

Environment Canada Closing Remarks: Continuance of the Meadowbank Hearing

Environment Canada would like to thank the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) for the opportunity to present our closing remarks to the Board regarding the supplemental information submitted for the continuance of the Meadowbank Gold Project final hearing. These closing remarks are made in addition to those presented on March 31, 2006 in Rankin Inlet, NU.

At the close of the Meadowbank Gold Project final public hearings in March 2006, the NIRB indicated that they would leave the hearing record open. Subsequently, in order to allow the Board to discharge its mandate and reach a decision on the project, the NIRB requested that Cumberland Resources Ltd. (CRL) provide additional information in the areas of the all weather road, socio-economic impacts, and consultation with the residents of Chesterfield Inlet regarding marine shipping. Environment Canada participated in the review of this supplemental information, and provided comments to the NIRB on marine shipping and safety.

Environment Canada is pleased to see that CRL is proposing to operate the all-season road between Baker Lake and the mine site as a private road. Environment Canada feels that the measures proposed by CRL to limit access to the road, restore the road at the end of the project, and monitor non-project uses of the road will help mitigate the potential cumulative and induced impacts associated with the construction and operation of this infrastructure.

Environment Canada believes that the development and implementation of a revised Terrestrial Ecosystem Management Plan (TEMP) will be essential to ensuring that potential impacts of the project on migratory birds and species at risk are mitigated and monitored. Environment Canada looks forward to receiving and reviewing the revised TEMP in the fall or early winter of 2006.

Environment Canada shares the concerns of the residents of Chesterfield Inlet regarding the need for comprehensive spill contingency and emergency response plans for land and water. As previously stated, the current plans are only conceptual in nature. Environment Canada notes that CRL has indicated that a revised spill plan will be available once tendering of the shipping contract under the Inuit Impact Benefit Agreement has been completed, and that a Spill Contingency Plan will be supplied by the shipper at that time. Environment Canada strongly recommends that if the project is approved by the NIRB, CRL ensure that the emergency response plans are revised and available for review for the regulatory phase. Environment Canada would also like to remind the proponent that they are ultimately responsible for ensuring that any contractors or shippers hired for the project meet CRL's due diligence standard.

In order to ensure that all the commitments that have been made are implemented, EC recommends that if the Board decides to approve the project, the NIRB incorporate the various commitments and promises into the terms/conditions of the Project Certificate. Environment Canada would like to clarify one commitment reported by CRL. CRL has committed to "perform sound level monitoring twice a year and document results". While the updated list provided on July 19, 2006 does not specify the agency from which the request for this monitoring originated, Exhibit 68 filed on March 31, 2006 lists EC as one of the requesting agencies. Environment Canada would like to clarify that sound level monitoring is outside of EC's mandated areas of

responsibility, and EC would not have any expertise to offer CRL or the Board regarding this topic.

Overall, EC feels that the outstanding issues identified during the course of the review can be addressed through the development and importantly, the implementation of appropriate adaptive management plans, monitoring plans and the inclusion of appropriate terms and conditions in the Final Hearing Report and/or Project Certificate. Environment Canada is committed to continuing to work with the proponent and other appropriate agencies to ensure that, if approved, the development of the Meadowbank gold project occurs in an environmentally-sound and sustainable manner.

Thank-you,



Cheryl Baraniecki
Manager, Environmental Assessment

cc. Colette Spagnuolo, Environmental Assessment / Contaminated Sites Specialist, Environment Canada, Iqaluit