INFORMATION REQUEST RESPONSE

EA No: 0809-001 **Information Request No: AltNrth #07**

Date Received:

February 28, 2011

Linkage to Other IRs:

Review Board IR #19

Date of this Response

May 31, 2011

Request:

Is there any intention on the part of the Developer to initiate and/or fund active research and development into a more permanent solution for the underground arsenic stored at the Giant Mine that would reduce or eliminate perpetual care requirements? If not, please provide a detailed rationale.

Reference to DAR (relevant DAR Sections):

Section 6.2.2 of the DAR provides an overview of the process that was used to assess alternative approaches to remediation, including a section entitled "Future Re-Consideration of Alternatives" (Section 6.2.2.4).

Reference to the EA Terms of Reference

Section 2.3 of the Terms of Reference (Temporal Scope) – "As the contaminant will continue to exist on the site, the risk of potential contamination may exist in perpetuity. To predict impacts in the future, assumptions must be made about future events and conditions" (p. 7).

Section 3.2.2 of the Terms of Reference requires the Developer to provide: "A description of project feasibility including financial feasibility. Include discussion of funding certainty for the development and related monitoring" (p.10).

Summary:

- INAC undertook a detailed and exhaustive, peer reviewed process in order to identify the most suitable approach to remediating the Giant Mine site for the long term.

- INAC and the GNWT consider the Frozen Block Method as the most suitable long-term management option for the site that requires involvement in perpetuity.
- The Developer has no current intention to initiate or fund additional research and development into alternatives to the Frozen Block method.
- However, as stated in the DAR, INAC and the GNWT remain open to the consideration of alternative emerging technologies in the future. Technology reviews and evaluations will be conducted as part of the Giant Mine Remediation Project Adaptive Management Plan (AMP) that is currently being developed.

Response:

Due to the detailed and exhaustive approach that was used to identify the remediation method, and the nature of the site (i.e., no quick fixes or walk away options), INAC is confident in the Frozen Block Method and has no intention to initiate or fund research and development into alternative approaches. As stated in the DAR, INAC and the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) consider the Frozen Block Method to be the most suitable long-term management option for the underground arsenic dust. This method was selected from 56 possible options, subjected to extensive peer review, and has not been found lacking in effectiveness or permanence. Once frozen, the level of effort to maintain this condition is expected to be minimal (e.g., monitoring, water treatment, operations and maintenance).

The Governments of Canada and the Northwest Territories, in selecting the preferred remediation option for the site, have recognized and accepted that the Giant Mine Remediation Project includes long-term care, maintenance and monitoring. The DAR also states clearly that several elements of the project will be required to be addressed in perpetuity. Long-term care, maintenance and monitoring are essential components of the remediation approach at the Giant Mine site that will protect human and environmental health and safety and ensure the integrity of Canada's investment.

The DAR also notes (Section 6.2.2.4) that INAC and the GNWT remain open to considering alternative emerging technologies in the future. The intention is to review advances in technologies rather than fund active research through the remediation project. Technology reviews and evaluations will be conducted as an element of the Giant Mine Remediation Project Adaptive Management Plan (AMP) which is currently under development.