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Prairie and Northern Region  
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Our file: 4704 004 021  
Your File: NIRB 008MN006

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*Via email at [lpayette@nirb.ca](mailto:lpayette@nirb.ca)*

Dear Ms. Payette:

**RE: Scoping Comments on Sabina Silver Corporation's Hackett River Project Proposal**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input to the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) regarding the scope of the Sabina Silver Corporation's Hackett River Project Proposal. Environment Canada has no regulatory authorizations associated with this project; however, EC will be providing specialist advice related to the protection and conservation of the environment pursuant to our mandated responsibilities for the enforcement of the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act*, the *Metal Mining Effluent Regulations* and Section 36(3) of the *Fisheries Act*, the *Migratory Birds Convention Act*, and the *Species at Risk Act*.

**Proposed Scope of Project**

Environment Canada (EC) recommends that the scope of the project include, but not be limited to, those physical works and the activities associated with the construction, operation and decommissioning (including closure and reclamation) of the Hackett River Project Proposal that have the potential to impact on areas of federal jurisdiction under EC's mandate, including:

Project Components		Potentially Affected Areas of Jurisdiction
<b>Hackett River Site</b>	Open Pit mining	- Surface water quality/quantity - Migratory birds - Species at risk - Air Quality
	Tailings Management Facility and associated water retention structures, pipelines and site water management system	- Surface water quality / quantity - Migratory birds - Air Quality
	Mineral processing facilities and associated infrastructure	- Migratory birds - Species at risk - Air quality - Surface water quality
	Mine haul roads	- Migratory birds - Species at risk - Air quality (from vehicle use) - Surface water quality
	Waste rock piles	- Surface water quality / quantity - Migratory birds

		- Species at risk - Air Quality
	Changes in surface water flow, including divergence of water flow into Camp Lake	- Surface water quality / quantity
	Drainage of Camp Lake	- Migratory birds - Species at risk
	Diesel generators and associated fuel tanks	- Air quality - Surface water quality
	Tankfarm and pipeline	- Surface water quality
	Landfill and Landfarm	- Surface water quality - Migratory birds - Species at risk
	Incinerator	- Air quality - Migratory birds - Species at risk - Surface water quality (contaminant loading)
	Sewage treatment facility	- Surface water quality
	Camp facilities	- Migratory birds - Species at risk
<b>Airstrip</b>	Airstrip and associated infrastructure	- Migratory birds - Species at risk
<b>Spur Road</b>	23 km all season access road, including quarries	- Surface water quantity - Migratory birds - Species at risk - Air Quality

### **Factors to be Considered**

In addition to the factors stated in 12.5.2 and 12.5.5 of Article 12 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement and the 10 Minimum EIS Requirements established by the NIRB, EC recommends that the following factors be considered in the environmental assessment of the Hackett River Project:

#### *Potential Accidents and Malfunctions*

The scope of the assessment should include consideration of the potential accidents, malfunctions and unplanned events that could occur in any phase of the project, the likelihood and circumstances under which these events could occur, the environmental effects that may result from such events and mitigation measures to help lessen any potential impacts.

#### *Follow-up/Monitoring Program*

The purpose of a follow -up program is to verify the accuracy of the environmental assessment and determine the effectiveness of mitigation measures. Environment Canada recommends that the environmental assessment describe the follow -up program and its associated requirements. This program framework should be compatible with other regulatory monitoring requirements.

#### *Cumulative Effects Assessment*

The scope of the assessment should include components contributing to cumulative effects. A thorough Cumulative Effects Assessment will help determine if aspects of the project will have a larger impact on the environment due to additional activities occurring near or within the proposed project area.

**Proposed Scope of Factors to be Considered**

Based on EC's mandated jurisdiction and the information provided in the Hackett River Project Proposal, the following list outlines the proposed scope of the factors to be considered, including what environmental components are likely to be affected:

- Migratory birds
- Species at risk
- Air quality
- Surface freshwater quality
- Surface freshwater quantity
- Emergency response
- Hazardous materials management

EC would like to note that the initial scoping of this project has been quite complicated for two reasons. Firstly, the current project proposal describes plans to utilize the Bathurst Inlet Port and Road (BIPR) as additional components to this project (all season road, port and shipping). The BIPR project is currently in the Environmental Assessment phase. Sabina Silver Corporation (SSC) has stated that should the BIPR Project not go ahead that they will be building their own infrastructure for a port and road. However, no details are currently provided on this aspect of the project. To further complicate matters, the proponent for the BIPR project has recently requested their EA be placed on hold. At this time EC finds it difficult to scope a project that does not provide details on all major components. SSC did state that this information would be included in the alternatives assessment; however, a detailed Alternatives Assessment has not yet been submitted. Secondly, SSC has not been able to determine full details on all aspects of the project until their feasibility study has been completed. This study would have been helpful when reviewing the project to determine scope. In conclusion, EC cannot provide advice on the scoping of this project for those components linked to the BIPR project and has thus only commented on the Mine Site, Airstrip and Spur Road. Once SSC has developed a detailed Alternatives Assessment for the entire project and/or complete details for aspects of an all season road to a port and shipping components, EC will feel that this project has been scoped in its entirety.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the scope of the Sabina Silver Hackett River Project Proposal. Environment Canada looks forward to continuing to work with the NIRB and Sabina Silver Corporation in the review of this project. Please do not hesitate to contact Savanna Levenson with any questions or comments with regards to the foregoing at (867) 669-4772 or by email at [savanna.levenson@ec.gc.ca](mailto:savanna.levenson@ec.gc.ca).

Yours truly,

Savanna Levenson  
Environmental Assessment Coordinator  
Environment Canada

cc: (Carey Ogilvie, Head, Assessment and Monitoring, Environment Canada, Yellowknife)  
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(Anne Wilson, Water Pollution Specialist, Environment Canada, Yellowknife)