



## Process improvement implementation update



Over the past couple months, the Review Board has been working on developing an implementation action plan that will outline the priorities and action items that the organization will take to move forward in improving the environmental impact assessment process.

In the lead up to development of an action plan, the Review Board heard from industry, government and other stakeholders as well as Stantec Consultants who undertook an external review of the Review Board's environmental assessment process. A number of priority issues were raised by these groups to the Review Board. The concerns raised have formed the basis for a responsive action plan to address the need for a more timely environmental impact assessment process that ensures fairness and transparency for all stakeholders.

After considering the feedback and results from the Stantec review, the key issues the Review Board feels merits further study are:

1. Improving the certainty of the process, including the introduction of timelines
2. Improving the process of referring appropriate developments to environmental impact review in a timely and efficient way
3. Improving the issues scoping phase in environmental assessments
4. Ensuring adequate information for the evaluation of impacts is being provided in a timely way during the process
5. Reducing the number of proposed developments being referred to environmental assessment

In its action plan, the Review Board will identify a number of tasks that could potentially address these priority issues. Some tasks can be completed in the short term, while others are longer term and may require cooperation of other agencies or legislative change.

Over the next month, the Review Board's implementation team will be evaluating the appropriateness of each task identified and deciding on resourcing requirements to begin work in completing these tasks, many of which will require consultation and collaboration with other organizations and stakeholders involved in Mackenzie Valley resource management.

The Review Board will be seeking funding in its 2012-13 budget to implement this work. The Review Board hopes to release a more detailed workplan, which will include milestone dates, by the beginning of April. Feel free to contact us with any questions you have about this initiative. Our toll free number for NWT, NT and YK residents is 1-866-912-3472, or call 867-766-7050.

Mahsi,  
Richard Edjericon, Chairperson



## Ongoing environmental assessments

*Click headings to visit the Review Board's public registry for that particular assessment*

### **Thor Lake Rare Earth Elements Project - Avalon Rare Metals Inc. EA1011-001**

**Status: Developer preparing remaining information request responses**

This proposed rare earth element mining project is at Thor Lake, 100 kilometres southeast of Yellowknife on the north side of Great Slave Lake. The development includes a hydro-metallurgical facility at the former Pine Point mine site on the south side of the lake. In mid-January, parties submitted their information requests. Applicable parties have submitted their information request responses. Avalon Rare Metals has provided some of its information request responses. The developer has indicated its remaining responses will be submitted by the end of February or early March.

### **NICO Project - Fortune Minerals Ltd. EA0809-004**

**Status: Developer preparing undertakings arising from technical meetings**

This proposed open pit and underground cobalt-gold-bismuth mine is approximately 50 kilometres northeast of Whati. At the beginning of February, the Review Board held technical meetings where parties and the developer were given the opportunity to gain clarification on key issues. The developer is now preparing its undertakings arising from those meetings, due February 23rd, 2012.

### **Yellowknife Gold Project - Tyhee NWT Corporation EA0809-003**

**Status: Developer preparing remaining responses to information requests.**

This is a proposed open pit gold mine 88 kilometres north of Yellowknife, near the former Discovery Mine site. In late August 2011, the Review Board issued a number of information requests to the developer related to water quality. Tyhee has submitted some of its information request responses. Tyhee has indicated it will be submitting an update shortly to the Review Board with an anticipated submission date for the remaining information request responses.

### **Giant Mine Reclamation and Remediation Project - Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada EA0809-001**

**Status: Developer and applicable parties preparing responses to information requests and technical reports**

The Contaminants and Remediation Directorate of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada is proposing to remediate and reclaim the Giant Mine site within the City of Yellowknife. The development includes the future disposition of 237,000 tonnes of arsenic trioxide currently stored underground and 16 million tonnes of contaminated surface tailings. In December 2011, the Review Board issued the second round of information requests. The developer and applicable parties are preparing responses, anticipated mid February. Technical reports are due from the parties on March 16th, 2012.



## Ongoing environmental impact review

### **Gahcho Kué Diamond Mine - De Beers Canada Inc. EIR0607-001**

*Status: Developer preparing proposed information request responses*

The proposed development is a large open-pit diamond mine approximately 180 km northeast of Yellowknife, NT. The Review Board established the Gahcho Kué Panel to evaluate the impacts of this development. Information requests were submitted to the developer in mid-January 2012. De Beers is preparing responses to the requests with a projected submission date of March 31, 2012.

## Ministers preparing response

### **Mineral Exploration Program - Encore Renaissance Resources. EA0506-005**

*Status: Report of EA issued in November 2007. Ministers referred the decision back for further consideration in April 2010. Review Board released Reasons for Decision with modifications to measures in November 2011.*

This is a proposed diamond exploration program in the area of Drybones Bay. In November 2007, the Review Board recommended the development proceed to the regulatory phase, subject to the measures outlined in the Review Board’s Report of Environmental Assessment. In April 2010, the federal Minister, on behalf of responsible ministers, referred the Report of Environmental Assessment back for further consideration.

Following a public hearing in September 2011, the Review Board further considered the evidence and revised most of its measures. The revisions clarify the responsibilities of government for implementing the measures, as well as the intent and desired outcomes of the measures. The Review Board’s recommendation to approve the project with the revised outlined measures has been resubmitted to the federal and responsible ministers for acceptance.

### **Mineral Exploration Program - Sidon International Resources Corp. EA0506-006**

*Status: Report of EA issued in February 2008. The federal and responsible ministers preparing response.*

This is a proposed mineral exploration program at Defeat Lake. In February 2008, the Review Board recommended the proposed development proceed to the regulatory phase, subject to the measures in the Review Board’s Report of Environmental Assessment and Reasons for Decision. In May 2010, the federal Minister advised the Review Board that the federal and responsible ministers need more time to review the report.

*The Review Board’s 2012 wall calendar is available for downloading at [www.reviewboard.ca](http://www.reviewboard.ca) . We also have printed copies available at the Review Board office, #200 Scotia Centre, Yellowknife, NT.*





## Environmental assessment adjourned

### Taltson Hydroelectric Expansion Project - Dezé Energy Corporation Ltd. EA0708-007

*Status: Report of EA issued March 2010. Ministers referred the decision back to the Review Board for further consideration in December 2010. Temporarily adjourned March 2011 at the request of the developer.*

This development is a proposed expansion to add 35 megawatts of power generating capacity to the Taltson Twin Gorges Plant, and includes a 690 kilometre transmission line to the diamond mines. The Review Board approved the development with measures to mitigate environmental and cultural impacts. In December 2010, the federal Minister, on behalf of responsible ministers, referred the Report of Environmental Assessment back to the Review Board for further consideration. However, in March 2011 the Review Board granted an adjournment at the developer's request.

## Welcome to the team Shannon!

The Review Board is pleased to announce that Ms. Shannon Hayden has joined the Review Board staff as the newest Environmental Assessment Officer.

Shannon comes to the Review Board with a Bachelors Degree in English, an Advanced Diploma in Integrated Coastal and Ocean Management as well as a Masters Degree in Archeology. Her Masters Thesis focused on the Archeology of Old Fort Rae. She also undertook an International Polar Year field work project regarding climate change and tundra vegetation.

She has most recently worked as an Operational Policy Analyst for the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency in Ottawa, as a Regulatory Officer for the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board, an Environmental Assistant/Heritage Specialist with the North Slave Metis Alliance and a Water Quality Database Manager with Environment Canada. She brings expertise and skills that promise to be very helpful to the Review Board team. Welcome Shannon to the Review Board Team!



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