



NAHANNI BUTTE DENE BAND

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30 September 2022

VIA EMAIL

Joanna Ankersmit
Director General, Natural Resources and Environment
Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada

Heather Bourassa
Chairperson
Sahtu Land Use Planning Board

RE: Sahtu Land Use Plan Amendment - Zone 41

Ms. Ankersmit & Ms. Bourassa:

I am writing to you to provide the Crown-Indigenous Relations Canada ("CIRNAC") and the Sahtu Land Use Planning Board ("SLUPB") with a summary of Nah?a Dehe Dene Band ("NDDB") priorities with respect to the Sahtu Land Use Plan Amendment for Zone 41, the portion of the South Nahanni River watershed which is not protected within the N?aats'ihch'oh National Park Reserve. We met with your staff on 9 August 2022 and subsequently received a briefing from Parks Canada, GNWT, and CIRNAC regarding the context for the proposed amendment.

NDDB has three main priorities with respect to this area:

1. NDDB's Treaty and Aboriginal rights are impacted by any land use changes within the entire South Nahanni watershed. The 'boundary' between the Sahtu Settlement Area and the remainder of the watershed is arbitrary, has never been agreed by NDDB, and does not reflect any ecological reality.
2. NDDB, with DFN support, will be establishing a Guardians program as a result of the Ndahecho Gondié Gháádé Agreement for Nahanni National Park Reserve, which we signed today with DFN and the Parks Canada Agency. NDDB has an interest in extending on-the-land environmental monitoring to the entire watershed. Whether this might come in the form of an indigenous protected conservation area, or another

mechanism, will require further discussion between the stakeholders. We encourage all stakeholders to work with NDDB to advance this objective.

3. In 2013, NDDB signed a Cooperation Agreement with Selwyn Chihong Mining Ltd. with respect to the Selwyn Project, recognizing NDDB's Traditional Territory would be impacted by that Project. Despite the inactivity of the Selwyn Project in recent years, we continue to maintain a good relationship with Selwyn Chihong. Selwyn Chihong has met their obligations to NDDB on a consistent basis for nearly a decade. NDDB is supportive of responsible development of the Selwyn Project and the Howard's Pass Access Road, if and when economic conditions are favourable. We support land use planning that enables access to and development of the Selwyn Project area, including mineral leases NT-2878 and NT-2879 within Zone 41.

NDDB is in support of the proposed amendment, subject to stakeholders working with NDDB to advance the above priorities.

NDDB requests that that SLUPB place this letter on the public record for the Zone 41 Amendment proceeding.

NDDB requests that CIRNAC consider these comments as it moves towards closing consultation on this amendment. NDDB understands that DFN will not be providing further comment on this matter and recognizes that NDDB is the primary party within the region that must be consulted concerning the proposed amendment.

Please contact our Negotiator, Elliot Holland (elliot.holland@imcprojects.ca, 867-446-0309) with any further questions regarding this file.

Sincerely,



Chief Steve Vital
Naha Dehe Dene Band

Cc Justin Stoyko, Executive Director, SLUPB
Kim Pawley, Manager, Env. Assessment, Land Use Planning, & Conservation, CIRNAC
Janice Traynor, Policy Coordinator Sustainable Development, CIRNAC
Grand Chief Herb Norwegian, DFN
Ramona Pearson, Resource Management Coordinator, DFN
Chris Reid, legal counsel to DFN
Michael Nadli, Chief Negotiator, DFN