



7th Floor - 4922 48th Street
PO Box 2130, Yellowknife NT X1A 2P6

Tel: 867-669-0506 Fax: 867-873-6610
www.mvlwb.com

February 24, 2025

File: MV2024C0037

Mark Cliffe-Phillips
Mackenzie Valley Review Board
200 Scotia Centre
Box 938, 5102-50th Avenue
Yellowknife NT X1A 2N7

Sent by email

Dear Mark Cliffe-Phillips,

Re: Fireweed Metals Corp. – Notice of Preliminary Screening Determination – Application for Land Use Permit – Mineral Exploration – Sahtu and Gwich'in Settlement Areas

The Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board (Board) met on February 20, 2025 and considered the Application Package from Fireweed Metals Corp. (Fireweed) for Land Use Permit (Permit) MV2024C0037 for the Gayna Project (Project) in accordance with the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* (MVRMA).

The Board conducted a preliminary screening based on the public record for the proceeding. Based on the evidence provided, the Board is satisfied the screening has been completed according to section 125 of the MVRMA and has decided **not to refer** the Project to environmental assessment. The Board's Preliminary Screening Determination and Reasons for Decision, as required by section 121 of the MVRMA, is attached.

If the Board does not receive notice of referral to environmental assessment, it can proceed with issuance of Permit MV2024C0037 on **Friday March 7, 2025**.

The Board and staff look forward to continued communications throughout the pause period. Please contact Kathy Racher via [email](#) or at (867) 7457 with any questions or concerns regarding this letter.

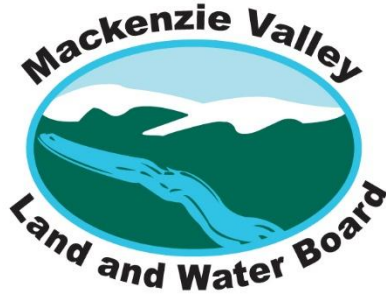
Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tanya MacIntosh". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tanya MacIntosh
Chair, Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board

BCC'd to: SLWB – K'asho Got'ine District Distribution List
GLWB Distribution List
Shae Dalphond – Fireweed Metals Corp.
Katsky Venter – RainCoast Environmental Services

Attached: Preliminary Screening Determination and Reasons for Decision



7th Floor - 4922 48th Street
 PO Box 2130, Yellowknife NT X1A 2P6

Tel: 867-669-0506 Fax: 867-873-6610
 www.mvlwb.com

Land Use Permit Application	
File Number	MV2024C0037
Company	Fireweed Metals Corp.
Project	Gayna Project
Location	Sahtu and Gwich'in Settlement Areas
Activity	Mineral Exploration
Date of Decision	February 20, 2025

1.0 Decision

In accordance with subsection 124(1) of the [Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act](#) (MVRMA), the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board (MVLWB or Board) met on February 20, 2025 to make a preliminary screening determination on the Application from Fireweed Metals Corp. (Fireweed) (Applicant) for Land Use Permit MV2024C0037(Permit)¹ or the Gayna Project (Project).²

The Board has decided not to refer the proposed Project to the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (the Review Board) for Environmental Assessment because, based on the evidence, it is the Board's opinion that the proposed Project will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern.

The Board's determination, including reasons for its decision, are detailed in sections [3.0](#) and [4.0](#).

¹See MVLWB Online Registry www.mvlwb.com for Fireweed – Gayna Project – [Permit Application – Dec2_24](#)

² The Project is the Gayna Project, which is the proposed development, where "development" is defined in Part 5 of the [MVRMA](#) as:

"any undertaking, or any part or extension of an undertaking, that is carried out on land or water and includes an acquisition of lands pursuant to the *Historic Sites and Monuments Act* and measures carried out by a department or agency of government leading to the establishment of a park subject to the *Canada National Parks Act* or the establishment of a park under a territorial law."

2.0 List of Defined Terms and Acronyms

Applicant	Fireweed Metals Corp.
Application	The complete application package submitted by the Applicant for Land Use Permit MV2024C0037
Board	Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board
CRP	Closure and Reclamation Plan
EA	Environmental Assessment
GNWT	Government of the Northwest Territories
GNWT-ECC	Government of the Northwest Territories – Environment and Climate Change
MVLWB	Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board
MVRMA	Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act
Minister	Minister of the Government of the Northwest Territories – Environment and Climate Change
ORS	Online Review System (www.new.onlinereviewssystem.ca)
Party	As per the LWB Rules of Procedure , an applicant, a person, or an organization participating in the regulatory proceeding for the Applications.
Project	Gayna Project, which is the proposed development (as defined in Part 5 of the MVRMA). ³
Review Board	Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board
SCP	Spill Contingency Plan
Standard Permit Conditions	LWB Standard Land Use Permit Conditions Template
TK	Traditional Knowledge
WMP	Waste Management Plan

3.0 Background and Scope of Screening

The Application submitted to the Board for review and consideration consist of a small-scale drilling program which includes the use of a temporary exploration camp. Engagement commenced in December of 2023 and concluded November of 2024. The requirement management plans were submitted with the Application.

In accordance with paragraph 125(1)(a) of the [MVRMA](#), the Board must conduct a preliminary screening of the proposed Project to determine and report to the Review Board whether, in its opinion, the proposed Project might have a significant adverse impact on the environment, or might be a cause of public concern. The details of the Board’s analysis are set out in section [4.0](#) below.

³ “development” is defined in Part 5 of the [MVRMA](#) as:

“any undertaking, or any part or extension of an undertaking, that is carried out on land or water and includes an acquisition of lands pursuant to the *Historic Sites and Monuments Act* and measures carried out by a department or agency of government leading to the establishment of a park subject to the *Canada National Parks Act* or the establishment of a park under a territorial law.”

3.1 Scope of Screening:

The Application submitted to the Board for review and consideration consist of a small-scale drilling program which includes the use of a temporary exploration camp. The camp is proposed to be comprised of tent structures used for accommodations, food preparation, dining, office space, core cutting, and washrooms. Smaller structures may also be erected to house toilets (which may be pit, pacto, or incinerating toilets), pump house, and generators. The camp will typically house between 15 to 35 people seasonally during active mobilization and drilling but may accommodate up to 49 people maximum to allow for peak occupancies related to community and shareholder site visits, environmental monitoring activities, or supplementary exploration activities.

Over land access (if any) would be restricted to the winter period when ground conditions permit (i.e. when frozen and protected by snow). Very limited winter access trials or roads may be developed to transfer materials mobilized via a fixed wing landing site to any nearby camp or laydown area. Access to the individual sites will also include the use of helicopters.

Water use is to remain below the 99m³/day threshold. Fuel storage will also be essential for the commencement and completion of the Project. Fuel is estimated to be in the estimated total volume of 124,000L.

3.2 Public Record and Regulatory Proceeding

To assist the Board in its preliminary screening determination for the Project, the Board distributed the Application and a draft Permit for public review on December 4, 2024, inviting reviewers to provide comments and recommendations on the Applications and the preliminary screening (e.g., on impacts and mitigation measures) using the Online Review System (ORS). On December 6, 2024, the Gwich'in Tribal Council requested an extension to the submission of comments for the Application. On December 10, 2024, the Board met and invoked section 22(2)(b) of the Mackenzie Valley Land Use Regulations which pauses the timeline. The Board felt it was necessary to allow Parties the additional time to complete a fulsome review of the Application and supporting documents. On December 10, 2024, the submission of comments and responses were updated. Comments were due January 16, 2025, with responses from the Applicant due January 30, 2025. The Board received comments and recommendations from:

- GNWT-ECE – Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre
- GNWT-ECC – Environmental Regulatory Analyst
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board
- First Nation of Na-Cho Nyak Dun
- Fireweed Metals Corp.
- Gwich'in Tribal Council – Department of Cultural Heritage
- Environment and Climate Change Canada
- Gwich'in Tribal Council – Lands and Resources (attached).⁴

⁴ See MVLWB Online Registry for [Fireweed - Application – Review Comment Table – Feb24_25](#).

Board staff also submitted comments and questions for the purposes of clarification.

Since there were no requests to extend the reviewer comment deadlines, the Board is satisfied that a reasonable period of notice was given to affected communities and First Nations, as required by subsection 63(2) of the [MVRMA](#).

Pursuant to Schedule 4.1 of [Northwest Territory Métis Nation \(NWTMN\) Interim Measures Agreement](#),⁵ the Board determined that written notice was given to the NWTMN and that a reasonable period of time was allowed for NWTMN to make representations with respect to the Application.

Pursuant to section 27, paragraphs (a) and (b) of the [Dehcho First Nations \(DCFN\) Interim Measures Agreement](#),⁶ the Board has determined that written notice was given to the DCFN, and that a reasonable period of time was allowed for DCFN to make representations with respect to the Application.

4.0 Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations

All Parties have had an opportunity to provide recommendations to the Board regarding draft conditions. In finalizing the conditions, the Board will consider these recommendations and all of the evidence provided through the regulatory proceeding.

Table 1 below summarizes:

- the potential impacts of the proposed Project;
- the concerns that were identified during the regulatory proceeding and how the Applicant addressed those concerns;
- the proposed and potential mitigations for the potential impacts; and
- the Board's analysis of the potential impacts and proposed mitigations.

⁵ See MVLWB Land Claims, IMAs, and Land Use Plans webpage to access the [Northwest Territory Métis Nation Interim Measures Agreement](#).

⁶ See MVLWB Land Claims, IMAs, and Land Use Plans webpage to access the [Dehcho First Nations Interim Measures Agreement](#).

Table 1: Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations for the Proposed Project

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations <i>Description of measures to reduce potential impacts, including consideration of cumulative impacts and climate change.</i>	Board Analysis and Determination
<p>Abiotic Components – Land – Soil Contamination</p> <p>Water – Groundwater – Changes in Water Quality</p> <p>Water – Surface Water – Changes in Water Quality</p>	<p>Project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant proposed the following mitigations in the Application: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A Spill Contingency Plan will be implemented 2. Fuel and chemical caches will be located at least 100 m away from the Ordinary High Water Mark of any waterbody or watercourse 3. If used, bulk fuel containers will be designed, or supplied, with 110% containment 4. Fuel storage areas will be inspected routinely when exploration is underway 5. Portable drip trays and appropriately sized fuel transfer hoses with pumps will be used when refueling to avoid any leaks or drips onto the land 6. Spill pads will be placed under equipment when stationary for extended periods 7. Spill response supplies will be located wherever fuel is stored or used 8. Regular maintenance and oil checks of all motorized equipment will be undertaken to avoid preventable leaks 9. All chemical substances, including fuel, will be appropriately labelled and Safety Data Sheets will be maintained in an accessible location on site 10. Greywater and cuttings water will be piped to a sump at least 100 m away from the closest Ordinary High Water Mark (and further away whenever practical) 11. Sumps must always maintain freeboard and the sumps and pipes will be inspected regularly for leaks or overflow 12. All work areas will be inspected regularly when in use to check for spills 	<p>Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment be a cause of public concern.</p>

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations <i>Description of measures to reduce potential impacts, including consideration of cumulative impacts and climate change.</i>	Board Analysis and Determination
		<p>13. All personnel will be trained in basic spill prevention and spill response procedures as well as available spill response materials and their use; spill-response exercises will be conducted periodically</p> <p>14. Spills will be cleaned up promptly</p> <p>15. If clean-up is delayed, measures will be implemented to protect any nearby waterbodies</p> <p>16. Any contaminated material will be securely stored to prevent contaminants from being released to the environment</p> <p>17. Hazardous and potentially hazardous wastes will be backhauled to Norman Wells or other suitable logistics hub in the Northwest Territories on the next available flight to minimize storage of hazardous materials on site</p> <p>18. At Project closure, all equipment, fuel, and hazardous and potentially hazardous waste will be removed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board has standard permit condition(s) that are typically used to mitigate the identified potential impacts. These standard conditions include:⁷ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chemicals ○ Drilling Near Water or on Ice ○ Drilling Waste ○ Drilling Waste Disposal ○ Dilling Waste Containment ○ Waste Chemical Disposal ○ Waste Petroleum Disposal ○ Waste Management Plan ○ Garbage Container ○ Fuel Storage Setback ○ Repair Leaks 	

⁷ See the MVLWB Policies and Resources webpage to access the LWB [Standard Land Use Permit Conditions Template](#).

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations <i>Description of measures to reduce potential impacts, including consideration of cumulative impacts and climate change.</i>	Board Analysis and Determination
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fuel Cache Secondary Containment ○ Secondary Containment – Refuelling ○ Fuel Containment ○ Fuel on Land ○ Seal Outlet ○ Spill Contingency Plan ○ Spill Response ○ Clean up Spills ○ Report Spills ○ Final Cleanup and Restoration ○ Progressive Reclamation 	
Abiotic Components – Land – Air	Fossil fuel combustion and burning or incineration and waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant proposed the following mitigations in the Application: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Emissions related to the combustion of fuel will be discontinuous, short term, and Localized 2. Minimizing helicopter use and equipment run times 3. Carrying out preventive maintenance on equipment 3. Consolidating waste and coordinating backhaul to reduce emissions 4. The incinerator will only be used to burn acceptable combustible materials and manufacturer recommendations will be followed 5. Only untreated wood, paper, and cardboard will be open burnt. • The Board has standard permit condition(s) that are typically used to mitigate the identified potential impacts. These standard conditions include:⁸ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Waste Management Plan 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment be a cause of public concern.

⁸ See the MVLWB Policies and Resources webpage to access the LWB [Standard Land Use Permit Conditions Template](#).

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations <i>Description of measures to reduce potential impacts, including consideration of cumulative impacts and climate change.</i>	Board Analysis and Determination
Abiotic Components – Land – Noise	Operation of equipment, generators, and aircraft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant proposed the following mitigations in the Application: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Noise will be localized, discontinuous, and short term in nature 2. Noise will be reduced to extent practical by minimizing idling, minimizing flights, establishing preferred flight paths that reduce disturbance of sensitive areas, and conducting appropriate maintenance of equipment 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment be a cause of public concern.
Biotic Components – Terrestrial Wildlife Habitat Direct loss or removal of habitat, dens, or nests	Direct impact on habitat related to Project footprint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant proposed the following mitigations in the Application: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where practical, selecting a camp location that has previously been subject to recent anthropogenic impact and/or cleared, or a naturally cleared area to minimize disturbance 2. Establishment of camp locations on dry, durable, and ideally unvegetated, ground to minimize vegetation and ground impacts and potential for erosion 3. Placement of camp structures, as well as drills, on cribbing (i.e., raised above ground) or (where needed) placement of a mat beneath heated structures to minimize vegetation impacts and prevent permafrost degradation 4. No overland off-road transit by vehicles when the ground is unfrozen or when there is risk of rutting or gouging of the ground 5. Minimizing the length and width of any over-land winter transit corridors; no all-weather roads will be developed 6. Use of natural depressions or dug sumps to constrain liquid wastes (e.g., greywater, cuttings) and minimize potential of contaminating or scouring surrounding area 7. Filling and recontouring any dug sumps or drill holes created on cessation of use to protect permafrost 8. Eliminating the use of salt during drilling to the extent possible by heating water, where needed, and only using salt when pausing drilling for extended periods when in permafrost 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment be a cause of public concern.

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations <i>Description of measures to reduce potential impacts, including consideration of cumulative impacts and climate change.</i>	Board Analysis and Determination
		<p>9. Prevent introduction of non-native vegetation by removing debris or soil from any mobile heavy equipment brought to site</p> <p>10. No brush clearing within 100 m of a waterbody unless associated with a trail crossing or for drill pad construction, when authorized by an Inspector; little to no clearing is anticipated necessary in the claim area as there are no trees present in that location</p> <p>11. Leaving roots where possible during any brush clearing to assist in soil stabilization</p> <p>12. Use of silt fencing or other suitable measures if any risk of runoff to water is noticed</p> <p>13 V-notching of any winter stream crossings constructed</p> <p>14. No camps, sumps, or fuel storage within 100m of a waterbody except with Inspector approval</p> <p>15. Training of all staff on the importance of and need to minimize Project footprint and Project impacts to wildlife habitat</p> <p>16. Progressive closure of drill sites and fly camps</p> <p>17. At closure, stabilize any impacted areas potentially subject to erosion or sediment loss</p> <p>1. Minimizing brush clearing activity, and avoiding clearing during nesting periods where possible</p> <p>2. Avoid disturbing or destroying any active nests containing eggs or young. If found, establish a suitable buffer zone (based on regulatory guidance) until all young have fledged</p> <p>3. Avoiding areas in which carnivore dens are discovered to be in use</p> <p>4. Skirting camp tents to deter wildlife denning</p> <p>5. Implementing the wildlife setbacks and sensitivity windows outlined in Table 4 of the Sahtú Land Use Plan to the extent feasible</p> <p>6. Conducting regular inspections to confirm that setbacks from known active nest or den sites are being maintained</p>	

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations <i>Description of measures to reduce potential impacts, including consideration of cumulative impacts and climate change.</i>	Board Analysis and Determination
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board has standard permit condition(s) that are typically used to mitigate the identified potential impacts. These standard conditions include:⁹ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Habitat ○ Migratory Bird Nest Disturbance 	
<p>Biotic Components – Terrestrial Wildlife Habitat</p> <p>Other - Mineral Lick Potential Effects</p>	<p>Disturbance of Wildlife use of lick or direct impacts to mineral licks from Project footprint or activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant proposed the following mitigations in the Application: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Avoid any direct disturbance of licks in all circumstances 2. Avoid conducting land use activities within 1 km of any known mineral lick where feasible 3. If a 1 km buffer is not feasible, work with the GNWT and appropriate Renewable Resources Board and Renewable Resource Councils to develop alternative appropriate mitigations such as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) avoiding any direct ground disturbance such as drilling or earthworks within 1 km of the lick b) avoiding conducting other activities (such as landing of planes) within 1 km of the lick during any lambing and calving periods c) maintaining as close to a 1 km buffer distance as is possible d) establish preferred flight routes which avoid and minimize disturbance in these areas • The Board has standard permit condition(s) that are typically used to mitigate the identified potential impacts. These standard conditions include:¹⁰ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Habitat 	<p>Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment be a cause of public concern.</p>

⁹ See the MVLWB Policies and Resources webpage to access the LWB [Standard Land Use Permit Conditions Template](#).

¹⁰ See the MVLWB Policies and Resources webpage to access the LWB [Standard Land Use Permit Conditions Template](#).

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations <i>Description of measures to reduce potential impacts, including consideration of cumulative impacts and climate change.</i>	Board Analysis and Determination
<p>Biotic Components – Terrestrial Wildlife Habitat</p> <p>Human Wildlife Conflicts – Potential attraction of wildlife by attractants such as food waste</p>	<p>On site storage and use of food and food waste and other potential wildlife attractants.</p> <p>Human wildlife conflicts and wildlife injury or mortality caused by Project activities or personnel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant proposed the following mitigations in the Application: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A strict ‘no feeding of wildlife’ policy will be implemented 2. All wastes will be contained and managed in an organized and appropriate manner as outlined in the Waste Management Plan 3. All food waste and wildlife attractants will be stored in a manner resistant to wildlife access and which minimizes smells 4. All field crews will be required to return any food scraps and associated wastes to the camp for appropriate management 5. Wastes attractive to wildlife will be disposed of promptly, either by backhaul to an approved waste management facility or in an onsite incinerator (if available and as suitable); if temporary storage is required, wastes attractive to wildlife will be double bagged and placed in an enclosed structure to restrict odours from escaping and minimize attraction of wildlife 6. No landfill will be established on site; these have the potential to attract wildlife 7. Kitchen wastewater will be screened to remove food particles prior to discharge and the greywater sump will be inspected daily to remove any food waste and treated as needed with lime or crystal lye to prevent being an attractant 8. An electric bear fence may be erected if deemed necessary 9. All staff will be trained on Project waste management practices aimed at minimizing wildlife attraction and conflict 10. All work areas will be inspected regularly when in use to confirm that wildlife attractants are being appropriately managed and food wastes are returned to the camp on a daily basis 11. Implementation of a strict no hunting policy for Project staff 12. Implementation of a strict no fishing policy for Project staff 13. Training staff in bear awareness and deterrence 14. Equipping field crews with bear deterrence kits which include: 	<p>Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board’s opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment be a cause of public concern.</p>

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations <i>Description of measures to reduce potential impacts, including consideration of cumulative impacts and climate change.</i>	Board Analysis and Determination
		<p>air horns or whistle, bear bangers, and bear spray (and training in their use)</p> <p>15. Where necessary, using electric bear fences</p> <p>16. Where appropriate, making use of wildlife monitors</p> <p>17. Wildlife will not be intentionally approached by Project staff and setback distances outlined in Table 4 of the Sahtú Land Use Plan will be implemented</p> <p>18. All staff will undergo orientation and training on project policies related to wildlife feeding, fishing and hunting, as well as site/ activity specific training on managing wildlife access and waste</p> <p>19. All work areas will be inspected daily when in use for evidence of wildlife access or initiation of nesting</p> <p>20. Where practical, chemicals that are toxic to wildlife will be substituted for others, particularly if they are also a wildlife attractant (e.g., propylene glycol will be used in substitution for ethylene glycol, calcium chloride in substitution for sodium chloride)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board has standard permit condition that are typically used to mitigate the identified potential impacts. These standard conditions include:¹¹ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Waste Management Plan ○ Garbage Container 	

¹¹ See the MVLWB Policies and Resources webpage to access the LWB [Standard Land Use Permit Conditions Template](#).

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations <i>Description of measures to reduce potential impacts, including consideration of cumulative impacts and climate change.</i>	Board Analysis and Determination
<p>Biotic Components – Terrestrial Wildlife Habitat</p> <p>Other – potential helicopter and activity related disturbance</p>	<p>Use of helicopters</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant proposed the following mitigations in the Application: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Species-specific wildlife setbacks as outlined in Table 4 of the Sahtú Land Use Plan will be implemented for species that may be present in the area where feasible 2 Aircraft will routinely fly at a height of at least 650 m above the ground (per recommendations of the Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board and equivalent to the highest Sahtú Land Use Plan setback altitude) even when wildlife are not present, except when activities require otherwise (e.g., for take off/landing, when conducting altitude specific aerial surveys, and where required for safety) 3. Field crews will conduct a scan for wildlife prior to landing; if caribou, sheep, or bears are within 500 m or species-specific setbacks cannot be reliably maintained, the crew will be deployed in a different location 4. Helicopters will avoid landing in areas where wildlife are present where feasible 5. Helicopters will avoid hovering over wildlife when spotted 6. Preferred site access flight routes will be used where possible to minimise disturbance of wildlife such as Dall sheep and caribou 7. Noise will be limited to the extent practical through minimization of idling, unnecessary flights, and appropriate maintenance of equipment, including mufflers 8. Adhering to Government of the Northwest Territories regulations regarding wildlife harassment 9. To the extent reasonable, activities will be conducted outside key wildlife sensitivity periods and areas, such as lambing and calving seasons/locations. I.e. Fireweed will endeavour to complete winter mobilizations before this period and initiate 	<p>Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board's opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment be a cause of public concern.</p>

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations <i>Description of measures to reduce potential impacts, including consideration of cumulative impacts and climate change.</i>	Board Analysis and Determination
		drilling activities after these birthing periods	
<p>Biotic Components – Aquatic Habitat</p> <p>Potential effects on water volume or fish habitat</p>	<p>Withdrawal of water from a waterbody for Project use</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant proposed the following mitigations in the Application: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Minimizing water use to the extent practical and to a cumulative daily use of no more than 99 m3 /day 2. Ensuring water withdrawal aligns with DFO and Land and Water Board guidance for the protection of fish and fish habitat, such as limiting water withdrawal to <10% of instantaneous flow or under ice water withdrawal to <10% of available water volume 3. Using smaller water pumps with flow rates below 0.150 m3/s to reduce the potential for fish entrainment or impingement 4. Equipping all water uptake lines with screens designed to prevent the impingement or entrainment of fish as outlined in DFO's Interim code of practice: End-of-pipe fish protection screens for small water intakes in freshwater 5. Following DFO's protective measures for fish and fish habitat and standard codes of practice and respect the NWT in-water works restricted activity timing windows to the extent feasible 6. Where required, seeking guidance and input from DFO through the Request for Review process. • The Board has standard permit condition(s) that are typically used to mitigate the identified potential impacts. These standard conditions include:¹² <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Habitat 	<p>Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board's opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment be a cause of public concern.</p>

¹² See the MVLWB Policies and Resources webpage to access the LWB [Standard Land Use Permit Conditions Template](#).

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations <i>Description of measures to reduce potential impacts, including consideration of cumulative impacts and climate change.</i>	Board Analysis and Determination
Cultural Components – Social and Economic Well-being	Project activities, purchasing, and employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant proposed the following mitigations in the Application: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preferential hiring of Indigenous Gwich'in and Sahtú staff, potential job opportunities in roles such as cook, laborer, cleaning, archaeological support, field assistant, core cutting, food preparation, geotechnical work on core, camp maintenance and set up, drilling and drill helpers, field technician roles, archaeological research assistant, and wildlife (or bear) monitoring 2. Job benefits may include on-the-job training and skill development such as technical training for core cutting, food preparation, geotechnical work on core, camp maintenance and set up, drilling and drill helpers, and field technician roles 3. Good and services will be preferentially sourced from local communities 4. Support of community initiatives where requested and financially feasible 	Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board's opinion that the proposed activities will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment be a cause of public concern.

4.1 Consideration of Potential Impacts

Based on the potential impacts and proposed mitigations identified above in Table 1, the Board considered whether the Project might have a significant adverse impact on the environment. In general, impacts of the Project on the environment can be mitigated through the use of standard permit conditions and/or project-specific conditions established by the Board as per the LWB [Standard Process for Creating New Conditions](#). These conditions may include requirements for management and monitoring plans that provide detailed information regarding the implementation of mitigation measures and the evaluation of their effectiveness.

A draft Permit was circulated for review during the regulatory proceeding, and all Parties were given the opportunity to provide comments and recommendations on the draft conditions. In finalizing the conditions, the Board will consider all of the evidence provided through the regulatory proceeding.

4.2 Consideration of Public Concern

In addition to considering the potential impacts of the Project, the Board considered whether the Project might be a cause of public concern.

Based on the evidence provided during the regulatory proceeding, the Board did not identify any comments or issues that indicate that the Project is a cause of public concern.

5.0 Conclusion

The Board has reviewed all the evidence received during the regulatory process with respect to the Preliminary Screening of the proposed Project. Based on the evidence, it is the Board's opinion that the proposed Project will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment or be a cause of public concern, as set out in paragraph 125(1)(a) of the [MVRMA](#). The Board has therefore decided not to refer the proposed Project to Environmental Assessment.

If the Board does not receive a notice of referral to environmental assessment by March 3, 2025, the Board can issue the Permit on March 4, 2025.

SIGNATURE



Tanya MacIntosh, Chair
Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board

February 24, 2025

Date