



## MEMORANDUM

**TO** Rick Schryer - Fortune Minerals Limited

**DATE** 16 February 2012

**CC** Jen Gibson

**FROM** Mitchell Goodjohn

**PROJECT No.** 09-1373-1004.9600

### **UNDERTAKING #13**

#### **LOSS OF USE OR AREAS OF AVOIDANCE IN TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE STUDY**

During Day 3 of the Technical Sessions for the NICO Project, the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board and the Tłıchq Government asked Fortune Minerals Limited (Fortune) to identify whether it had included any questions relating to the loss of use or areas of avoidance by harvesters in their traditional knowledge study, including any questions about the psychosocial impacts associated with perceived contamination in the vicinity of the proposed mine site as a result of the NICO Project.

Section 5.2.1.3 of the Developer's Assessment Report (DAR) provides information about the methodology used for individual and group interviews. A semi-structured approach was used during the interviews that gave participants an opportunity to provide additional information not considered in the interview guide. A copy of the interview guide is found in Appendix I of Annex B (Traditional Land Use Baseline) in the DAR. The interview guide provided interview participants the opportunity to identify and discuss any issues or concerns they had about the proposed NICO Project, and any perceived effects of existing developments on their traditional activities. During the interviews, participants identified areas they avoided due to perceived contamination, and they further identified concerns and fears they had relating to the potential effects of the NICO Project. The following discusses areas avoided by hunters and Elders, and concerns and fears related to perceived or potential contamination identified during the interviews.

Section 5.3.1 of the DAR indicates that interview participants had perceived there were problems with previous mining projects. Section 5.3.2.6 of the DAR indicates that the Tłıchq generally believe the former Rayrock Mine may have damaged the land, possibly causing animals and several Tłıchq who worked in or near the mine to become ill. Elders also reported fears about possible changes in the animals, or contamination as a result of mine areas, such as the former Colomac Mine site outside the regional study area, or the former Rayrock Mine. Elders questioned if any of the animals hunted around the proposed NICO Project would be safe to eat.

Section 5.3.3.4 of the DAR indicates that interview participants from Whatì and Gamètì also expressed concern about perceived contamination from the site of the old Rayrock Mine, and its effects on fish and water quality. Whatì Elders said that fish from the Behchokò area were soft and affected by drainage from the former Rayrock Mine. They added that they have noticed dead fish in the rivers downstream from the site. Similarly, Gamètì interview participants reported that they take water upstream from the site of the old Rayrock Mine because they did not trust the water quality downstream of the mine. Gamètì participants added that many people do not fish near mine areas now since they have concerns about mine pollution.

Section 5.3.3.4 of the DAR also listed the following water-related concerns raised by Elders:

- belief that the water in the Gamètì area is not good;



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- concerns that mining may negatively affect healthy fish in locations, such as Lou Lake; and
- concern that mercury has been found in the trout from Rae Lakes.

In addition to the above concerns, one interview participant provided contradictory evidence. He reported that people are not able to drink the water in the area of the NICO Project, but further reported that fishing is good in the area around the NICO Project.

Gamèti Elders also questioned if it will be possible to continue fishing along the Marian River if the NICO Project is developed as planned.

Fortune is providing support for the Tłı̄ch̄ Government to undertake its own Traditional Knowledge and Traditional Land Use studies for the NICO Project. When the results of the studies become available, Fortune will discuss any identified potential effects of the NICO Project with the Tłı̄ch̄ Government, and any reasonable mitigation or avoidance measures. Similarly, Fortune is supporting the North Slave Métis Alliance in their Traditional Knowledge and Traditional Land Use studies for the NICO Project. When the results of the studies become available, Fortune will discuss any identified potential effects of the NICO Project, and any reasonable mitigation or avoidance measures.

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