



Government of Nunavut Concluding Remarks to the Final NIRB Hearings on the Meadowbank Gold Project, July 2006

On March 31, 2006 at the public hearing in Rankin Inlet, the GN read a closing statement for the review of the Meadowbank Gold Project that concluded;

‘.....we believe the GN’s observations and recommendations will, subject to NIRB’s report and the ministerial decisions in relation to permits, enable Cumberland to proceed with its gold project...’

On April 24, 2006, NIRB wrote to Parties stating that there was ‘*uncertainty*’ in three key areas of the project. NIRB directed the proponent to collect and present more information and data in these key areas.

The GN respects and appreciates the diligence demonstrated by NIRB in the discharge of its mandate and has continued to provide assistance to ensure NIRB has all the information required to do a proper analysis of the impacts, and reach a decision.

The GN now welcomes this opportunity to provide NIRB with its additional concluding remarks regarding the continuation of the hearings for Meadowbank Gold Project, Environmental Impact Statement.

The GN Department of Environment (DOE) has been engaged with both NIRB and Cumberland Resources Limited (CRL) throughout all the stages of NIRB’s review of the Meadowbank project. The intent of DOE involvement was to ensure protection of Nunavut’s natural resources consistent with our legislative mandate under the Wildlife Act and Environmental Protection Act.

In DOE’s original closing comments, presented in Rankin Inlet on March 31, 2006, DOE indicated that recommendations provided to NIRB for the environmental assessment phase of the project relating to water quality, permafrost, hazardous materials management, air quality, noise management and abandonment and reclamation, had been accepted by CRL for inclusion in their plans for construction and management of the project. These recommendations are contained in the commitment list attached to the CRL letter of July 19, 2006.

Furthermore, in March 2006, DOE provided several recommendations on the Terrestrial Ecosystem Management Plan (TEMP). DOE indicated to NIRB and the proponent that all of these recommendations could be addressed in a revised

TEMP, or in the first annual monitoring report to be submitted in 2007. However, as part of the hearing continuation, in their letter of April 24, 2006, NIRB subsequently requested further information from CRL on these issues. The information provided by CRL went some way to addressing these outstanding issues, but both DOE and CRL recognize that there is still some further work to do. CRL has since stated in their July 11, 2006 letter, that they;

‘.....accept and will comply with the ten recommendations made by the GN regarding the TEMP and Wildlife Monitoring Report...’

Renewed commitments contained within the July 19, 2006 letter from CRL, and reiterated in verbal discussions between CRL and DOE, give DOE further assurance that these issues will be resolved as identified. DOE looks forward to continuing to work with CRL to address these matters.

The GN department of Economic Development and Transportation (ED&T) provided comments on CRL's response to NIRB's letter of April 24, 2006, specifically the all-weather road and socio-economics; and concluded;

‘The department is satisfied that Cumberland Resources Limited has addressed the issues identified by the Nunavut Impact Review Board in its letter of April 24, 2006 in manner that should permit the project to proceed’.

ED&T has nothing further to add to our previous comments, except to note that we are satisfied with the list of commitments provided by Cumberland Resources Ltd. March 31, 2006 and re-stated July 19, 2006 in their letter to the Nunavut Impact Review Board.

In summary, the Government of Nunavut is supportive of the project moving forward to the permitting phase and will work with the proponent, Inuit organizations and communities throughout the project life to address outstanding issues and mitigate any unforeseen impacts should they occur.