

OCT 3 1 2014

Ms. JoAnne Deneron
Chairperson
Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board
200 Scotia Centre
PO BOX 938
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 2N7

Dear Ms. Deneron:

Decision on the Report of Environmental Assessment and Reasons for Decision for the De Beers Canada Inc. Snap Lake Water Licence Amendment Project (MVEIRB file number EA1314-02)

As the territorial Minister with delegated authority under the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* (MVRMA), and on behalf of the Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, who is the other Responsible Minister with jurisdiction in relation to the environmental assessment of the De Beers Canada Incorporated Snap Lake Water Licence Amendment Project (the Project), I am writing to convey our decision on the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board's (MVEIRB) Report of Environmental Assessment and Reasons for Decision (the Report), submitted to me on September 5, 2014.

In the Report, MVEIRB recommended under sub-paragraph 128(1)(b)(ii) of the MVRMA that the Project be approved subject to the implementation of the measures and developer's commitments contained in the Report.

As part of the analysis of the Report, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) initiated consultation with Aboriginal governments and organizations to request their advice as to whether potential adverse impacts of the proposed Project on asserted or established Aboriginal and/or treaty rights have been fully addressed by the Report. In this process, GNWT consulted with the Tłı̨chǫ Government, the Yellowknives Dene First Nation, the Łutsel K'e Dene First Nation, the Deninu Kue First Nation, the North Slave Métis Alliance, and the Northwest Territory Métis Nation.

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The Responsible Ministers' analysis therefore included careful consideration of the:

- September 5, 2014 Report;
- September 22, 2014 letter from the Deninu Kue First Nation;
- September 23, 2014 letter from the Łutsel K'e Dene First Nation; and,
- October 22, 2014 e-mail from the Northwest Territory Métis Nation

The Responsible Ministers have given full and fair consideration to the views expressed by the Aboriginal governments and organizations during the environmental assessment and in recent correspondence. We have concluded that all points raised relating to potential adverse impacts from the proposed Project on asserted or established Aboriginal and/or treaty rights have been fully consulted on and will be accommodated, as appropriate, through the implementation of the recommended measures and the developer's commitments, as well as through processes established following the original Snap Lake environmental assessment in 2003. The implementation of the measures and commitments will be discussed in detail during the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board's (MVLWB) water licensing process, the developer's implementation of the Project, and continuing management and monitoring processes during Project operations. Concurrent with this decision letter, GNWT is sending responses to the letters received from Aboriginal governments and organizations.

The Minister of Environment and Natural Resources and I have agreed, under subparagraph 130(1)(b)(i) of the MVRMA, to adopt MVEIRB's recommendation that the development be approved subject to the implementation of the measures and developer's commitments contained in the Report. I confirm that in making this decision, the Responsible Ministers have considered the importance of the conservation of the lands, waters and wildlife of the Mackenzie Valley on which the Snap Lake water licence amendment might have an impact, as required under section 131.2 of the MVRMA.

For clarity, when approving Measure 1b, it was understood that water in Snap Lake is to mean the whole lake average. It is also understood that the results of this environmental assessment (EA1314-02) will replace Measures 5 and 10 from the 2003 environmental assessment (EA01-004).

The Responsible Ministers have noted the three suggestions in MVEIRB's Report. I encourage the MVLWB and/or De Beers Canada Inc., as applicable, to give due consideration to these suggestions.

I wish to thank MVEIRB for discharging its duties under the MVRMA in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. C. McLeod". The signature is written in a cursive style with some capitalization.

Robert C. McLeod

c. See Attached

c. The Honourable J. Michael Miltenberger
Minister, Environment and Natural Resources

Chief Louis Balsillie
Deninu Kue First Nation

Chief Felix Lockhart
Łutsel K'e Dene First Nation

Mr. Bill Enge, President
North Slave Métis Alliance

Mr. Garry Bailey, President
Northwest Territory Métis Nation

Grand Chief Eddie Erasmus
Tłıchǫ Government

Chief Edward Sangris
Yellowknives Dene First Nation

Chief Ernest Betsina
Yellowknives Dene First Nation

Mr. Willard Hagen, Chairperson
Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board

Ms. Erica Bonhomme, Manager, Environment, Snap Lake Mine
De Beers Canada Incorporated

Ms. Paula Isaak, Director General, Natural Resources and Environment
Branch, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada

Mr. Mohan Denetto, Regional Director General, Northwest Territories Region,
Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada

Mr. Matthew Spence, Director General, Northern Projects Management Office,
Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency

Mr. Philippe di Pizzo, Executive Director
Snap Lake Environmental Monitoring Agency

Mr. Ray Case, Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate and Strategic Planning
Environment and Natural Resources