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Your file *Votre référence*  
EA1011-001

Our file *Notre référence*  
10-HCAA-CA6-00026

September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010

Paul Mercredi  
Environmental Assessment Officer  
Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board  
PO Box 938  
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2N7

**Via E-mail to :**  
[pmercredi@reviewboard.ca](mailto:pmercredi@reviewboard.ca)

Dear Mr. Mercredi:

**RE: DFO Comments on the scope for Avalon Rare Metals Inc's Nechalacho Rare Earth Element Project**

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) attended the technical scoping session held on September 9<sup>th</sup> in Yellowknife as well as the community scoping session in Dettah on August 16<sup>th</sup> for Avalon Rare Metals Inc's Nechalacho Rare Earth Element Project. As a follow up to that session, DFO would like to provide the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (Review Board) with the following written scoping submission.

DFO is responsible for developing and implementing policies and programs in support of Canada's scientific, ecological, social and economic interests in relation to sea, coastal and inland fisheries, and oceans in general. DFO's primary focus in reviewing proposed developments in and around fishery water is to ensure that the works and undertakings are conducted in such a way that the proponents are in compliance with the *Fisheries Act*. DFO also has expertise in areas including, but not limited to oceans science, fish and marine mammal biology, aquatic ecology, as well as fisheries and habitat management.

In reviewing the project description for the Nechalacho Project, DFO has identified the following factors that may require additional consideration and could be included in the scope of the Environmental Assessment for the Nechalacho Rare Earth Element Project:

- Construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of the Buck and Ring Lake – Tailings Management Facility.
- Water withdrawal from Thor Lake;
- Construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of all roads that might require a water crossing, including the installation of any culverts or bridges;
- Construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of the two proposed seasonal dock facilities on Great Slave Lake

It should be noted that all comments are based on our current understanding of the proposal, dated April 2010, by Avalon Rare Metals Inc. Should a subsequent submissions or re-design of the project be submitted, we anticipate that changes to the scope would be required.

In closing, DFO would like to thank the Review Board for the opportunity to provide comments and we look forward to continued discussions related to this development proposal. If there are any questions or clarification needed on any of these matters, please contact Sarah Olivier at (867) 669-4919.

Regards,



Beverley Ross  
Regional Manager, Environmental Assessment for Major Projects  
Fisheries and Oceans Canada

cc. Kelly Burke, Fisheries and Oceans Canada  
Rick Walbourne, Fisheries and Oceans Canada