



# DEHCHO FIRST NATIONS

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July 13, 2015

RE: Intervention North American Tungsten Corporation Ltd's (NATCL) Water License Renewal Application

Dehcho First Nations (DFN) has reviewed NATCL's Water License Renewal Application (MV2015L2-0003) to replace their existing Water License (MV2002L2-0019), which expires January 29, 2016.

We support the inclusion of an Aquatic Effects Monitoring Program (AEMP) and Interim Closure and Reclamation Plan (ICRP) as part of the Water License Renewal with consultation from DFN, Liidlii Kue First Nation and Naha Dehe Dene Band. DFN will fully participate in the AEMP and ICRP processes and looks forward on providing comments in the future. We request that the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board put conditions into NATCL's Water License Renewal to address both the inclusion of the ICRP and the AEMP. We also request that adequate timelines are put as conditions into the Water License Renewal to allow for the timely completion of these plans.

DFN's primary concern when developing the AEMP is to ensure that it provides an effective basis for determining if the Flat River is being protected from the effects associated with the construction, operation, and closure and reclamation of the Cantung Minesite. DFN also aims to develop adaptive management protocols within the AEMP process to ensure that if there are found to be negative impacts to the Flat River that there are processes to address these issues. A key component of AEMP is to address the effects of the tailings facilities including the effects of the Flat River Tailings. DFN also acknowledges that the development of the AEMP includes a traditional knowledge component with input from LKFN and NDDB.

DFN's primary concern when considering and developing closure and reclamation options is the overall health of the Flat River. Our overarching goal is to ensure that the water quality of the Flat River is maintained, fish and other aquatic species that reside in the river or depend on the Flat River for food remain healthy and there are no downstream effects resulting from the Cantung mine.

For DFN, the two most significant aspects of reclamation and closure planning is the chemical and physical stability of the project components of the Cantung Mine site. Specifically, DFN wants to ensure

that the tailing facilities (including historic Flat River Tailings) and waste rock are chemically stable post closure and that NATCL addresses acid rock drainage and metal leaching potential from the waste rock and tailings facilities. DFN also wants to ensure that the tailings facilities and other aspects of the Cantung Mine are constructed to be physically stable and that NATCL addresses the presence of liquefiable soils underlying areas of the mine site and erosion potential given the close proximity of the Cantung Mine to the Flat River.

As part of the Water License Renewal, DFN has also reviewed NATCL's S4-44 Water Quality Assessment Report. We have some outstanding concerns regarding the change in the water quality objective for fluoride that were outlined in our information requests.

It is the opinion of DFN that typically the purpose of a hearing is to debate different points of view regarding an application for a proposed development project. In the case of NATCL's water license renewal application, there is a general consensus among the reviewers surrounding the technical aspects of the water license renewal. Therefore, DFN is requesting a written component rather than a formal technical hearing for NATCL's Water License Renewal but does not object to other party's requests for a hearing.

Given the financial uncertainty surrounding the future of the Cantung mine; DFN has questions and concerns regarding environmental monitoring and the future of the ICRP and AEMP processes, the 2015 Environmental Effects Monitoring and the Geochemical Risk Assessment. For DFN, the ICRP and the AEMP are key components of modernizing the environmental monitoring and planning at the Cantung mine. DFN notes that there has been a delay in the first draft of the AEMP by NATCL. It is a key priority for DFN that the ICRP and AEMP are continued regardless of the future of the Cantung minesite and that both are completed on schedule.

If you have any questions regarding DFN's intervention, please contact Dahti Tsetso at 867-695-2355 or [dahti\\_tsetso@dehcho.org](mailto:dahti_tsetso@dehcho.org).

Mahsi cho,



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## Intervention

### 1. Care and maintenance at the Cantung Minesite

It is DFN's understanding that during care and maintenance phase, production is stopped but the site is managed to ensure it remains in a safe and stable condition.

#### Recommendation:

- Request NATCL outline what will occur during care and maintenance at the minesite. Including who will be responsible for care and maintenance and what the reporting requirements will be.
- Request the GNWT to outline the frequency of inspections and what will occur during the inspections.

### 2. EEM 2015

It is DFN's understanding that during the summer of 2015, the Environmental Effects Monitoring study will be completed.

#### Recommendation:

- Request NATCL to confirm that EEM activities will be taking place this summer.
- Request NATCL provide an outline of the 2015 EEM Study Design.

### 3. Delays to the AEMP, ICRP or Geochemical Risk Assessment Schedule

#### Recommendation:

- DFN requests that NATCL outline and update the AEMP, ICRP and Geochemical Risk Assessment schedule.