



Beaufort Delta District Profile

Loretta Hopkins is the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation's District Director for the Beaufort Delta, which is comprised of eight communities: Inuvik, Aklavik, Fort MacPherson, Tsiigehtic, Tuktoyuktuk, Sachs Harbour, Ulukhaktuk, and Paulatuk. The Beaufort Delta office, with the main office located in Inuvik, has the distinction of being the most northerly district, with many of its communities located above the Arctic Circle.

Hopkins said that of all the Housing Choices programs, Homeownership Entry Level Program (HELP) has been most vital to the communities in the Beaufort Delta. HELP provides assistance to prospective first-time homebuyers who are unable to get a mortgage or are unsure of the responsibilities that come with owning a home. The program, part of the suite of Housing Choices, provides the opportunity to experience homeownership commitments before purchasing a home. According to Hopkins the biggest challenge is delivering housing programs to the most northerly communities, specifically Paulatuk, Ulukhaktuk and Sachs Harbour. Those three communities can only have construction materials brought in by barge during the fall months, meaning construction season is in winter. Hopkins also noted the difficulties in cost when dealing with the three communities, which are only accessible by plane. She said it makes it hard to deliver housing programs, particularly Contributing Assistance for Repairs and Enhancements (CARE), as the cost of flying in a contractor alone is very expensive. The Beaufort Delta does have an advantage in that a lot of their staff have been in their jobs for a very long time, which has allowed them to build strong, long-term relationships with the residents and community governments.

In March 2010 the Northern Housing Forum (NHF) was hosted by the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation (NWTHC) with support from the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), in Inuvik. Hopkins said it was well received, with attendees coming in from all over the circumpolar regions of the world. Hopkins said the Aklavik Drummers and Dancers were an entertainment highlight for the forum, with one of the members also being an employee of the Aklavik Local Housing Organization. The forum was hailed as a success, attracting over 150 delegates, including architects, energy experts, contractors and city planners. The goal of the NHF was to generate discussion and explore northern housing issues and solutions, and foster relationships between individuals involved in the circumpolar housing industry. Reports from attendees said the forum was well organized and that the various presentations were current and the information was valuable.