



NIRB File No.: 00MN059

August 18, 2008

Greg Missal
Tahera Diamond Corporation
Suite 803, 121 Richmond Street West
Toronto, Ontario
M5H 2K1

Delivered via email to missal@tahera.com

Re: Opportunity for Tahera to Respond to Parties' Comments on the 2007 Wildlife Monitoring Program-Data Summary Report

Dear Mr. Missal:

On March 25, 2008, the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) received Jericho Diamond Mine's *2007 Wildlife Monitoring Program Data Summary Report* which was a requirement of the Wildlife Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (WMMP) which stipulates that an annual Wildlife Mitigation and Monitoring Report will be available for review.

As you are aware, on June 3, 2008 the NIRB requested comments from interested Parties with respect to their areas of expertise. The NIRB requested Parties to provide comments regarding:

- Whether the wildlife monitoring was carried out according to the specific objectives of the *final* WMMP (May 15, 2007);
- Whether the report provides a clear summary of the wildlife mitigation and monitoring that Tahera carried out; and
- Whether the wildlife monitoring program met with the requirements of the Jericho Project Certificate terms and conditions.

Comments were received from the Government of Nunavut, Department of Environment (GN-DOE) and are located on the NIRB's ftp site at:

<http://ftp.nirb.ca/MONITORING/00MN059-JERICH0/02-MONITORING%20AND%20MANAGEMENT%20PLANS/Wildlife%20Mitigation%20%26%20Monitoring%20Plan/02-REPORTS/2007/01-COMMENTS/>

The 2007 Wildlife Monitoring Report was adequate in addressing the objectives of the WMMP. The report provided a summary of the data collected in 2007 and a general comparison to the

2006 data sets. The following recommendations and comments are based on the NIRB's review of the 2007 Wildlife Monitoring Report and on comments received from Parties and provide input for the 2008 report.

GENERAL

- 1) The 2007 wildlife report included a wildlife sighting log (p. 11) that was maintained for the Jericho employees to record observations of wildlife around the site. However, no discussion was included on any impacts that were noted at the Jericho mine site. In addition, Tahera stated in their WMMP that weekly surveys for wildlife presence and wildlife signs around the Project footprint would be conducted. Tahera conducted 6 surveys throughout the 2007 monitoring year.

Recommendation: Please provide rationale as to why the weekly surveys were not conducted.

- 2) Tahera recommended muskox, waterfowls and loons (p. 59) be removed from the wildlife monitoring programs as valued ecosystem components (VECs) since the monitoring objectives cannot be met with the species due to the low-densities observed at the site.

Recommendation: The GN-DOE recommends that muskox, waterfowls and loons remain as VECs for the mine impact assessment. However, separate surveys are not warranted due to the low densities and varied distributions observed. On the other hand, muskox should continue to be included as observations during the caribou-focused surveys and if the numbers were to increase in the future, then muskox focused surveys should be conducted.

WOLVERINE

- 1) For the 2007 monitoring program, hair-snagging (DNA fingerprinting) technique was used to assess wolverine abundance/distribution in the study area. However, it is unclear in both the WMMP and the 2007 annual monitoring report whether or when the hair samples will be analyzed.

Recommendation: It is recommended that Tahera include a discussion in the 2008 report on the analyses of the hair samples collected in 2007 and 2008 to confirm the species and to confirm the number of individuals included in the samples.

- 2) For the 2007 monitoring period, Tahera mentioned that two wildlife incidents occurred, both involving wolverine, one leading to the death of the wolverine (struck by vehicle). The circumstances surrounding the presence of the wolverine in the vicinity of the camp site require some discussion as this is not the first wolverine incident since the inception of the mine. The discussion should include whether the wolverine were residents or where they attracted to the site? Could additional actions be taken to avoid recurrence and minimize attraction to site? In addition, are the mitigation measures implemented sufficient and have they minimized wildlife incidents at site.

Recommendation: Future annual reports should include a more detailed discussion on wildlife incidents that occur at the site.

On August 12, 2008, the NIRB requested that Tahera provide an update on the status of the mine during the care and maintenance phase as well as provide information on how Tahera will meet the NIRB Project Certificate terms and conditions. This was re-iterated by GN-DOE in their letter dated July 15, 2008 but specifically focused on the wildlife monitoring. The NIRB requests that Tahera provide an update on the wildlife monitoring program on how it will be conducted or continued during the period of care and maintenance. In addition, the discussion should include how Tahera will ensure that the raw data collected, as well as the hair samples, will be available to successive biological consultants and/or regulatory agencies. It was suggested by GN-DOE that the hair samples and the raw data be submitted to the GN-DOE for long-term archival purposes until the mine becomes active.

As a result of my review of the documents, I am recommending that Tahera provide a written response that addresses the above comments with particular emphasis on the listed recommendations that are provided. Please provide your comments by **September 18, 2008** to the NIRB's Manager of Environmental Administration, Leslie Payette at lpayette@nirb.ca.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at sgranchinho@nirb.ca or 867-983-4607.

Sincerely,



Sophia Granchinho
Technical Advisor
Nunavut Impact Review Board

cc: Bruce Ott, Tahera Diamond Corporation
Jericho Distribution List