



Crown-Indigenous Relations
and Northern Affairs Canada

Relations Couronne-Autochtones
et Affaires du Nord Canada

Assistant Deputy Minister

Sous-ministre adjoint

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0H4

20 JUL. 2018

Mr. David Harpley
Vice President, Environment and Permitting Affairs
Canadian Zinc Corporation
Suite 1710-650 West Georgia Street
VANCOUVER BC V6B 4N9
Via e-mail: david@canadianzinc.com

Ms. JoAnne Deneron
Chairperson
Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board
200 Scotia Centre, PO Box 938, 5102-50th Ave
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 2N7
Via e-mail: jdeneron@reviewboard.ca

**RE: Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada's decision on
resuming the decision phase for Canadian Zinc Corporation's Prairie Creek
All-Season Road Environmental Assessment**

Dear David and JoAnne:

On June 8, 2018, Canadian Zinc responded to the responsible Ministers' January 19, 2018 Information Request. On behalf of all responsible Ministers for the Report of Environmental Assessment for Canadian Zinc's proposed Prairie Creek All-Season Road, I wish to convey the federal Minister's decision to resume the decision-phase consideration of the Mackenzie Valley Review Board's recommendation and Report of Environmental Assessment for EA1415-01. As the January 19, 2018 Information Request effectively stopped the seven month time limit for the Federal Minister's decision, this letter will start the clock again. The Federal Minister, with the concurrence of the responsible Ministers, will have 83 days of the posting of this letter on the registry to issue her decision.

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The Information Request had asked that Canadian Zinc provide detailed records of their discussions with the Łı́ıdlıı Kúę First Nation, the Nahʔą Dehé Dene Band, and the Dehcho First Nations. In addition to the response Canadian Zinc provided, the letters of support from each of the Indigenous Governments and Organizations, and the signed Process Agreement which commits Canadian Zinc to negotiate and enter into an Environmental Management Agreement with the Indigenous Governments and Organizations have provided assurance to the responsible Ministers that Canadian Zinc is committed to continuing to engage and include the affected Indigenous Governments and Organizations in the planning and monitoring of the Prairie Creek All-Season Road project.

The responsible Ministers also note that Canadian Zinc and the Indigenous Governments and Organizations have requested that the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs include in her decision a condition, or direction to the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board and Parks Canada, that permits for the Prairie Creek All-Season Road not be issued before the Environmental Management Agreement is concluded between the parties. As noted in a June 22, 2018 letter sent by the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency, on behalf of the responsible Ministers, to the Łı́ıdlıı Kúę First Nation and the Nahʔą Dehé Dene Band, the Federal Minister neither has the authority to direct the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board and Parks Canada, nor can she put conditions in her acceptance that would withhold permits and licences pending the finalization of the Environmental Management Agreement. Should this project proceed to the post Environmental Assessment phase, there are many opportunities for continued dialogue between the parties to address any remaining concerns.

The Information Response package submitted by Canadian Zinc included a document titled "*Draft Implementation Plans Select Measures and Commitments*". I would like to take this opportunity to clarify that these materials were considered only in regards to the implementation of actions identified in the Information Request responses (i.e. a detailed follow-up from outcomes from the Information Requests). "Implementation Plans," for measures, commitments, authorizations and management plans are normally assessed during the regulatory and other post-EA processes for the licencing and permitting of the project. The responsible ministers, by way of accepting the



responses to the information requests, are not indicating that the "Implementation Plans" are acceptable for post-EA purposes, should the project be approved. The purpose of the implementation plan was for Canadian Zinc to provide detail on follow through actions on the engagement outcome for each information request.

The responsible Ministers are encouraged by the commitment of all parties to the negotiation of an Environmental Management Agreement and encourage parties to continue their efforts to conclude such an agreement in a timely manner.

If you have any questions, please contact Adrian Paradis (adrian.paradis@canada.ca), A/Director General, Northern Projects Management Office.

Respectfully,

Stephen M. Van Dine
Assistant Deputy Minister
Northern Affairs Organization

c.c.: Herb Norwegian
Peter Marcellais
Gerald Antoine
Gene Hope
Dr. Joe Dragon
Willard Hagen
Gary Bohnet
Mike Aumond
Paul Guy
Sylvia Haener
Jonah Mitchell
Tom Hoggarth
Patrick O'Neill
Adrian Paradis
Mark Cliffe-Phillips
Shelagh Montgomery