includes some notable adjustments to Energy, Mines and Resources anticipated revenues. Revenue estimates for placer mining fees have been increased by \$10,000 and revenues from quartz mining fees and leases have been increased by \$1.4 million, to an expected total of \$2.3 million for the 2011-12 fiscal year. While that is valued by the Government of Yukon, I want to emphasize that it is on the lives of Yukoners that the increase in industry activity has the most impact. In these areas, the employment that is provided by both the placer and the quartz industries is very important to the territory and the people employed by that industry, the people who own companies in that industry and, of course, Yukoners who provide services to those industries. These operations are providing quality employment, training and business opportunities for Yukoners, both within Whitehorse and in rural Yukon, and the most positive benefits to the Yukon come from direct jobs through the service and supply sector.

It is estimated that the 140 placer mines that operated in the Yukon last year employed about 450 workers and generated roughly 600 jobs in related service and hospitality sectors. The fiscal benefit to the Yukon government is not primarily through fees or royalties, but from the income and business taxes from that sector and, of course, the overall societal benefits are through Yukoners who are employed, who are earning a living, who are able to feed their families, put their kids through college and so on and so on.

It is challenging to be successful in placer mining. Like gold prices, the price of fuel has increased dramatically in recent years. There are also increased operating costs related to more stringent federal regulation, and labour and lower-grade ground all affect the profitability of this industry. Placer mining remains a key contributor to the Yukon's economy and of course has often been referred to as the Yukon equivalent of the "family farm."

Similarly, the \$1.4 million I mentioned in quartz mining fee and lease revenue increases signals the growth of business and employment opportunities for Yukon, and over \$300 million has been spent on mineral exploration in the Yukon in 2011, marking the second year in a row Yukon's mineral industry has broken records for exploration and claim-staking.

Up until the end of October of this year, over 108,000 claims had been staked in 2011. This part of the exploration process, the physical staking of claims, is now estimated in this current year to be a \$40-million industry.

In addition to indirect employment and business opportunities, this exploration spending has provided more than 1,200 direct jobs in Yukon. This has been tremendously important for Yukon communities and provided real benefit to many Yukoners.

A final piece of the revenue section of the budget I would like to draw members' attention to is the addition of \$229,000 to the Assessment and Abandoned Mines branch with funds from the Curragh Resources environmental trust.

This fund has been transferred to the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources by the former fund trustees in recognition of the lead role the department plays in addressing the historic liabilities of the Faro mine. While a process for allocation of these funds has not yet been established, the funds will be used to support innovative approaches that help the local community build upon the opportunities created by remediation work at the Faro mine.

In conclusion, this supplementary budget provides an update on some of the government's work to build, support and appropriately manage a diversified natural resource economy that benefits all Yukoners. As this budget shows, Energy, Mines and Resources works across a wide range of resource sectors, supporting diverse economic growth and opportunities and has a very important role as one of the primary regulators — it is fair to say, the primary regulator — of activities both on the land base and use of our natural resources and development of our natural resources in a responsible manner.

While the hardrock sector, the quartz sector, of the mining industry is booming, we are also seeing the rise of significant opportunities in agriculture and forestry. For the benefit of all Yukoners, we will continue our efforts toward strengthening Yukon's investment climate, encouraging private sector investment, providing regulatory certainty and supporting the diversification of the Yukon economy.

In conclusion, Madam Chair, I appreciate the work that the staff of Energy, Mines and Resources do to support our economy, to manage the economy. There are also a number of significant platform commitments and announcements from the 2011 election that the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources is tasked with delivering, either solely or with the assistance of other departments or in a supporting role to other departments. I want to thank the department staff for the good work they do.

I believe time is short but I would be remiss if I did not draw attention specifically to one key area of platform commitments in which Energy, Mines and Resources plays a very important role. That relates to the development of land, especially for the purposes of housing but also for other areas, including agriculture and tourism and other sectors of the commercial economy.

The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, of course, through our Agriculture branch, our Lands Management branch and through the Land Planning branch, plays a significant role in doing this management. We are also responsible for regional land use planning, as the lead government department for conducting that work. These matters are all very important to the Yukon economy and again, in the brief time that I have left, I would like to point to specific examples, including the commitment that the Yukon government made —

#### **Termination of sitting as per Standing Order 76(1)**

**Chair:** Order please.

The time has reached 5:00 p.m. on this, the ninth day of the 2011 fall sitting. Members will be aware that the House gave unanimous consent on December 1, 2011, to this fall sitting closing on today's date. Also the House at that time agreed by unanimous consent that the provisions of Standing Order 76 should apply on this date in the same fashion as if this closing day had been established pursuant to Standing Order 75.

Standing Order 76(1) states, "On the day that the Assembly has reached the maximum number of days allocated for that Sitting pursuant to Standing Order 75, the Chair of the Committee of the Whole, if the Assembly is in Committee of the Whole at the time, shall interrupt proceedings at 5:00 p.m. and, with respect to each Government Bill before Committee that the Government House Leader directs to be called, shall:

"(a) put the question on any amendment then before the Committee;

"(b) put the question, without debate or amendment, on a motion moved by a Minister that the bill, including all clauses, schedules, title and preamble, be deemed to be read and carried,

"(c) put the question on a motion moved by a Minister that the bill be reported to the Assembly, and,

"(d) when all bills have been dealt with, recall the Speaker to the Chair to report on the proceedings of the Committee."

It is the duty of the Chair to now conduct the business of Committee of the Whole in a manner directed by Standing Order 76(1). The Chair would now ask the Government House Leader to indicate the government bills now before Committee of the Whole, which should be called.

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** Madam Chair, the government directs that Bill No. 2, entitled *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2010-11*, and Bill No. 3, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2011-12*, be called at this time.

#### **Bill No. 2: *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2010-11* — continued**

**Chair:** The Committee will now deal with Bill No. 2, entitled *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2010-11*.

The Committee will now deal with Bill No. 2, entitled *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2010-11*.

The Chair will now recognize Mr. Pasloski as the sponsor of Bill No. 2 for the purpose of moving a motion pursuant to Standing Order 76(1)(b).

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** I move that all clauses, schedules and the title of Bill No. 2, entitled *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2010-11*, be deemed to be read and carried.

**Chair:** It has been moved by Mr. Pasloski that all clauses, schedules and the title of Bill No. 2, entitled *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2010-11*, be deemed to be read and carried. As no debate or amendment is permitted, I shall now put the question. Are you agreed?

*Motion agreed to*

*On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures*

*Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$4,090,000 agreed to*

*On Capital Expenditures*

*Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$2,000 agreed to*

*Clause 1 and 2 agreed to*  
*Schedules A and B agreed to*  
*Title agreed to*

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** Madam Chair, I move that you report Bill No. 2, entitled *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2010-11*, without amendment.

**Chair:** It has been moved by Mr. Pasloski that Bill No. 2, entitled *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2010-11*, be reported without amendment. As no debate or amendment is permitted, I shall now put the question. Are you agreed?

*Motion agreed to*

**Bill No. 3: Second Appropriation Act, 2011-12 — continued**

**Chair:** The Committee will now deal with Bill No. 3, *Second Appropriation Act, 2011-12*.

The Chair will now recognize Mr. Pasloski as the sponsor of Bill No. 3 for the purpose of moving a motion pursuant to Standing Order 76(1)(b).

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** Madam Chair, I move that all clauses, schedules and the title of Bill No. 3, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2011-12*, be deemed to be read and carried.

**Chair:** It has been moved by Mr. Pasloski that all clauses, schedules and the title of Bill No. 3, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2011-12*, be deemed to be read and carried. As no debate or amendment is permitted, I shall put the question. Are you agreed?

*Motion agreed to*

**On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures**

**Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$22,925,000 agreed to**

**On Capital Expenditures**

**Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$29,073,000 agreed to**

*Clause 1 and 2 agreed to*

*Schedules A and B agreed to*

*Title agreed to*

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** Madam Chair, I move that you report Bill No. 3, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2011-12*, without amendment.

**Chair:** It has been moved by Mr. Pasloski that Bill No. 3, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2011-12*, be reported without amendment. As no debate or amendment is permitted, I shall now put the question. Are you agreed?

*Motion agreed to*

**Chair:** As all government bills identified by the Government House Leader have now been decided upon, it is my duty to rise and report to the House.

*Speaker resumes the Chair*

**Termination of sitting as per Standing Order 76(2)**

**Speaker:** I will call the House to order. May the House have a report from the Chair of Committee of Whole?

**Chair's report**

**Ms. McLeod:** Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 2, *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2010-11*, and directed me to report it without amendment. Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has also considered Bill No. 3, *Second Appropriation Act, 2011-12*, and has directed me to report it without amendment.

**Speaker:** You have heard the report from the Chair of Committee of the Whole. Are you agreed?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Speaker:** I declare the report carried.

Members will be aware that the House gave unanimous consent on December 1, 2011 to this fall sitting closing on today's date. Also, the House at that time agreed by unanimous consent that the provisions of Standing Order 76 shall apply on this date, in the same fashion as if this closing date had been established pursuant to Standing Order 75. Standing Order 76(2)(d), states, "On the sitting day that the Assembly has reached the maximum number of sitting days allocated for that Sitting pursuant to Standing Order 75, the Speaker of the Assembly, when recalled to the Chair after the House has been in the Committee of the Whole, shall:

(d) with respect to each Government Bill standing on the Order Paper for Third Reading and designated to be called by the Government House Leader,

(i) receive a motion for Third Reading and passage of the bill, and

(ii) put the question, without debate or amendment, on that motion."

I shall, therefore, ask the Government House Leader to indicate whether Bill No. 3 and Bill No. 2, the only government bills now standing at third reading, should be called.

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** Mr. Speaker, the government directs that Bill No. 2, entitled *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2010-11*, and Bill No. 3, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2011-12*, be called for third reading at this time.

**GOVERNMENT BILLS**

**Bill No. 2: Third Reading — Fourth Appropriation Act, 2010-11**

**Clerk:** Third reading, Bill No. 2, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Pasloski.

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** I move that Bill No. 2, entitled *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2010-11*, be now read a third time and do pass.

**Speaker:** It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 2, entitled *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2010-11*, be now read a third time and do pass. As no debate or amendment is permitted, I shall now put the question. Are you agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Speaker:** I believe the yeas have it.

*Motion for third reading of Bill No. 2 agreed to*

**Speaker:** I declare the motion carried and that Bill No. 2 has passed this House.

**Bill No. 3: Third Reading — Second Appropriation Act, 2011-12**

**Clerk:** Third reading, Bill No. 3, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Pasloski.

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** I move that Bill No. 3, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2011-12*, be now read a third time and do pass.

**Speaker:** It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that Bill No. 3, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2011-12*, be now read a third time and do pass. As no debate or amendment is permitted, I shall now put the question. Are you agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** Division.

**Division**

**Speaker:** Division has been called.

*Bells*

**Speaker:** Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

**Hon. Mr. Pasloski:** Agree.

**Hon. Mr. Cathers:** Agree.

**Hon. Ms. Taylor:** Agree.

**Hon. Mr. Graham:** Agree.

**Hon. Mr. Kent:** Agree.

**Hon. Mr. Nixon:** Agree.

**Ms. McLeod:** Agree.

**Hon. Mr. Istchenko:** Agree.

**Hon. Mr. Dixon:** Agree.

**Mr. Hassard:** Agree.

**Ms. Hanson:** Disagree.

**Mr. Tredger:** Disagree.

**Ms. Moorcroft:** Disagree.

**Ms. White:** Disagree.

**Ms. Stick:** Disagree.

**Mr. Barr:** Disagree.

**Mr. Elias:** Disagree.

**Mr. Silver:** Disagree.

**Clerk:** Mr. Speaker, the results are 10 yea, 8 nay.

**Speaker:** The yeas have it.

*Motion for third reading of Bill No. 3 agreed to*

**Speaker:** I declare the motion carried and that Bill No. 3 has passed this House.

**Speaker:** We are now prepared to receive the Administrator of Yukon to grant assent to the bills which have passed this House.

*Administrator Cameron enters the Chamber, announced by the Sergeant-at-Arms*

**ASSENT TO BILLS**

**Administrator:** Please be seated.

**Speaker:** Mr. Administrator, the Assembly has, at its present session, passed certain bills to which, in the name and on behalf of the Assembly, I respectfully request your assent.

**Clerk:** *Fourth Appropriation Act, 2010-11; Second Appropriation Act, 2011-12.*

**Administrator:** I hereby assent to the bills as enumerated by the Clerk.

I would also like to take this opportunity to wish all members a very merry Christmas and happy holiday season. I also wish all members rewarding and productive deliberations in the year ahead. Thank you.

*Administrator leaves the Chamber*

**Speaker:** I will now call the House to order.

Before we adjourn, on behalf of all members and staff of this Legislature, I would like to wish all Yukoners a very merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

On behalf of myself and my family, I wish my colleagues and their families a merry Christmas and a wonderful and exciting New Year.

As the House has reached the maximum number of days permitted for this fall sitting, as established pursuant to unanimous consent of the House on December 1, 2011, and the House has completed consideration of the designated legislation, it is the duty of the Chair to declare that this House now stands adjourned.

*The House adjourned at 5:15 p.m.*

**The following Sessional Papers were tabled on December 15, 2011:**

33-1-24

Yukon Development Corporation 2010 Annual Report and Audited Financial Statements  
(Cathers)

33-1-25

Yukon Energy Corporation 2010 Annual Report and Audited Financial Statements (Cathers)

33-1-26

Public Accounts 2010 – 2011 of the Government of Yukon for the year ended March 31, 2011  
(Pasloski)

**The following Filed Documents were tabled on December 15, 2011:**

33-1-6

Select Committee on Whistle-blower Protection: letter (dated December 14, 2011) from Hon. Brad Cathers, Government House Leader to Mr. Tredger, MLA Mayo-Tatchun and Ms. Hanson, MLA Whitehorse Centre (Cathers)