

# COPY



Yellowknives Dene First Nation  
Lands Management / Land & Environment Office

\*original to  
Richard  
Edjericon

FACSIMILE TRANSMITTAL SHEET

TO: Richard Edjericon FROM: YKDFN  
 COMPANY: MVEIRB DATE: June 15/2010  
 FAX NUMBER: (867) 777-4264 TOTAL NO. OF PAGES INCLUDING COVER: 4  
 RE: Consolidated Goldwin Ventures (EA0506-005)

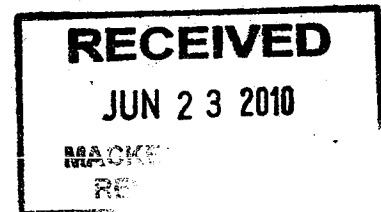
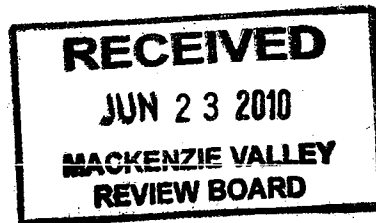
URGENT     FOR REVIEW     PLEASE COMMENT     PLEASE REPLY     PLEASE RECYCLE

NOTES/COMMENTS:

copy to:

Steve Ellis @ 1888 714 3209

Lorraine Seale @ 1867 669 2859



Y900  
10-15-10 10:35 AM

Chair, MVEIRB



## Yellowknives Dene First Nation

P.O. Box 2514, Yellowknife, NT X1A 2P8

June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2010

Richard Edjericon  
Chair, Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board  
Box 938  
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories  
X1A 2N7  
Fax: (867) 777-4264

Dear Mr. Edjericon:

### Re: Consolidated Goldwin Ventures (EA0506-005)

The Yellowknives Dene First Nation (YKDFN) has read Minister Strahl's letter of April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2010 asking your Board to reconsider several of the measures that formed part of the decision on this proposed exploration program. While the Minister is well within his rights to suggest this reconsideration, it has been several years since this file was particularly active and we wish to suggest measures to the Board.

First and foremost, we would like to implore the Board to reconsider the words of the Elders, leaders and landusers who spoke out at the hearing. The majority of the members of your Board were not present during the hearings and it is very difficult to understand the exact impressions that people are conveying from the transcript alone. The majority of communication comes not from words but from body language.

These measures were recommended by your Board to mitigate impacts that were anticipated to be significant. Before these issues should be reconsidered, that fact must be remembered – that each accommodation measure had a purpose. The Drybone's Bay area is the heart of an area of invaluable and incalculable worth to the Yellowknives Dene First Nation. The YKDFN strenuously opposed any development because of the significance and magnitude of the impacts that would result. These impacts have already occurred – they're not just a risk of occurrence anymore. Other permitted developments destroyed cemeteries and other heritage sites, burning a significant area of this prime territory.

### Specific Measures:


- Measure 1: The Minister requests that the terminology be refined to be less open to misinformation, though it is not clear what standard they are suggesting. The terms used as examples are already quite clear, more so when considered in context.
- Measure 3: The Board noted a need for land use planning in the region. This has been


- o Evaluate the cumulative effects of those human activities on the identified components; and,
  - o Provide recommendations for management of those impacts in the Plan of Action.
- Measure 5: YKDFN are quoted in the report "The whole of the Drybone's Area is of significant spiritual cultural and archaeological value to the *Weledeh* People and is one of the few remaining significant areas of land". This development must be considered in the context of the many other developments that are occurring in the area and should be considered in this context rather than simply by 'project-specific measures'. That the region is of the highest social and cultural value is verified through many avenues, but to use an example from the report Glen McKay noted "The density of archaeological sites recorded to date and the diversity of site types in the area indicates the intense use of the shoreline area between Wool Bay and Matonabee Point in both the pre-contact and post contact time periods".
  - Measure 6: The critical issue with this measure is in regards to mitigating impacts on traditional harvesting both from displacement of local resources and connected degradation of the surrounding area. Regardless of the reconsideration of this measure, we remind the Board that the key part of this measure was the collaboration between the YKDFN and the developer in selecting a camp site to minimize intrusions.

Lastly, as a reminder, we wish to restate that the "Onus is on the developer to convince the Review Board that it will not cause significant impacts". The Yellowknives Dene made their position clear – that this project will have real and significant impacts to the First Nation. This has been borne out by the impacts experienced with other permits that proceeded through the EA in this area. The previous Board clearly thought that the measures that are being reconsidered were appropriate to diminish the potential impacts to such a point that the impacts were no longer 'significant'. Should the Board reconsider the suggested measures, we hope that the Board will keep in mind the significant impacts that the measures were attempted to address.

The Board should make no mistake. This is the most important territory within the Chief Drygeese Territory and the YKDFN have repeatedly opposed any development. Because of the critical significance of this area, the magnitude of the impacts to the health of the community and the land cannot be underestimated. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact YKDFN Lands and Environment at 766-3496.

Sincerely,

  
 Chief Edward Sangris  
 Yellowknives Dene First Nation (Dettah)

  
 Chief Ted Tsetta  
 Yellowknives Dene First Nation (Ndilo)

Copy: Steve Ellis, Akaitcho IMA Implementation Office, Lutsel K'e NT, 1-888-714-3209  
 Todd Slack, YKDFN – Land and Environment, Yellowknife, NT (867) 766-3497  
 Lorraine Seale, Environmental Assessment and Agreements, INAC, Yellowknife NT, Fax: (867) 669-2859

identified many times over (McCrank, Other Environmental Assessments, Auditor General, etc.), but INAC has not commenced any kind of planning framework for the area. As noted in the Reasons for Decision report "We do not need another rushed and unplanned development regime that ignores the concerns of First Nations and other Northerners, is uncertain for industry and results in little benefit for present and future generations". This had been recognized in the 2003 Environmental Assessments.

Accepting this as a starting point, allowing INAC an infinite amount of time/flexibility to conclude this process would be acceptable only if the completion and acceptance of a land use plan is a pre-requisite to this development proceeding. The Land Use Planning processes have been in progress in the Sahtu and the Deh Cho have been underway for more than 10 years. YKDFN hope that the any process would be much more timely and would suggest to the Board that if INAC is not constrained by timelines then the process will not have the required institutional emphasis.

Should INAC insist that they do not want to move forward with Land Use Planning of this nature, then the Board should make any permit issuance conditional on the successful completion of the Shoreline Zone planning.

- Measure 4: The Board has already indicated that the "whole of the landscape is more than the sum of its parts" and that considering the impacts of any one program, isolated from the activity in the region. Unfortunately the issues surrounding cumulative effects (s. 6.2.11) have not been well advanced in the intervening years and all Parties continue to struggle in terms of not just evaluating cumulative effects, but in terms of determining what department or agency should be assuming leadership. The Board's opinion is that this is a Government responsibility, but neither INAC nor GNWT has initiated studies for the Drybone's area.

We also wish to remind the Board of the impacts associated with the other four 2003 EAs whose "scope of assessment, including cumulative impacts, covers most of the areas likely affected by the current developments undergoing environmental assessments". Just some of these impacts was a very large forest fire started by Snowfield Development Corp (EA 03-006), which burned a significant portion of the Shoreline Zone/cultural landscape, including a known cemetery. These cumulative impacts apply to both cultural and environmental features. The Board has indicated that an environmental monitoring framework is needed but during the intervening years there has been no establishment of such a system anywhere in the territory. We have no better an idea as to cumulative impacts of development today across the territory, more so when considering just the Drybone's Bay area.

The development of a monitoring program that will identify and track the four themes mentioned in the Board's report is fundamental to evaluating the long term impacts to the people who rely on this critical area. The four themes identified were:

- Identify the priority biophysical and cultural valued components;
- Determine the full range of human activities in the shoreline zone that potentially affect those components;