Ministre des Affaires autochtones et du Nord



Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0H4

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Mr. Stanley Anablak
President
Kitikmeot Inuit Association
PO Box 18
CAMBRIDGE BAY NU X0B 0C0

Via email: kiapresident@qiniq.com

Dear Mr. Anablak:

Thank you for your letter of August 24, 2016, in regard to the Nunavut Impact Review Board's Final Hearing Report respecting Sabina Gold & Silver Corp.'s Back River Gold Mine Project.

You have expressed your conditional support for the project and satisfaction with the proponent's proposed monitoring and mitigation programs for caribou. You have also conveyed your confidence in the ability of regulatory agencies, including the Nunavut Water Board, to address remaining project concerns.

Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada is working closely with the other responsible Ministers, those of Fisheries and Oceans, Natural Resources, and Transport, to review the Final Hearing Report and our decision options. Upon completion of the review, the responsible Ministers will make a decision as required pursuant to Article 12 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. I would like to assure you that the ecosystemic and socioeconomic impacts and benefits of the Back River Project will be fully considered before any decision is issued. Once a decision has been made, I will communicate my decision on behalf of the responsible Ministers to the Nunavut Impact Review Board.

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Again, I would like to thank you for bringing your views to the Government of Canada's attention.

Sincerely,

Hon. Carolyn Bennett, M.D., P.C., M.P.

c.c.: The Honourable Hunter Tootoo, P.C., M.P.

The Honourable Peter Taptuna, M.L.A.

The Honourable Keith Peterson, M.L.A.

The Honourable Tony Akoak, M.L.A.

The Honourable Emiliano Qirngnuq, M.L.A.

Ms. Cathy Towtongie

Ms. Elizabeth Copland

Mr. Thomas Kabloona

Mr. Bruce McLeod

Mr. Matthew Spence





P.O. Box 18 Cambridge Bay, NU X0B 0C0 Telephone: (867) 983-2458 Fax: (867) 983-2701 www.kitia.ca

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The Honourable Carolyn Bennett P.C., M.P. Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs 10 Wellington Street, 21st Floor Gatineau, OC K1A 0H4

August 24, 2016

Kugluktuk 46-54De

Dear Minister Bennett:

Bathurst Inlet Kingaok 404<u>U</u>D4

RE: Nunavut Impact Review Board June 15, 2016 Hearing Report - Sabina Gold & Silver Corp.'s (Sabina) Back River Gold Mine Project (the Project)

Bay Chimo Umingmaktok DL_eFeDee

Gjoa Haven Okhoktok D20720J20

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The Kitikmeot Inuit Association (KIA) was an active participant throughout the Nunavut Impact Review Board's (NIRB or the Board) review of the Project. KIA is in receipt of correspondence to you from Sabina dated July 20, 2016 requesting that you return the June 15, 2016 NIRB Report to the Board under one of paragraphs 12.5.7(d) or (e) of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA).

KIA is the Designated Inuit Organization under Articles 6, 19, 20, 21, 26 and 27.2 of the NLCA in relation to the Project. KIA is also the landowner of a majority of the land upon which the Project will be constructed, and representative of the socioeconomic interest for Inuit of the Kitikmeot Region. KIA has always encouraged responsible mining development in the Kitikmeot Region and has supported Sabina and its plans for the Project accordingly. During the NIRB proceeding KIA supported the Project as proposed. However, you should be aware that final KIA support for the Project is contingent on the completion of an Inuit Impact Benefit Agreement (IIBA), land tenure agreement, and the Board's inclusion of the commitments, terms and conditions, jointly developed by KIA and Sabina, in any eventual Project Certificate. Inuit support for the Project is firm across the Kitikmeot Region, as indicated by the results of Sabina's recent community consultation tour.

The Sabina proceeding was comprehensive and carefully conducted. The NIRB is an Institution of Public Government established by Article 12 of the NLCA and is a central component of the co-management system in Nunavut. Inuit, and Kitikmeot Inuit in particular, place great stock in their land claim institutions. The concerns about barren-ground caribou expressed by Inuit participants and wildlife managers in the Sabina proceeding were genuine and are also widespread. Shortly after the conclusion of the Sabina NIRB process, KIA appeared before the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board in support of affected Hunters and Trappers Organizations as that board considered the need to impose Total Allowable Harvests on Bathurst and Bluenose East caribou harvesters. Inuit and other aboriginal peoples maintain deeply held cultural concerns about caribou and the effects of development on these herds.

> Affiliates: Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, Kitikmeot Corporation, Nunavut Resources Corporation.



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KIA and Kitikmeot Inuit give considerable weight to concerns about caribou when evaluating any project that may adversely affect herds located near any proposed project area. KIA agrees that Sabina has proposed to conduct careful and comprehensive caribou monitoring and mitigation programs based in a Wildlife Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (WMMP) and a Wildlife Effects Monitoring Plan (WEMP). While KIA is satisfied with these Plans, it should be noted that they were only finalized during the hearing and that these final details were the subject of a joint submission by Sabina, KIA and the Government of Nunavut on the final day of the hearing. Unfortunately that meant the Board did not have the benefit of a full airing of these revised plans.

While it is difficult to anticipate the contents of regulatory instruments which may be issued in the future, KIA does have confidence that the Nunavut Water Board will address tailings, waste rock management and water quality matters thoroughly and effectively. Our submissions to NIRB indicated that KIA felt the regulatory agencies could properly address any remaining concerns with respect to the Project.

In the circumstances, in light of KIA's review of the Report and Sabina's submissions to you, we are of the view that a more focussed conversation on the caribou concerns raised by the Board is required. While KIA agrees with Sabina that the report should be returned to NIRB under section 12.5.7 of the NLCA, we think that the Board should be given the discretion to determine how best to structure any further review. As a result, KIA recommends that the Report be returned to the Board under paragraph 12.5.7(e) with your instructions to focus any further investigations on matters related to the Project's impacts on caribou and the best approaches to mitigation of such impacts.

Yours truly,

President

Kitikmeot Inuit Association

cc. Honourable Peter Taptuna, Premier Nunavut
Hunter Tootoo, MP for Nunavut
Kitikmeot MLAs
Cathy Towtongie, President Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
Elizabeth Copland, Chairperson NIRB
Thomas Kabloona, Chairperson NWB
Bruce McLeod, President and CEO Sabina
Matthew Spence, Regional Director General CanNor

From:

<carolyn.bennett@parl.gc.ca> <Minister@aandc-aadnc.gc.ca>

To: Date:

8/25/2016 4:05 PM

Subject:

FW: NIRB Hearing Report June 1

Attachments: image003.jpg; Letter to Hon. Carolyn Bennett Minister INAC - NIRB Sabina gold Silver

Corp's project- August 24 2016.pdf

From: Peggy Adjun [mailto:landsadmin@kitia.ca]

Sent: August 25, 2016 4:03 PM To: Bennett, Carolyn - M.P.

Cc: Geoff Clark; 'Paul Emingak'; president@kitia.ca

Subject: NIRB Hearing Report June 1

Good day,

Attached is letter NIRB June 15, 2016 Hearing Report Sabina Gold & Silver Back River Gold Mine Project.

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