

NORTH SLAVE MÉTIS ALLIANCE

PO Box 2301 Yellowknife, NT X1A 2P7



September 29th 2008

Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Fisheries Management
42043 Mackenzie Highway
Hay River, NT. X0E 0R9

Attention: Northwest Territories Licensing Coordinator
Telephone: (867) 875-5303
Fax: (867) 874-6922
E-mail : XCA-NWTpermit@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Re: 2008-2009 Baseline Studies for Avalon Ventures Ltd. Proposed Thor Lake Rare Earth Metals Project

The North Slave Métis Alliance (NSMA) has reviewed and conditionally supports the aforementioned application.

The NSMA represents the North Slave Indigenous Métis people who have continuously “used and occupied” the North Slave region of the Northwest Territories (NWT) since long before the “Crown” established “effective control” over fisheries management in the area. This means the Indigenous North Slave Métis people possess Aboriginal Rights and Titles to the lands and resources in the North Slave region of the NWT. As well, about 75 of our 90 Métis families also possess Treaty Rights promised them by Treaty 11, signed at Fort Rae, in 1921. With that in mind, the NSMA takes its representative mandate seriously, and must continue to ensure it is “consulted and accommodated,” on any and all forms of activities planned or underway by public and private sector organizations, wishing to or undertaking activities on its traditional lands.

The indigenous Métis People of the North Slave have a direct and proprietary interest in the fishery resources of the Thor Lake area, which is within NSMA's traditional territory.

In accordance with our Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, and as contained in guidelines for the ethical research provided by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People¹, and described in section 6 of the Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Research². These guidelines confirm that the interests of Aboriginal Peoples must be taken into account in the conduct of research, in addition to the individual interests of aboriginal individuals, and that Aboriginal Peoples have a right to be meaningfully involved in and benefit from research that affects them.

¹ http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/sg/sgmm_e.html

² <http://pre.ethics.gc.ca/english/policystatement/section6.cfm>

The best way for the North Slave Métis to ascertain details about fish habitat conditions and determine if baseline studies are completed to acceptable standards is to utilize traditional Métis Knowledge, which requires hands-on experience at the site. We are not satisfied with textual or mathematical information provided to us by Government, Industry, or Industrial Consultants, and have many reasons not to trust resource management decisions based upon that kind of information. We also require the experience based opinions of our respected elders to inform our community whether or not the research is acceptable or not. The meaningful incorporation of Traditional Knowledge ensures that community concerns, as well as academic interests, are addressed by the research.

NSMA expects to be consulted on all research planned on North Slave Métis traditional lands. The LFSP application, as it is presented, is incomplete. Avalon Ventures Ltd. has a responsibility to properly consult Aboriginal groups with a vested interest in the land and resources on which they plan to explore and develop. Avalon Ventures Ltd., however, did not consult with the NSMA and does not have an attached Letter of Support from any appropriate local renewable resource organization (Hunters and Trappers Organization(s) / Association(s)/Committee(s) or Renewable Resource Council(s)) indicating support for the project.

Our conditions for offering our support are:

- ∞ Avalon Ventures Ltd. will set up a meeting with NSMA staff to discuss our consultation and accommodations expectations. We expect this will further involve a community meeting and site visit. Please contact the undersigned to discuss this matter.
- ∞ Avalon Ventures Ltd. will provide us with a map showing the location of all lakes and streams to be tested and their location in relation to the Thor Lake property.
- ∞ Avalon Ventures Ltd. will assure the NSMA that there will be no interference on fishing rights as a result of this project.
- ∞ Jacques Whitford AXYS will give the NSMA an opportunity to participate in any job opportunities associated with these Fishery Studies. Please send any job opportunities to the undersigned.

Sincerely,



Sheryl Grieve
Manager, Lands and Resources
lands@nsma.net

CC: Shelly Acton (Shelly_Acton@gov.nt.ca)
Sandra Nicol (Sandra.Nicol@jacqueswhitford.com)