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Environment Canada Presentation to Nunavut Water Board Regarding Teck Resources Ltd.'s Former Polaris Mine Project

NWB Pre-Hearing Conference

(Held by teleconference)

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EC's Mandate

- *Department of the Environment Act*
 - General responsibility for environmental management and protection.
 - Preserve and enhance water, air and soil quality.
 - Conserve Canada's renewable resources.
 - Migratory birds, species at risk, flora and fauna.
 - Conserve and protect Canada's water resources.
 - Provide meteorological information.
 - Coordinate environmental policies and programs.

How EC Fulfills its Mandate

Relevant acts and regulations:

- *Department of the Environment Act*
- *Canadian Environmental Protection Act*
 - Air quality
 - Spill contingency planning
 - Waste management
- *Fisheries Act* – Pollution prevention provisions
 - Water quality
 - Metal Mining Effluent Regulations (MMER)
- *Migratory Birds Convention Act* (MBCA)
- *Species at Risk Act* (SARA)

EC's Role in Nunavut

- Reviews development (and remediation) proposals for environmental impacts falling within its mandate.
- Provides recommendations and expert advice to the Nunavut Impact Review Board and Nunavut Water Board.
- Enforces compliance with legislation that falls within EC's mandate.

EC's Concerns with the Former Polaris Mine Project

EC raised concerns related to:

- Migratory birds and species at risk; and
- Long-term post-closure monitoring plan.

Recommendations Related to Migratory Birds and Species at Risk

- Avoid active nesting areas.
- Avoid the direct or indirect deposit of substances harmful to migratory birds in waters or areas frequented by migratory birds.
- Safety permitting, reduce aircraft disturbance to migratory birds
- Use EC-recommended nest setback distances to minimize disturbance to different bird groups nesting in tundra habitat.
- The Proponent is encouraged to submit their observations of birds to eBird Canada (<http://ebird.org/content/canada>).

Recommendations related to Migratory Birds and Species at Risk

- Food, domestic wastes, and petroleum-based chemicals should be made inaccessible to wildlife at all times.
- Adverse effects of the Project on SARA-listed species and critical habitat be identified, measures be taken to avoid or lessen those effects, and that those effects be monitored.
- Ensure that extra precautions are taken to avoid any disturbance to Red Knot or its habitat during the breeding season.
- If inland groups of Ivory Gull are encountered, the area should be avoided and observations should be reported to the Canadian Wildlife Service of EC.

Recommendations Related to the Long-Term Post-Closure Monitoring Plan

- Implementation of EC's proposed changes in the monitoring program by providing a detailed summary of the post-closure monitoring data (for all parameters analyzed) to date for Garrow Lake and Garrow Creek.
- Vertical limnology and chemistry monitoring of the Garrow Lake center location are also conducted in Year 10, Year 15, and Year 25; in step with the schedule proposed for Garrow Creek water quality.
- A field blank be included in quality assurance and quality control measures, as described by the *Metal Mining Technical Guidance for Environmental Effects Monitoring* (EC, 2012).

Conclusions

- EC has reviewed the Amendment-Renewal Application and has recommendations that would improve the long-term monitoring planned for the Project.
- Additional information is provided in EC's letter to the NWB dated August 1, 2014.