



Mackenzie Valley
Environmental Impact
Review Board

Meeting Summary

Re: Snowfield Development Corporation (SDC) Diamond Exploration - Report of Environmental Assessment

Date: June 28, 2004
Time: 10 AM – 12 Noon
Location: MVEIRB Board Room, Yellowknife, NT

Attendees:

Vern Christensen, Executive Director, MVEIRB (Chair)
Alan Ehrlich, Senior Environmental Assessment Officer, MVEIRB
John Donihee, Legal Counsel, MVEIRB
Eric Yaxley, Manager, Environment and Conservation, DIAND
Fraser Fairman, Environmental Scientist, DIAND
Lionel Marcinkoski, Environmental Scientist, DIAND
Carla Conkin, Legal Counsel, DIAND
Gavin More, Manager of Environmental Assessment, RWED, GNWT
Tom Andrews, Territorial Archaeologist, GNWT

Background:

In a letter dated June 17, 2004, the federal Minister of DIAND, on behalf of Responsible Ministers, requested consultation with the Review Board regarding Recommended Measures R1 to R5 of the Board's Report of Environmental Assessment (REA) and Reasons for Decision on the Snowfield Development Corporation (SDC) Diamond Exploration Program. The Minister's letter proposed suggested modifications to address the concerns cited. An explanation of the concerns of responsible Ministers and the suggested modifications were attached to the Minister's letter.

Purpose of Meeting:

The purpose of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for Board staff and legal counsel to meet with the Responsible Ministers, as represented by DIAND and GNWT officials, on Monday June 28th to discuss the concerns and rationale for the suggested modifications.

Discussion:

Recommended Measures R1 to R3

The main issue related to the Board's use of the terms archeological "survey" and "scouting". The Board had understood that each term indicated a higher versus lower level of archeological assessment. As a result it had used those terms to describe a higher level of work required within the 3 kilometer zone (a survey) and a lower level of study outside the 3 kilometer zone (scouting). The GNWT wished to use the term "environmental impact assessment" to describe both situations as it was a more commonly understood term by professional archeologists.

Although the narrative in the REA and the Board's letter of clarification to SDC of May 20th, 2004 explained the scope of development affected by its Recommended Measure R1 included bulk sampling activities, the Responsible Ministers sought clearer language.

It was noted that the Review Board in its Recommended Measures had addressed the need to safeguard suspected archaeological, historical, burial or cultural sites - but in three distinct geographic areas being i) areas within the 3 kilometer Shoreline zone, ii) within the claim blocks and within the 3 kilometer Shoreline zone iii) within the claim block and outside the 3 kilometer Shoreline zone.

By using the more generic term "archeological impact assessment" and more inclusive terms to describe the scope of work affected, the revisions were proposed to R1 such that R2 and R3 would no longer be required.

Recommended Measure R4

R4 was revised to correct a typo graphical error and to remove the adjective "precise". R4 had stated that "...the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre will provide precise locations and the extent ofsites....to SDC....". Tom Andrews, Territorial Archaeologist of the Northern Heritage Centre advised that the locations are only approximately known and could not be described as being precise.

Recommended Measure R5

It was agreed that no revisions were required to the Review Board's Recommended Measure R5.

Conclusions:

Board staff and legal counsel agreed that improved wording to Recommended Measures R1 to R4 was appropriate to clarify the Board's intent to the Minister. The revised

wording of Recommended Measures R1 to R4 which was discussed by Board staff and the representatives of Responsible Ministers is attached.

Next Steps:

Board staff and legal counsel would report the results of this meeting to the Review Board for its consideration and response to the Minister of DIAND.

Prepared by: Vern Christensen
Executive Director
June 30, 2004

Attachment