



NIRB File No.: 05YN078, 07EN004

Associated NIRB File No.: 08MN053

AANDC File No.: N2006C0036

QIA File No.: Q05L2C14

April 12, 2013

The Honourable Bernard Valcourt
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development
c/o Jeff Mercer, Manager, Land Administration
Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
P.O. Box 100,
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0

Sent via email: jeff.mercer@aandc.gc.ca and landsmining@aandc.gc.ca

Re: Application Exempt from the Requirement for Screening pursuant to Section 12.4.3 of the NLCA: Baffinland Iron Mines Corporation's "Mary River Geotechnical Drilling" project, North Baffin Region

Dear Jeff Mercer:

On March 19, 2013 the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) received an application from Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) for a one-year extension to AANDC Land Use Permit N2006C0036 associated with Baffinland Iron Mines Corporation's (Baffinland) "Mary River Geotechnical Drilling" project proposal.

Please be advised that the "Baseline Environmental Field Study" project proposal (NIRB File No.: 05YN078) was received by the NIRB from the Nunavut Research Institute (NRI) on May 11, 2005 and was screened by the Board in accordance with Part 4, Article 12 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA). On May 27, 2005 the NIRB issued the enclosed NLCA 12.4.4(a) screening decision to the Minister of Culture, Language, Elders & Youth, Government of Nunavut (CLEY, now Department of Culture and Heritage) which indicated that the proposed project could proceed subject to the NIRB's recommended project-specific terms and conditions.

On January 24, 2007 the NIRB received applications from the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA) and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC, now AANDC) for a Land Use Licence and Land Use Permit, respectively for Baffinland's "Mary River Geotechnical Drilling Project" proposal. The NIRB also received a positive conformity determination (North Baffin Regional Land Use Plan) for the file from the Nunavut Planning Commission on January 22, 2007. The NIRB assigned this project file number 07EN004 and commenced screening the proposal in

accordance with Part 4, Article 12 of the NLCA. In its application to QIA, Baffinland indicated that it intended for the Land Use Licence to include works previously screened by the NIRB (File No. 05YN078) as the proposed camp facilities would be used to house research personnel. On March 26, 2007 the NIRB issued the enclosed NLCA 12.4.4(a) screening decision to the Minister of INAC and President of the QIA which indicated that the proposed project could proceed subject to the NIRB's recommended project-specific terms and conditions (NIRB File No. 07EN004).

Additional authorization and extension requests associated with the "Mary River Geotechnical Drilling" project have also been reviewed by the NIRB following screening of the original project proposal (File No. 07EN004). In each instance the NIRB confirmed that the applications were exempt from the requirement for further screening pursuant to Section 12.4.3 of the NLCA and the activities therein remained subject to the terms and conditions recommended in the original May 27, 2005 and March 26, 2007 Screening Decision Reports. A summary of the additional applications associated with NIRB Files No. 05YN078 and 07EN004 is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Additional applications associated with NIRB Files No. 05YN078 and 07EN004

Authorization	Application			Correspondence Issued by NIRB
	Date Received by NIRB	Type	Reason for Application	
INAC Land Use Permit (N2006C0036)	March 26, 2010	Extension	To continue drilling and exploration activities	March 29, 2010 (reissued SDR)
INAC Land Use Permit (N2006C0036)	March 10, 2011	Extension	To continue drilling and exploration activities	March 17, 2011 (reissued SDR)
NRI Scientific Research Licence	May 1, 2012	Extension	To continue baseline studies on freshwater and sediment quality and to use the existing camp facilities to house research personnel	May 14, 2012 (reissued SDR)

Notes: INAC = Indian and Northern Affairs Canada; NRI = Nunavut Research Institute; NIRB = Nunavut Impact Review Board; SDR= Screening Decision Report

The current request for extension to AANDC, the original NIRB Screening Decision Report (07EN004) and related file information are available from the NIRB's online registry at the following location:

[http://ftp.nirb.ca/01-SCREENINGS/COMPLETED_SCREENINGS/2007/07EN004-Baffinland - Geotechnical Program/](http://ftp.nirb.ca/01-SCREENINGS/COMPLETED_SCREENINGS/2007/07EN004-Baffinland_-_Geotechnical_Program/)

PREVIOUSLY-SCREENED PROJECT PROPOSAL:

As previously screened by the NIRB (File No. 05YN078), the “Baseline Environmental Field Study” project was located on Baffin Island within the Qikiqtani region, from Milne Inlet at the north to the Steensby Inlet area to the southwest. The Proponent indicated that it intended to collect baseline environmental data to support the development of an environmental impact assessment in support of its Mary River Iron Ore project proposal (NIRB File No. 08MN053).

The activities and components associated with the previously screened proposal (NIRB File No. 05YN078) included:

- Set up a meteorological station for monitoring temperature, rainfall, wind direction and speed;
- Establishment of water quality and flow sampling locations (ground water and surface water);
- Fly two potential transportation corridors (the abandoned road from Nuluujaak Mountain to Milne Inlet) and a second potential route south to Steensby Inlet;
- Conduct sound monitoring;
- Conduct wildlife survey (observations only);
- Undertake benthic and fish sampling;
- Soil and sediment sampling;
- Conduct marine survey (observations only); and,
- Undertake an archaeology survey (observations only).

As previously screened by the NIRB (File No. 07EN004), the “Mary River Geotechnical Drilling” project was located on Baffin Island, encompassing Milne Inlet, Mary River and Steensby Inlet. The Proponent indicated that it intended to conduct a geotechnical drilling program and associated activities.

The activities and components associated with the previously screened proposal (NIRB File No. 07EN004) included:

- Continued mineral exploration at Deposits #1, 2, 3 and 3A (renewal of activities permitted previously);
- Initiation of mineral exploration on Deposit No. 4;
- Continued operation of the existing 80-person tent camp and expansion to 100-persons;
- Temporary installation of three (3) 8-12 person fly camps at Milne Inlet, Steensby Inlet and Deposit No. 4 to support drilling activities;
- Land-based geotechnical investigations of mine-related infrastructure at Mary River, potential transportation routes, potential hydro and wind power sites, port-related facilities at Milne Inlet and Steensby Inlet (no construction activities);
- On-ice geotechnical drilling investigations of port-related facilities at Milne Inlet and Steensby Inlet;
- Winter road use;
- Airstrip use;
- Fuel transportation and storage chemical transportation and storage;
- Mobilization of three additional rock coring drills (for an on-site total of 7 rigs);
- Water use and deposition of waste;
- Use of aircraft/watercraft/land vehicle for personnel drop-off and pick-up to project location;

- Use of on-site mechanized vehicles (i.e. All-Terrain Vehicle, snowmobile, truck, zodiac); and
- Water and sediment quality sampling; hydrology stream gauging.

CURRENT APPLICATION:

Baffinland is proposing to extend its AANDC Land Use Permit for one year in support of its ongoing archaeological surveying, geotechnical surveying and baseline scientific studies program for its “Mary River Geotechnical Drilling” project.

Please note that Section 12.4.3 of the NLCA states that:

“Any application for a component or activity of a project proposal that has been permitted to proceed in accordance with these provisions shall be exempt from the requirement for screening by NIRB unless:

(a) such component or activity was not part of the original project proposal; or

(b) its inclusion would significantly modify the project.”

After completing a review of the information provided in support of the current application, the NIRB is of the understanding that the proposed application does not change the general scope of the original project activities, and the exceptions noted in NLCA 12.4.3(a) and (b) do not apply. Therefore, this application is exempt from the requirement for screening pursuant to Section 12.4.3 of the NLCA and the activities therein remain subject to the terms and conditions recommended in the original May 27, 2005 and March 26, 2007 Screening Decision Reports (enclosed).

Please also be advised that NIRB Project Certificate No. 005, issued on December 28, 2012 for Baffinland Iron Mines Corp.’s Mary River Project (NIRB File No. 08MN053) also contains terms and conditions which may be applicable to the activities associated with this project proposal; NIRB Project Certificate No. 005 is available online from the NIRB’s public registry at the following location:

<http://ftp.nirb.ca/03-MONITORING/08MN053-MARY%20RIVER%20IRON%20MINE/01-PROJECT%20CERTIFICATE/>

If you have any questions or require clarification, please contact Jaswir Dhillon, Technical Advisor, at (867) 983-4609 or jdhillon@nirb.ca.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ryan Barry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Ryan Barry
Executive Director
Nunavut Impact Review Board

cc: James Millard, Baffinland Iron Mine Corporation
Oliver Curran, Baffinland Iron Mine Corporation
Tracey McCaie, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
Doug Stenton, Government of Nunavut, Department of Culture and Heritage
Jean Daniel Blouin, Government of Nunavut, Department of Environment
Elizabeth Patreau, Department of Fisheries and Oceans
Georgina Williston, Department of Fisheries and Oceans
Phyllis Beaulieu, Nunavut Water Board
Bernie MacIsaac, Qikiqtani Inuit Association

Enclosed (2): NIRB Screening Decision Report, File No.: 05YN078 (*May 27, 2005*)
NIRB Screening Decision Report, File No.: 07EN004 (*March 26, 2007*)