



Workplan

for

EA0708-001 Selwyn Resources – Mineral Exploration at Howard's Pass

1 Introduction

On June 12, 2007, the Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated (SSI) referred a Land Use Permit application for Selwyn Resources'¹ mineral exploration activities at Howard's Pass, on the Yukon/NWT border. The referral was requested by the Tulita District Land Corporation, a member organization of SSI. The referral was made according to s. 126 of the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act*, which grants the Sahtu First Nation referral powers in the case of a development to be carried out in its settlement area. The referral was made because of a public concern over conflicting land use priorities concerning the area where the development is proposed. The area has been identified as an area of interest for creation of a National Park. There is concern that mineral exploration will threaten the ecological integrity of the region and prevent the lands from being protected.

Selwyn proposes a mineral exploration project with over 100 drill sites and 10 km of new trails near the NWT/Yukon border. The company has substantial interests in the Yukon, running a fairly advanced mineral exploration project there with 8-10 drill rigs on site, two 50 man camps, two airstrips and an access road. The infrastructure already permitted and developed in the Yukon will be used to support extending the drilling program to areas of interest in the NWT.

This Environmental Assessment (EA) is subject to the requirements of Part 5 of the MVRMA. It is also subject to the MVEIRB's *Environmental Impact Assessment Guidelines* and the *Rules of Procedure*. Both of these documents are available online at www.mveirb.nt.ca. The definitions of MVRMA s. 111 apply in this document and throughout the EA. Terms not defined in the MVRMA are used in their general sense and do not imply specific activities or standards that may be associated with the term in other jurisdictions.

2 Approach

This EA will be divided into five phases, some of which have been completed at the writing of this document.

1. The **Start-up phase**, during which the Review Board establishes the basic administrative structure of the EA (including distribution lists and mechanisms, public registry, filing systems, etc.). This phase is completed.
2. The **Scoping phase**, during which the Review Board identifies and prioritizes key issues for the environmental assessment. The Review Board does this through meetings with impacted communities and the developer. Scoping

¹ Selwyn Resources applied under the name Pacifica Resources, but following a corporate reorganization, changed its name to Selwyn Resources at the end of May, 2007.

assists the Review Board to develop Terms of Reference and a Workplan for the remainder of the EA. This phase is in progress.

3. The **Analytical Phase**, which will include the development of Developer's Assessment Report, impact predictions and impact analysis.
4. The **Hearing Phase**, which include a pre-hearing conference and public hearing(s), allowing the Review Board members to hear evidence first hand from parties.
5. The **Decision Phase**, which includes the Review Board's decision under MVRMA s. 118 (or s. 134 for an EIR). This phase will be completed with the release of the Report of Environmental Assessment.

This document will set out timeframes for each of these phases. However, as the conclusion of each phase will influence the subsequent phases, these timeframes are necessarily estimates and may vary as the EA proceeds. The plans for information requests and technical reporting are tentative; and the Review Board may determine that these steps are not necessary given the information gathered at a previous stage. Also the public hearing may be a face to face meeting between the parties, Review Board and developer or it may be a paper hearing. These determinations will be made by the Review Board in order to conduct environmental assessments in an efficient and timely manner and will be made in consultation with the parties to the EA.

3 Scope of Development

The Review Board has defined the scope of the development to consist of, but not be limited to, the following physical works or activities that will occur during the general operations of the mineral exploration program:

- Drilling and associated activities, including water withdrawals;
- Clearing of timber and vegetation for CAT trails, drill pads and other uses;
- Transportation to sites from camps, by helicopters, quads and CATs, of personnel and equipment;
- Containment of materials, e.g. waste, fuel and core samples not taken out of the field;

4 Scope of Assessment

The scope of this assessment includes all components of the proposed development as defined above.

The MVRMA defines "impact on the environment" as an effect on any part of the land, water, air or any other component of the environment, as well as on wildlife harvesting, and includes any effect on the social and cultural environment or on heritage resources. This EA will assess any impact to any part of this environment, including the impacts of

accidents and malfunctions and cumulative impacts of this development in conjunction with other developments.

Following a scoping meeting in Tulita on October 10th, 2007 the initial scope of the EA is defined below. A more complete scope of EA will be provided in the Terms of Reference for this EA:

- **Regulatory Issues:** These issues centred largely around waste generation, containment and clean up, particularly of sumps, core samples and other human generated waste. Also, setbacks from watercourses, impacts to potentially fish-bearing streams and other issues were identified.
- **Environmental Issues:** Including impacts to woodland caribou, other alpine ungulates, impacts to the South Nahanni watershed and other biophysical concerns. Of special concern was the impact of noise on wildlife populations, as the developer plans to use helicopters and/or CATs quite extensively.
- **Socio-economic Issues:** There is a lack of meaningful engagement between local communities and the developer. The exploration activities occur within Sahtu lands, but supply and manpower needs are drawn wholly from the Yukon.
- **Establishment of a park:** The primary reason for the referral of this project was the interest by Parks Canada in creating a park in this area. This interest is supported by the local people and the Tulita District Land Corporation, who are concerned that development in the area may threaten the development of the region as a National Park. There is concern that development may compromise the ecological integrity of the area. This conflict over land use is a major issue in this EA.

5 Roles and Responsibilities

This section explains the roles and responsibilities of the Review Board, the Review Board's staff and other parties involved in the Environmental Assessment process.

For a more detailed treatment of roles and responsibilities in the Review Board's environmental impact assessments, please see sections three and four of the Review Board's *Environmental Impact Assessment Guidelines*.

Review Board

The Review Board's role includes the following in relation to this EA:

- Conduct the EA in accordance with ss.126(1) of the MVRMA;
- Determine the scope of the development, in accordance with ss.117 (1) of the MVRMA;
- Consider environmental assessment factors in accordance with ss.117 (2) of the MVRMA;
- Make a determination regarding the environmental impacts or public concern about the development, in accordance with ss.128 (1) of the MVRMA;
- Report to the Federal Minister in accordance with ss.128 (2) of the MVRMA; and,

- Identify areas and extent of effects, within or outside the Mackenzie Valley in which the development is likely to have a significant adverse impact or be a cause of significant public concern, in accordance with ss.128 (4) of the MVRMA.

Review Board Staff

The Review Board's Executive Director and staff are the primary contacts for the developer, aboriginal groups, government bodies (federal, territorial and municipal), non-government organizations (NGOs), expert advisors (experts contracted directly by the Review Board), the public and other interested parties. This does not limit or preclude the Developer from contacting other parties during in the EA process. The Review Board may choose to hire expert advisors to provide technical expertise on specific aspects of the EA.

Developer

The developer is expected to respond in a suitable and timely manner to directions and requests issued by the Review Board. Such requests include but are not necessarily limited to Information Requests, requests for translation of documents, the request for the developer's presence at Public Hearings, and requests to produce public information material.

The developer may present additional information at any time to the Review Board beyond what was requested during the EA process. The Review Board encourages the developer to continue consulting all potentially affected communities and organizations during the EA process. The Review Board may request that the Developer provide a written record verifying consultation, including how the consultations have influenced the design of any part of the development.

Parties

Aboriginal groups, communities, or land owners that may potentially be affected by the development can obtain standing as "parties". The standing of an individual or organization as a party is subject to approval by the Review Board. Party status gives the party the right to fully participate in the EA. Public interest groups, non-governmental organizations and other interested parties may participate in the EA as parties.

Parties may present information at any time during the EA and may be given an opportunity to submit information requests for Board approval during the analysis and hearing phases. Party status may be granted at any time during the proceedings. Please note, the developer is automatically granted party status in the EA process.

Government Bodies

Government bodies may be involved in the EA process as a regulatory authority as defined in the MVRMA, a Responsible Minister as defined in the MVRMA, a Federal Minister as defined in the MVRMA, or an advisor to the Review Board.

6 EA Start-Up and Scoping Schedule

The table below outlines the milestones of phases one (start-up) and two (scoping) of the EA. All dates are target periods and are subject to change.

<i>Milestone</i>	<i>Estimated Working Days</i>
Start up phase	Complete
Scoping Phase	
Preparation and conduct of Community Scoping Hearings	Complete
Draft Workplan issuance	Early November
Workplan issued	end of November
Draft Terms of Reference issuance	Late December
Terms of Reference comment period ends	mid January 2008
Preparation and release of Final Terms of Reference	Late January 2008
Analytical Phase	
Developer's Assessment Report	3 months
Conformity Check	10 days ²
<i>Information Requests</i> ³	1 month
<i>Technical Reports</i> ³	1 month
Hearing Phase	
Pre-hearing Conference	Approx. 15 days after technical reports have been received
Public Hearing	Approx. 30 days after technical reports have been received
Decision Phase	
Report of EA	Approx. 40 days after the conclusion of the public hearing

² unless otherwise indicated, days refers to business days

³ tentative