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Department of Environment

Ministère de l'Environnement

May 4, 2006

File No: NWB 3BC-BUR0305

Mrs. Phyllis Beaulieu
Manager of Licensing
Nunavut Water Board

Via Email:

licensing@nwb.nunavut.ca

RE: Renewal – Alex McPherson & Burnt Creek Project Renewal Type “B”

The Department of Environment(DOE) thanks Nunavut Water Board (NWB) for the opportunity to provide comments on the Burnt Creek Project Renewal.

DOE have several general comments, however most stem from the lack of a single concise source of information regarding the project. DOE recommends that the proponent submit a project proposal containing all relevant information in a concise format. The Nunavut Impact Review Board ftp site has guides to project proposals that the proponent could use for reference:

- http://ftp.nunavut.ca/nirb/NIRB_ADMINISTRATION/NIRB_DRAFT_PSIR/051028-NIRB-PSIR-Draft-Exploration-OTAE.pdf

General Comments:

1. The Canadian Heritage Rivers System

The proponent should be aware that Burnt Creek flows directly into the Coppermine river which has been nominated for Canadian Heritage River status. The Canadian Heritage Rivers System (CHRS) is Canada's national program for freshwater conservation. In Nunavut (as elsewhere in Canada), it is a cooperative program between the governments of Canada and the Government of Nunavut (other provincial and territorial governments for the rest of Canada). The objectives of the program are to give national recognition to Canada's outstanding rivers and to ensure long-term management that will conserve their natural, cultural and recreational values for the benefit and enjoyment of Canadians, now and in the future.

In Nunavut, three rivers have been designated (Soper, Kazan and Thelon), meaning that management plans detailing how their heritage values will be protected have been lodged with the CHR Board, and one has been nominated (Coppermine). Therefore, we ask that if NWB grants the prospecting permits within the management areas of the Heritage Rivers that it insures, via conditions within the permits, that the prospectors respect the values of the Heritage Rivers (please see the Management Plans referenced above) and not to engage in any activity that would interfere or otherwise detract from the experience of tourists and Nunavummiut using the Heritage Rivers now and in the future.

2. Wildlife

a. Caribou

- i.* The proposed project area lies within barren caribou wintering and early spring grounds. Additionally, it is within caribou migration route for late July / early August. For these reasons DOE suggest that the following measures are adopted:

DIAND Caribou Protection Measures (under the Territorial Lands Act)

1. (a) The Permittee shall not, without approval, conduct any activity between May 15 and July 15 within the Caribou Protection Areas depicted on the map certified by the Engineer as the "Caribou Protection Map" and annexed to this Land Use Permit.

(b) A Permittee may, upon approval by the Land Use Inspector, operate within the said Caribou Protection Areas beyond the May 15 deadline set out in 1(a), provided that, when monitoring information indicates that caribou cows are approaching the area of operation, the Permittee will implement 1(c).

(c) On cessation of activities pursuant to 1(a) or 1(b), the Permittee will remove from the zone all personnel who are not required for the maintenance and protection of the camp facilities and equipment, unless otherwise directed by the Land Use Inspector.

d) The Permittee may commence or resume activities prior to July 15 within those parts of the Caribou Protection Areas released by the Land Use Inspector for the reason that caribou cows are not expected to use those parts for calving or post-calving (note 1).

2. (a) In the event that caribou cows calve outside of the Caribou Protection Areas, the Permittee shall suspend operations within the area(s) occupied by cows and/or calves between May 15 and July 15.

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b) In the event that caribou cows and calves are present, the permittee shall suspend:

(i) blasting;

(ii) overflights by aircraft at any altitude of less than 300 meters above ground level; and

(iii) the use of snowmobiles and ATVs(all-terrain vehicles) outside the immediate vicinity of the camp.

3 (a) During migration of Caribou, the Permittee shall not locate any operation so as to block or cause substantial diversion to migration.

(b) The Permittee shall cease activities that may interfere with migration, such as airborne geophysics surveys or movement of equipment, until the migrating caribou have passed.

4. (a) The Permittee shall not, between May 15 and September 1, construct any camp, cache any fuel or conduct any blasting within 10 km of any "Designated Crossing" as outlined on the map certified by the Engineer as the "Caribou Protection Map" and annexed to this Land Use Permit.

(b) The Permittee shall not, between May 15 and September 1, conduct any diamond drilling operation within 5km of any "Designated Crossing" as outlined on the map certified by the Engineer as the "Caribou Protection map" and annexed to this land Use Permit.

NOTE

1. The Land Use Inspector's decision will be based on the existing caribou information.
2. Concentrations of caribou should be avoided by low-level aircraft at all times.



3. Carnivores

The proposed project area is within prime habitat of Grizzly Bears and Wolves. The proponent is advised to minimize odors that potentially attract carnivores through timely camp housekeeping. Should the proponent experience any interaction with carnivores, they are advised they should contact the local wildlife officer.

4. Bear-People Conflicts

The operation is in an area where bears may be encountered. Proper food handling and garbage disposal procedures should be followed to reduce the likelihood that bears will be attracted to the operation. Careful planning and attention to details of camp design and maintenance will decrease the attraction of bears to camp.

The applicant should follow procedures outlined in the "Safety in Bear Country Manual", and should contact the Regional/Area Biologist or the Wildlife manager indicated below for information and advice on measures which should be taken to minimize the possibility of bear-people conflicts.

DoE Contacts

Manager, Wildlife
-Dan Shewchuk, (867) 857-2828
Biologist, Kitikmeot Region, Kugluktuk
- Mathieu Dumond, (867) 982-7444

5. Other Information

The proponent should provide the following missing information:

- Location of Spill Kits
- Dates of abandonment & restoration
- Disposal of sewage and domestic wastes

Once again the Department of Environment thanks Nunavut Water Board for the opportunity to comment on this project proposal.

Sincerely,

Michael Mifflin
Coordinator, Land Use Planning