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Affairs Canada

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February 23, 2004

Your file - Votre référence

Our file - Notre référence  
IQA-N 5510-5-11 UNC

Stephanie Briscoe  
Executive Director  
Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB)  
Box 2379  
Cambridge Bay, NU  
X0B 0C0

**RE: Doris North Mine Components and Scope of Assessment: Exploration Declines**

Dear Ms. Briscoe,

As described in Supporting Document A1 (Project Description) of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), most significantly in Section 3.4, the proponent of the proposed Doris North gold mine, Miramar Hope Bay Ltd. (MHBL) plans to construct exploration declines south from the Doris North underground mine, under Doris Lake to confirm the attributes of gold-bearing ore veins below the lake.

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) has held occasional communications with MHBL on whether these exploration declines are part of the environmental assessment (EA) for the Doris North project. We also discussed this issue during a meeting of Environment Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, INAC, and MHBL representatives on Feb. 3, 2004. It is our impression that MHBL believes that the declines should not be scoped into the EA. INAC argues, however, that the exploration declines should be scoped into the EA because:

- The mining of Doris North and exploration decline activities under Doris Lake will be concurrent;
- The exploration declines will likely be subject to groundwater flows in the talik below Doris Lake, and as such will affect the water balance calculations that are an important part of the EA for this project; and
- The exploration declines cannot be constructed without first constructing a portion of the underground gold mine and use some of the same infrastructure as the Doris North

mine, so the exploration activities are dependent on the mining activities.

The purpose of this letter is to seek clarification whether NIRB considers whether these exploration declines to be part of the environmental assessment for this mine, and thus clarify the scope of issues to be considered by our technical reviewers.

INAC has solicited the input of our federal partners in the preparation of this letter. We would like to thank NIRB for its efforts in this matter. Please, feel free to contact Janice Traynor at (867) 975-4554.

Sincerely,

**Original Signed by**

Lou Spagnuolo  
A/Manager of Environment

cc. John Ramsey, Natural Resources Canada  
Colette Meloche, Environment Canada  
Anjala Puvananathan, Health Canada  
Elizabeth Sherlock, INAC Waters  
Martyn Curtis, DFO  
Stephen Harbricht, Environment Canada  
Hugh Wilson, MHL