



NIRB File No.: 10EN013

AANDC File No.: N2015C0014, *previously* N2010C0003

NWB File No.: 2BE-STO1015

March 26, 2015

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

Sent via email: tracey.mccaie@aandc.ca; landsmining@aandc.gc.ca

Re: Application Exempt from the Requirement for Screening pursuant to Section 12.4.3 of the NLCA: Aston Bay Holdings Ltd. “Aston Bay Property - Storm and Seal Prospects” project, Oikiqtani (North Baffin) Region

Dear Tracey McCaie:

On February 20, 2015 the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) received an application from Aston Bay Holdings Ltd.¹ (Aston Bay) to replace Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) Land Use Permit N2015C0014 (previously N2010C0003) for Aston Bay for its “Aston Bay Property – Storm and Seal Prospects” project. On March 12, 2015 the NIRB received correspondence from the Nunavut Planning Commission that the extension request did not change the scope of the originally reviewed project, and that the terms and conditions of the previous April 23, 2010 conformity determination still apply. Also, on March 12, 2015 the NIRB received a referral from AANDC.

Please be advised that the original project proposal (NIRB File No.: 10EN013) was received by the NIRB from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC, now AANDC) on February 15, 2010 and was screened by the Board in accordance with Part 4, Article 12 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA). On May 13, 2010 the NIRB issued the enclosed NLCA 12.4.4(a) screening decision to the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada which indicated that the proposed project could proceed subject to the NIRB’s recommended project-specific terms and conditions.

Additional authorization and extension requests associated with the “Aston Bay Property–Storm and Seal Prospects” project have also been reviewed by the NIRB following screening of the original project proposal (File No. 10EN013). In each instance the NIRB confirmed that the applications were exempt from the requirement for further screening pursuant to Section 12.4.3

¹ Joint venture between Commander Resources Ltd. (primary tenure holder) and Aston Bay Holdings Ltd. (operator)

of the NLCA and the activities therein remained subject to the terms and conditions recommended in the May 13, 2010 Screening Decision Report. A summary of the additional applications associated with NIRB File No. 10EN013 is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Additional applications associated with NIRB File No. 10EN013

Authorization	Application			NIRB Decision	
	Date Received by NIRB	Type	Reason for Application	Date Issued	Type
AANDC Land Use Permit (N2010C0003)	June 21, 2012	Extension	Continue exploration activities	July 6, 2012	Reissued May 13, 2010 SDR
AANDC Land Use Permit (N2010C0003)	January 18, 2013	Amendment	Addition of Seal deposit and change style of drill used on site.	January 22, 2013	Reissued May 13, 2010 SDR
AANDC Land Use Permit (N2010C0003)	May 14, 2013	Extension	Continue exploration activities	June 7, 2013	Reissued May 13, 2010 SDR
AANDC Land Use Permit (N2010C0003)	February 17, 2014	Extension	Continue exploration activities	February 26, 2014	Reissued May 13, 2010 SDR

Notes: AANDC=Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada; NIRB=Nunavut Impact Review Board; SDR=Screening Decision Report

The current AANDC application, the original NIRB Screening Decision Report (File No. 10YN013) and related file information are available from the NIRB's online public registry at the following location:

<http://ftp.nirb.ca/01-SCREENINGS/COMPLETED%20SCREENINGS/2010/10EN013-Commander%20Resources%20Ltd/>.

PREVIOUSLY-SCREENED PROJECT PROPOSAL:

As previously screened by the NIRB (File No.: 10EN013), the "Aston Bay Property – Storm and Seal Prospects" project was located within the Qikiqtani region, approximately 112 kilometres (km) south of the community of Resolute Bay. The Proponent intended to conduct a preliminary exploration drilling program from August 2010 through July 2012, to potentially be followed by a diamond drilling program.

The activities and components associated with the previously screened proposal included:

- Setup and operation of a 12-person temporary tent camp;
- Incineration of sewage and combustible solid waste;
- Fuel storage;
- Use of helicopter and fixed wing aircraft for field pickups and drop offs, and transport of supplies;
- Percussion drilling;
- Potential diamond drilling;
- Ground and airborne geophysical survey; and
- Waster use and waste disposal.

On June 21, 2012 Commander Resources Ltd. applied for a one-year extension to the Land Use Permit No. N2010C0003 to continue previously approved exploration activities.

The activities and components associated with the previous January 18, 2013 amendment to the AANDC Land Use Permit No. N2010C0003 included:

- One additional drill area located around the Seal lead-zinc deposit, proposed 20 drill holes with depths ranging from 100 to 600 metres at this location;
- Use of a heli-portable diamond drill rig at the exploration site instead of previous approved heli-portable reverse circulation drill rig; and
- Drill program to take place during the summer of 2013 and 2014 for 8 to 12 weeks. Further exploration work was dependent upon the results of this drilling work.

On May 14, 2013 Commander Resources Ltd. applied for a one-year extension to the Land Use Permit No. N2010C0003 to continue previously approved exploration activities.

On February 16, 2014 Commander Resources Ltd. applied to extend its existing Land Use Permit for an additional year to continue previously approved exploration activities at the project site. The NIRB noted that the application represented the third consecutive one-year term extension to the original Land Use Permit issued in 2010.

CURRENT APPLICATION:

Aston Bay is currently applying for a new AANDC Land Use Permit N2015C0014 to replace its previous permit N2010C0003 to continue previously approved exploration activities at the Storm and Seal properties.

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 new AANDC LUP 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 13, 2010 Screening Decision Report (enclosed).

If you have any questions or require additional clarification, please contact Kelli Gillard, Technical Advisor, at (867) 983-4619 or kgillard@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: Robert L'Heureux, Apex Geoscience Ltd.
Phyllis Beaulieu, Nunavut Water Board
Joel Fortier, Qikiqtani Inuit Association

Enclosure: NIRB Screening Decision Report, File No.: 10EN013 (May 13, 2010)