

Valley Talk



The Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board's mission is to conduct fair and timely environmental impact assessments in the Mackenzie Valley that protect the environment, including the social, economic and cultural well-being of its residents.

November -December 2012, Vol. 8 No. 11

Christmas Greetings!

The Mackenzie Valley Review Board works year-round to protect the environment, including the social, economic and cultural well-being of residents of the Mackenzie Valley. At this time of year, we are reminded that we are working to protect families, so that future generations may enjoy all that the Mackenzie Valley has to offer. May you and your family, wherever you reside, have a very Merry Christmas, and a safe, peaceful and productive new year. Happy Holidays!



Hello April!



The Review Board is pleased to welcome April Taylor to the team as our new Executive Advisor. April has been living and work in the North for over 20 years. Welcome April!

Farewell Travis!

The Review Board wishes a heartfelt farewell to Travis Schindel. Travis, who joined the Review Board team in 2010, is described by his colleagues as a strong negotiator, organizer and skilled problem solver. He will bring these skills to the exciting new position he has accepted with De Beers Canada working in the field of purchasing and contracting. Although we are sorry to see him go, the Review Board wishes Travis the very best of luck in his new endeavour.



Gahcho Kué Diamond Mine Public Hearings

Click headings to visit the Review Board's public registry for these and other assessments

Status: Community and Public Hearings completed.

Public Record closes January 3, 2013.

The Gahcho Kué Project, proposed by De Beers Canada Inc., is a large open-pit diamond mine approximately 280 km northeast of Yellowknife, NT. The Review Board established the Gahcho Kué Panel to evaluate the impacts of this development on people and the environment.

Community Hearings took place in Dettah on November 30, 2012 and in Lutsel K'e on December 3rd. The Panel heard statements from elders, band councillors, community members and the public at large. Public Hearings were conducted in Yellowknife from December 5 - 7, 2012. The parties that presented at the Public Hearings were:

- Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC)
- Deninu Kué First Nation
- Environment Canada
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- Government of the Northwest Territories
- Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation
- Natural Resources Canada
- North Slave Metis Alliance
- Tlicho Government
- Transport Canada
- Yellowknives Dene First Nation



There was also a joint presentation by: De Beers Canada Inc.; the Deninu Kué First Nation; the Lutsel K'e First Nation; the Tlicho Government and the Yellowknives Dene First Nation titled "Gahcho Kué Ni Hadi Yati: Ensuring Aboriginal Party Capacity for the Holistic Environmental Stewardship of the Gahcho Kué Project".

Final submissions from parties are due on December 21, 2012 and from the developer on January 3, 2013. The public record will close on January 3rd. The Panel will then deliberate on all evidence found on the public record and prepare a Report of Environmental Impact Review. The Report is scheduled for completion in July 2013.



Ongoing environmental assessments

Giant Mine Reclamation and Remediation Project - Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) EA0809-001

Status: Review Board decision expected by March 2013.

The Contaminants and Remediation Directorate of AANDC is proposing to clean-up and reclaim the Giant Mine site in Yellowknife. The work includes dealing with 237,000 tonnes of arsenic trioxide currently stored underground and 13 million tonnes of contaminated surface tailings. The Public Hearing was held in Yellowknife from September 10 -14, 2012 with an evening community hearing in Dettah on September 11th. The Review Board has received undertakings and closing statements from parties. The public record for submissions to the Review Board closed on October 5, 2012. The Review Board is currently considering the evidence. A decision is expected by March 2013.

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

Status: Preparations underway for the February 2013 hearing.

This rare earth element mining project is proposed 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. On March 2, 2012 the developer submitted the remaining responses pertaining to the Review Board's information requests of January 2012. The Review Board then asked the developer to provide clarification regarding submitted water quality data. The developer submitted responses on May 18, 2012, followed by chronic toxicity test results in July. During the week of August 14-17, 2012, the Review Board conducted a technical session attended by the developer and the parties. Afterwards, the Board began a second round of information requests for this environmental assessment. Parties submitted technical reports on November 29. Preparations are underway for the public hearings on February 18-22, 2013 in Yellowknife and February 26 in Fort Resolution.



Ongoing environmental assessments cont...

NICO Project - Fortune Minerals Ltd. EA0809-004

Status: Reviewing conclusion of public hearings held October 10-11, 2012.

This proposed open pit and underground cobalt-gold-bismuth mine is located approximately 50 kilometres northeast of Whati. Final submissions from parties and the developer were received on October 17 and 22 and the public record closed on October 22, 2012. The Review Board is considering all information received and is preparing its Report of Environmental Assessment. The report will be completed by late January, 2013 and will be sent to the AANDDC Minister and the Tlicho Government for their decision.

Yellowknife Gold Project - Tyhee NWT Corporation EA0809-003

Status: Awaiting Developer responses to party Information requests.

This is a proposed open pit gold mine 88 kilometres north of Yellowknife, near the former Discovery Mine site. Information requests from the Review Board and parties were submitted to the developer in June, 2012. Tyhee NWT Corporation had indicated that responses would be submitted in September and October, 2012. The Review Board has not yet received any responses to party information requests. The developer is required to respond to the information requests and submit an updated project description to the Review Board before technical sessions can be scheduled.

Ministers preparing response

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.



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. The Review Board is waiting for an update from the developer on the status of the Taltson Hydroelectric Expansion project and its best predictions for when the developer will ask the Review Board to resume the environmental assessment.

**Happy
Holidays!**



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