



NIRB File No.: 12MN036

NWB File No.: 2AM-BRP----

AANDC File No.: N2012T0025

December 19, 2014

Matthew Pickard
Director, Environment & Community Relations
Sabina Gold & Silver Corporation
930 West 1st Street
North Vancouver, BC V7P 3N4

Sent via regular mail and email: mpickard@sabinagoldsilver.com

Re: The NIRB's Pre-hearing Conference Decision for Sabina Gold & Silver Corporation's Back River project proposal

Dear Matthew Pickard:

From November 17-19, 2014 the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) held a Pre-hearing Conference (PHC) in Cambridge Bay, Nunavut to hear discussion by parties and Sabina Gold & Silver Corporation (Sabina or the Proponent) on the issues to be considered within the next steps of the NIRB's Review of the Back River Project, the information to be included within the Proponent's submission of its Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and further preparations for a Final Hearing.

Issues addressed during the PHC included:

1. Anticipated date for submission of the Final Environmental Impact Statement,
2. Date, time and location of the Final Hearing,
3. Timetable for the exchange of documents and information requests prior to the hearing,
4. Formulation of issues for the hearing,
5. Procedures to be followed in the hearing,
6. Equipment, language, interpretation, translation and transcript requirements, and
7. Other matters that may aid in the simplification of the hearing.

The enclosed *Nunavut Impact Review Board Pre-hearing Conference Decision Concerning The Back River Project (NIRB File No. 12MN036) Proposed by Sabina Gold & Silver Corporation* (the PHC Decision), outlines the Board's findings on each of the seven issues listed above, and includes direction to the Proponent on information that it is required to include within its future FEIS submission. The following are highlights from the enclosed PHC Decision:

The Final Hearing

The dates for the Final Hearing will be set, following the successful conclusion of the NIRB's compliance review of Sabina's FEIS submission, according to the requirements outlined in the enclosed PHC Decision. The venue for the Final Hearing will be the community of Cambridge Bay, Nunavut where technical presentations will be organized by specific technical topics, followed by a community roundtable session. The Board is committed to taking steps to ensure the attendance and participation of a broad range of representatives from potentially affected communities at both technical and community roundtable sessions.

Once accepted by the NIRB, the FEIS will be subject to a minimum 90 day technical review period, with a 30 day Information Request period to run concurrently. The NIRB may schedule another meeting of technical experts (i.e. a technical meeting) and/or pre-hearing conference if determined to be necessary. Following the technical review of the FEIS, the Board will formulate the issues for the Final Hearing. The Final Hearing will proceed in accordance with the NIRB Rules of Procedure (September 3, 2009).

Commitments from Sabina, Additional Issues and Specific Direction

The Board believes that Sabina will address the majority of the parties' outstanding concerns by complying with the specific direction and implied intention of the NIRB's EIS Guidelines and by fully satisfying its commitments as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 of the PHC Decision. In addition to the commitments put forward by Sabina, the Board has provided specific direction to the Proponent for its preparation of an FEIS submission; Sabina is expected to address each of these specific issues within the FEIS and is further encouraged to respond directly to all of the issues that have arisen over the course of the review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, including at the recent Technical Meeting and Pre-hearing Conference. The Board also reiterates the need for the Proponent to ensure that all information and assessment details provided within the FEIS meet the requirements as set out in the EIS Guidelines issued by the NIRB on April 30, 2013.

The Board has determined that scheduling a site visit, as established in Rule 27.1 of its Rules of Procedure, would be beneficial, and will provide further details regarding the schedule and logistics for the visit once the timing of the Final Hearing has been confirmed by the Board.

The Board asks that Sabina confirm its intended FEIS submission date within 30 days of receipt of the enclosed PHC Decision; should more time be required, the Board asks that Sabina advise the NIRB accordingly at its earliest opportunity. The NIRB thanks Sabina and all parties for the cooperative and open dialogue to date which has allowed the NIRB's Review process to unfold in an efficient and effective manner. The Board looks forward to receiving Sabina's FEIS submission and proceeding through the remaining steps of the Review process for the Back River Project.

If you have any questions or require clarification regarding the enclosed PHC Decision or the NIRB's Review of the Back River Project, please contact Tara Arko, Technical Advisor at (867) 983-4611 or via email at tarko@nirb.ca.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ryan Barry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Ryan Barry
Executive Director
Nunavut Impact Review Board

cc: Back River Distribution List
David Hohnstein, Nunavut Water Board

Enclosed: Nunavut Impact Review Board Pre-hearing Conference Decision Concerning the Back River
(NIRB File No. 12MN036) Proposed by Sabina Gold & Silver Corporation (*December 19, 2014*)