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NIRB file - NIRB référence
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NWB file- NWB référence
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Our file - Notre référence
CIDM# 516428

March 30, 2012

Ryan Barry
Executive Director
Nunavut Impact Review Board
P.O. Box 1360
Cambridge Bay, NU, X0B 0C0
Via electronic mail to: info@ nirb.ca

Dionne Filiatrault
Executive Director
Nunavut Water Board
P.O. Box 119
Gjoa Haven NU, X0B 1J0

Re: Information Requests pertaining to the review of the FEIS for Baffinland's Mary River Iron Ore Project.

On February 29, 2012 the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) and the Nunavut Water Board (NWB) requested that interveners submit information requests with respect to the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for Baffinland's Mary River Iron Ore Project.

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) has completed a preliminary assessment of the information in the FEIS, as well as the Type A Water Licence application with the intent of analyzing the completeness of the information presented by the Proponent, as per the direction provided by the NIRB. Our review in relation to the NIRB's Part 5 review of this project focused on the Proponent's commitments as attached to NIRB's Pre-Hearing Conference report, but also considered our original comments and requests from which the commitments were drawn. Our review in relation to the Type A Water Licence application focused primarily on the guidelines provided.

We acknowledge and are pleased to find that Baffinland has provided sufficient information to satisfy most issues AANDC identified during our review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). However, some gaps were found in the FEIS. Receiving the requested additional information will support our ability to undertake a complete final technical review. These include complete project site water balance schematics for existing conditions, preliminary thermal modeling analysis for waste rock



dump design, an assessment of pit water quality after closure, and the inclusion of a project Sustainability Plan. Further information gaps were identified in the Water Licence application within the FEIS. The complete information requests are contained in attachment.

AANDC continues to review the FEIS document in anticipation of submitting technical review comments to NIRB on May 30th, 2012. At the pre-hearing conference held this past November, all participating Government of Canada departments requested that the Proponent provide a detailed response to interveners' technical review comments before the final hearing. It does not appear that NIRB has provided for this in the current process description. AANDC believes that such a step would significantly increase the efficiency of the final hearing, as both the NIRB and interveners will be aware of what issues are unresolved and will be able to plan and focus their efforts accordingly.

AANDC recommends the NWB schedules a preliminary technical meeting following the NIRB's Final Report to the Ministers to help focus the Water Licence technical review process. The terms and conditions contained in the NIRB report will clarify additional information and review requirements of the water licensing process.

AANDC appreciates the opportunity to participate in this review. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Margaux Brisco at (867) 975-4549 or margaux.brisco@aandc-aadnc.gc.ca.

Sincerely,

Robin Aitken
Regional Director General

c.c: Mitch Bloom, Northern Project Management Office