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June 12, 2026

File: S26C-003

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: Rio Tinto Exploration Canada Inc. – Notice of Preliminary Screening Determination –Application for Land Use Permit – Mineral Exploration for CopperCap Project – Mackenzie Mountains, NT

The Sahtú Land and Water Board (Board) met on June 12, 2026, and considered the Application Package from Rio Tinto Exploration Canada Inc. (RTECI) for Land Use Permit (Permit) S26C-003 for the CopperCap 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 S26C-003 on Tuesday, June 23, 2026.

The Board and staff look forward to continued communications throughout the pause period. Please contact Paul Dixon via [email](#) or at (867) 598-2413 ext. 225 with any questions or concerns regarding this letter.

Yours sincerely,



Valerie Gordon,
Chair, Sahtu Land and Water Board

BCC'd to: Tulit'a Distribution List
 Sam Russell, RTECI
 Yasmin Ferrando, RTECI

Attached: Preliminary Screening Determination and Reasons for Decision



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Preliminary Screening Determination and Reasons for Decision

Land Use Permit Application	
File Number	S26C-003
Company	Rio Tinto Exploration Canada Inc.
Project	CopperCap Project
Location	Mackenzie Mountains, NT
Activity	Mineral Exploration
Date of Decision	June 12, 2026

1.0 Decision

In accordance with subsection 124(1) of the [Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act](#) (MVRMA), the Sahtú Land and Water Board (SLWB or Board) met on June 12, 2026, to make a preliminary screening determination on the Application from Rio Tinto Exploration Canada Inc. (RTECI) (Applicant) for Land Use Permit S26C-003 (Permit)¹ for the CopperCap Project (Project).²

¹See SLWB Online Registry www.slwb.com for [S26C-003 – Permit Application – Apr24_26](#)

² The Project is the CopperCap 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.”

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](#).

2.0 List of Defined Terms and Acronyms

Applicant	Rio Tinto Exploration Inc.
Application	The complete application package submitted by the Applicant for Land Use Permit S26C-003
AEMP	Aquatic Effects Monitoring Program
Board	Sahtú Land and Water Board
CRP	Closure and Reclamation Plan
DFO	Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada
EA	Environmental Assessment
GNWT	Government of the Northwest Territories
GNWT-ECC	Government of the Northwest Territories – Environment and Climate Change
GNWT-ECC-Wildlife	Government of the Northwest Territories – Environment and Climate Change – Wildlife
GNWT-ECC-ERA	Government of the Northwest Territories – Environment and Climate Change – Environmental Regulatory Analyst
GNWT-ECE-PWNHC	Government of the Northwest Territories – Education, Culture, and Employment – Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre
IR	Information Request
Inspector	An Inspector designated under subsection 65(1) of the Waters Act
LWBs	Land and Water Boards of the Mackenzie Valley
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
NWRRC	Norman Wells Renewable Resources Board
OHWM	Ordinary High-Water Mark
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 Application.
Permit	Land Use Permit S26C-003
Project	CopperCap Project, which is the proposed development (as defined in Part 5 of the MVRMA). ³

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.”

Review Board	Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board
SCP	Spill Contingency Plan
Sahtú MLA	Sahtú Member of the Legislative Assembly
SNP	Surveillance Network Program
SLWB or Board	Sahtú Land and Water Board
SRRB	Sahtú Renewable Resources Board
Standard Permit Conditions	LWB Standard Land Use Permit Conditions Template
TG	Tłı̨chǫ Government
TK	Traditional Knowledge
WMP	Waste Management Plan
WMMP	Wildlife Monitoring and Management Plan
TRRC	Tulit'a Renewable Resources Board
TDLC	Tulit'a District Land Corporation

3.0 **Background and Scope of Screening**

The Board received the Application on April 22, 2026, for a Type A Land Use Permit seeking to conduct low impact copper mineralization exploration. The Applicant intends to conduct this work over the next five years with the possibility of amending the permit to include drilling. The Applicant has been engaged with affected parties since March 17, 2026, and have been working towards finalizing agreements with Tulit'a District Land Corporation regarding access to Sahtú Settlement Lands. No formal Traditional Knowledge (TK) study has been completed at this stage, but the Applicant is actively engaging Renewable Resource Councils and other community designated representatives to identify TK related to wildlife, harvesting areas, seasonal sensitivities, and mitigation which will be incorporated into the Applicants project planning.

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.

3.1 **Scope of Screening**

The Applicant will be exploring for copper mineralization within their prospecting claims located within the Mackenzie Mountains, NT, which will include a search area based upon historical exploration activities undertaken by Shell Minerals Inc. in the 1970's and Freeport McMoRan in 2006-2007. At the present time, the Applicant is not seeking drilling permits, nor is seeking to build a dedicated camp; rather, seeking to limit ground disturbance at this early project stage. The Applicant seeks to utilize existing cleared areas and setup a standalone camp, to conduct a helicopter supported prospecting and a drone magnetics survey (the latter over a small portion of the property). Geological work on the property is to include mapping, prospecting, and sampling.

The camp location that was initially proposed in the application was to be either at Outfitter Camps in the Mackenzie Mountains, a stand-alone camp in a pre-disturbed airstrip area (historical airstrip used by Shell), or possibly in a new location, which would require clearing. During the review period, GNWT-ECC commented (ID#2) that the use of the proposed NWT Outfitter Camps is not an option, as the current surface lease does not allow these activities, but the historical airstrip (pre-disturbed and cleared area previously used by Shell Canada Inc.) can be utilized as a camp location.

The Applicant acknowledges that the historical Shell Airstrip location is within Conservation Zone #40: Shúhtaot'Iné Néné (Mountain Dene Land) and understands that mineral exploration and development activities are prohibited within the area of the CZ. No mineral exploration activities are being proposed to occur within the CZ, and this camp location will only be used to support permitted land use activities in adjacent areas. The Sahtú Land Use Plan manages access to CZ for adjacent permitted land use activities under CR #1 S.2. Because the historical Shell Airstrip is a previously disturbed site, selection of this camp location minimizes environmental impact and ensures minimal risk of encountering any unrecorded archaeological sites.

3.2 Public Record and Regulatory Proceeding

To assist the Board in its preliminary screening determination for the Project, the Board distributed the Application Permit for public review on May 1, 2026, 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). Comments were due May 20, 2026, with responses from the Applicant due May 27, 2026. The Board received comments and recommendations from Tuli'ta District Land Corporation (TDLC), Government of the Northwest Territories – Environment and Climate Change (GNWT-ECC), Government of the Northwest Territories – Environment and Climate Change – Wildlife (GNWT-ECC-Wildlife), Government of the Northwest Territories – Education, Culture and Employment – Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre (GNWT-ECE-PWNHC), Sahtú Renewable Resources Board (SRRB), Sahtú Member of the Legislative Assembly (Sahtú MLA), Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), and the Government of the Northwest Territories – Environment and Climate Change – Environmental Regulatory Analyst (GNWT-ECC-ERA) (attached).⁴ Board staff also submitted comments and questions for the purposes of clarification.

Since there were no requests to extend the reviewer comment deadline, 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](#).

The Board is also satisfied that notice of the Application was provided to the Dél'Iné Got'ine Government (DGG) and that a reasonable period of time was provided for the DGG to make representations to the Board in accordance with section 63 of the [MVRMA](#).

⁴ See SLWB Online Registry for [S26C-003 – Review Summary Table – May27_26](#)

4.0 Potential Impacts and Proposed Mitigations

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.

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

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
LAND			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soil Contamination • Soil Compaction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant states no potential impact • Destabilization/Erosion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant states no potential impact • Change in Soil Structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant states no heavy equipment on the project • Inability to Support Vegetation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant states no potential impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of Helicopter and Equipment • Brush Clearing • Mineral Exploration • Establishment and Use of a Camp • Storage of Fuel • Closure and Reclamation Activities • Mobilization / Demobilization of Workers, Equipment, Camp Materials • Geological Mapping and Soil and Rock Sampling 	<p>The Applicant proposed the following mitigations in the Application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant will implement a Spill Contingency Plan. • Applicant will implement a Waste Management Plan. • No impact is anticipated as no earthwork, permanent structures, or temporary infrastructure on slopes will be conducted or constructed. • The Applicant states no heavy equipment will be on the Project other than the helicopter. • Non-recyclable and recyclable domestic waste are stored in animal-proof containers. • Hazardous wastes (e.g., oils, solvents, batteries) are stored in purpose-built, sealed, and labelled containers with secondary containment. • Burnable waste (paper, cardboard, untreated wood) is separated for controlled burning. • Monthly site inspections when the project is active. • Daily work area inspections for overlooked waste. • Inspections check for proper labelling, secondary containment, absence of leaks/spills, and wildlife attraction. • Non-hazardous waste sent to the Town of Norman Wells waste facility. • Recyclables sent to Bottle Shop Recycling Depot in Yellowknife. • Hazardous waste sent to KBL Environmental in Yellowknife for proper processing. • Controlled open burning of approved materials only, monitored by trained operators and in accordance with Government of the Northwest Territories guidelines. • All hazardous waste has secondary containment. 	<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 for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The small scope and scale of the project; • The Applicants willingness to incorporate mitigation measures provided by reviewers during the public review; • The low impact nature of the Project and; • The Applicants past performance in the Wek’éezhii Resource Management Area under W2025L2-0001 (Diavik Diamond Mines Inc).

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privy/outhouse toilets and greywater sumps are located at least 100 metres from the Ordinary High-Water Mark of any watercourse, unless otherwise authorized. • Mandatory orientation/induction for all staff and contractors. • Ongoing training on waste identification, segregation, and spill response. • Transportation of Dangerous Goods training for those handling hazardous waste shipments. • Waste manifests and shipping documents are prepared and signed by trained personnel. • All workers receive training on the Spill Contingency Plan, Spill Kits, and Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System before starting work. • Daily safety meetings and regular operational briefings reinforce spill prevention and response protocols. • Personnel are instructed to inspect and maintain equipment daily, with additional visual checks during operations. • Equipment must be in good working order and free of leaks. • Fuel and hazardous materials are stored at least 100 metres from watercourses (unless otherwise authorized), in designated areas with secondary containment. • Drums are stored on their sides with bungs at 3 and 9 o'clock, except those in use. • Sufficient spill kits and fire extinguishers are kept near fuel storage and transfer areas. • All vehicles and equipment are equipped with dedicated spill kits, which are inspected monthly. • Only trained staff conduct fueling, using spill mats, drip trays, and approved equipment. • No trigger locks are used, and nozzles are kept upright and holstered 	

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
		<p>when not in use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smoking and open flames are prohibited within 20 metres of fueling areas. • In the event of a spill, personnel must assess safety, identify the product, remove ignition sources, notify the camp manager, stop the spill if safe, and contain/manage the spill using appropriate procedures for land, water, or snow/ice. • If a spill exceeds reportable quantities, occurs near water, or poses a threat, the camp manager completes the NT-NU Spill Report, notifies authorities, and updates inspectors as required. • After reporting, site restoration may be required, including monitoring and remediation to assess and address environmental impacts. • All spills are documented and managed according to the Spill Contingency Plan. Safety Data Sheets are available and regularly updated. • The Spill Contingency Plan is reviewed and revised as needed, with changes submitted for regulatory approval. <p>Applicant Responses to Reviewer Comments and Board Clarifying Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant will add text to its Spill Contingency Plan requiring that Tuli't'a District Land Corporation be notified within 24 hours for any spill, with Tuli't'a District Land Corporation's contact details captured in a note linked to the notification requirement. • Applicant will revise wording in the introduction of its Spill Contingency Plan confirming that updates were made in response to review comments received through the Sahtú Land and Water Board 	

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
		<p>co-management review process, including comments raised by Tuli't'a District Land Corporation through the Online Review System.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant will add text in its Spill Contingency Plan confirming that restoration updates will also be provided to Tuli't'a District Land Corporation. • Applicant will add text in its Spill Contingency Plan confirming that spill prevention and spill response priorities will be informed by Traditional Knowledge and Tuli't'a District Land Corporation input, where applicable. • Applicant will include the sewage/greywater 100m setback in its Waste Management Plan. • Applicant will include how hazardous wastes are to be stored using secondary containment, in the Waste Management Plan. • Applicant will create a standalone Closure and Reclamation Plan which will contain reclamation procedures for helipads, sample sites, trails, and camp locations and end of season demobilization requirements. • The Applicant will set up the camp on a previously disturbed location at the historical Shell Airstrip. To avoid potential interaction with aircraft and other workers, the Applicant will avoid locating the camp at either end of the airstrip or near the existing exploration camp. Locating the camp on a previously disturbed site will also minimize environmental impact and ensure minimal risk to unrecorded archaeological sites. 	

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
		<p>The Board has standard permit conditions that are typically used to mitigate the identified potential impacts. These standard conditions include:⁵</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LOCATION OF ACTIVITIES • CAMP SETBACK • USE EXISTING CAMP • SUMP SETBACK • USE APPROVED EQUIPMENT • SEASONAL SHUT DOWN • CLEAN WORK AREA • PERMAFROST PROTECTION • NATURAL DRAINAGE • REPAIR EROSION • EQUIPMENT: WATERCOURSE BUFFER • RECLAIM NON-OIL AND GAS SUMPS • WASTE PETROLEUM DISPOSAL • NOTIFICATION OF SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL • WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN • GARBAGE CONTAINER • SEWAGE DISPOSAL – SUMP SETBACK • SECURITY DEPOSIT • RESPONSIBILITY FOR REMEDIATION COSTS • REPAIR LEAKS • FUEL STORAGE SETBACK • FUEL CACHE SECONDARY CONTAINMENT • SECONDARY CONTAINMENT – REFUELING • FUEL CONTAINMENT • MARK CONTAINERS AND TANKS • MARK FUEL LOCATION 	

⁵ See the SLWB Policies and Resources webpage to access the LWB [Standard Land Use Permit Conditions Template](#).

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MAXIMUM FUEL ON SITE • SPILL CONTINGENCY PLAN • SPILL RESPONSE • DRIP TRAYS • CLEAN UP SPILLS • REPORT SPILLS • BRUSH DISPOSAL/TIME • MINIMIZE AREA CLEARED • CLOSURE AND RECLAMATION PLAN • FINAL CLEANUP AND RESTORATION • PROGRESSIVE RECLAMATION • ENGAGEMENT PLAN 	
WATER			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groundwater Table Alteration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant states minimal water withdrawal • Groundwater Infiltration Changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant states no modification to soil or vadose zone • Changes in Groundwater Quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brush Clearing • Mineral Exploration • Establishment and Use of a Camp • Storage of Fuel • Closure and Reclamation and Associated Activities 	<p>The Applicant proposed the following mitigations in the Application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blackwater pits will conform to GNWT guidance for construction and maintenance. • Pit toilet location will be dug >100m from the Ordinary High-Water Mark. • Sumps will either be hand-dug or will drain into a natural depression. • Pacto-style toilets or alternative will be used if high-groundwater table is present, thus eliminating the leaching potential. • Fuel at the camp will be limited as is practically possible. • All fuel containers (drums and cans) will be stored within secondary containment with additional containment capacity (220% of the single largest container). Inspection frequency will be increased to weekly for fuel and waste storage and transfer areas. <p>Applicant Responses to Reviewer Comments and Board Clarifying Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant will add text to its Spill Contingency Plan requiring 	<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 for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The small scope and scale of the project; • The Applicants willingness to incorporate mitigation measures provided by reviewers during the public review; • The low impact nature of

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groundwater Temperature Changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant states insufficient impacts to alter ground water temperatures • Loss or Change in Extent of Permafrost <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant states no modifications to cause impacts to permafrost • Changes in Seasonal Fluctuations of Permafrost <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant states no modifications to cause impacts to permafrost • Change in Persistence of Permafrost 		<p>that Tuli't'a District Land Corporation be notified within 24 hours for any spill.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant will add text in its Spill Contingency Plan confirming that restoration updates will also be provided to Tuli't'a District Land Corporation. • Applicant will include the sewage/greywater 100m setback and how hazardous wastes are to be in stored using secondary containment, in its Waste Management Plan. • Applicant will create a standalone Closure and Reclamation Plan which will contain reclamation procedures for helipads, sample sites, trails, and camp locations as well as end of season demobilization requirements. <p>The Board has standard permit conditions that are used to mitigate the identified potential impacts. These standard conditions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LOCATION OF ACTIVITIES • CAMP SETBACK • USE EXISTING CAMP • SUMP SETBACK • USE APPROVED EQUIPMENT • SEASONAL SHUT DOWN • CLEAN WORK AREA • PERMAFROST PROTECTION • NATURAL DRAINAGE • REPAIR EROSION • EQUIPMENT: WATERCOURSE BUFFER • RECLAIM NON-OIL AND GAS SUMPS 	<p>the Project and;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicants past performance in the Wek'éezhii Resource Management Area under W2025L2-0001 (Diavik Diamond Mines Inc.).

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant states no modifications to cause impacts to permafrost • Surface Water Flow or Level Changes (Permanent, Temporary, Seasonal) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant states water draw is insufficient to impact water levels • Surface Water Drainage Pattern Changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant states no modifications that could cause impacts • Surface Water Temperature Changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant states 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WASTE PETROLEUM DISPOSAL • NOTIFICATION OF SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL • WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN • GARBAGE CONTAINER • SEWAGE DISPOSAL – SUMP SETBACK • SECURITY DEPOSIT • RESPONSIBILITY FOR REMEDIATION COSTS • REPAIR LEAKS • FUEL STORAGE SETBACK • FUEL CACHE SECONDARY CONTAINMENT • SECONDARY CONTAINMENT – REFUELING • FUEL CONTAINMENT • MARK CONTAINERS AND TANKS • MARK FUEL LOCATION • MAXIMUM FUEL ON SITE • SPILL CONTINGENCY PLAN • SPILL RESPONSE • DRIP TRAYS • CLEAN UP SPILLS • REPORT SPILLS • BRUSH DISPOSAL/TIME • MINIMIZE AREA CLEARED • CLOSURE AND RECLAMATION PLAN • FINAL CLEANUP AND RESTORATION • PROGRESSIVE RECLAMATION • ENGAGEMENT PLAN 	

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
<p>no modifications that could cause impacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in Surface Water Quality • Wetland Impairment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant states no modifications that could cause impacts • Changes to Aquatic Habitat (See Biotic Section Below) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant states no modifications that could cause impacts 			
AIR			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in Air Quality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant states minimal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of Vehicles, Machines, and Equipment 	<p>The Applicant proposed the following mitigations in the Application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant will conduct safe helicopter operations, minimal/selective hand cutting or possible chainsaw use of up to a 	<p>Based on the described mitigations, it is the Board's opinion that the proposed activities will not have a</p>

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
<p>emissions resulting from the Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harm to Living Things <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant states minimal emissions resulting from the Project • Increased greenhouse gases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant states minimal emissions resulting from the Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brush Clearing • Mineral Exploration • Establishment and Use of a Camp • Storage of Fuel • Closure and Reclamation and Associated Activities • Mobilization/Demobilization of Workers, Equipment, Camp Materials • Geological Mapping and Soil and Rock Sampling 	<p>few small trees or bushes only when safety considerations necessitate for main and tail rotor clearance.</p> <p>The Board has standard permit conditions that are used to mitigate the identified potential impacts. These standard conditions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LOCATION OF ACTIVITIES • CAMP SETBACK • USE EXISTING CAMP • SUMP SETBACK • USE APPROVED EQUIPMENT • SEASONAL SHUT DOWN • CLEAN WORK AREA • PERMAFROST PROTECTION • NATURAL DRAINAGE • REPAIR EROSION • EQUIPMENT: WATERCOURSE BUFFER • RECLAIM NON-OIL AND GAS SUMPS • WASTE PETROLEUM DISPOSAL • NOTIFICATION OF SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL • WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN • GARBAGE CONTAINER • SEWAGE DISPOSAL – SUMP SETBACK • SECURITY DEPOSIT • RESPONSIBILITY FOR REMEDIATION COSTS • REPAIR LEAKS • FUEL STORAGE SETBACK • FUEL CACHE SECONDARY CONTAINMENT • SECONDARY CONTAINMENT – REFUELING • FUEL CONTAINMENT • MARK CONTAINERS AND TANKS 	<p>significant adverse impact on the environment for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The small scope and scale of the project; • The Applicants willingness to incorporate mitigation measures provided by reviewers during the public review; • The low impact nature of the Project and; • The Applicants past performance in the Wek'éezhii Resource Management Area under W2025L2-0001 (Diavik Diamond Mines Inc.).

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MARK FUEL LOCATION • MAXIMUM FUEL ON SITE • SPILL CONTINGENCY PLAN • SPILL RESPONSE • DRIP TRAYS • CLEAN UP SPILLS • REPORT SPILLS • BRUSH DISPOSAL/TIME • MINIMIZE AREA CLEARED • CLOSURE AND RECLAMATION PLAN • FINAL CLEANUP AND RESTORATION • PROGRESSIVE RECLAMATION • ENGAGEMENT PLAN 	
VEGETATION			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct loss of vegetation • Loss of Species at Risk or may-be-at-risk plants • Change in Species Composition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applicant states no impacts are anticipated • Introduction of non-native (invasive) species 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of Vehicles, Machines, and Equipment • Brush Clearing • Mineral Exploration • Establishment and Use of a Camp • Storage of Fuel • Closure and Reclamation and 	<p>The Applicant proposed the following mitigations in the Application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant will conduct safe helicopter operations minimal/selective hand cutting or possible chainsaw use of up to a few small trees or bushes only when safety considerations necessitate for main and tail rotor clearance. Cut debris will be laid flat and left on the landscape. • Minor clearing around temporary camp structures only when necessary, and not expected, as using pre-disturbed area for a camp. • A review of the Government of the Northwest Territories Species Infobase identified no rare plant species or plant species classified as “may be at risk” within or near the project area based on available territorial records. • The Project will not introduce any non-native species, materials, or organic matter. All equipment, supplies, and materials brought to site will be clean and free of soil, plant material, or other potential vectors 	<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 for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The small scope and scale of the project; • The Applicants willingness to incorporate mitigation measures provided by reviewers during the

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effects on plant health (dust, metals, toxins) • Increased risk of fire • Compaction of Vegetation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associated Activities • Geological Mapping and Soil and Rock Sampling 	<p>for invasive species.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire training for all personnel in prevention and mitigation practices (related to smoking, fuelling, no open fires allowed, etc.) • Fire extinguishers and hand tools located at camp facility, near fuel transfer, helicopter pad, generator. • Weight of the helicopter is well dispersed and will avoid compacting low-lying vegetation as practically possible. <p>Applicant Responses to Reviewer Comments and Board Clarifying Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant will add text to its Spill Contingency Plan requiring that Tuli't'a District Land Corporation be notified within 24 hours for any spill. • Applicant will revise wording in the introduction of its Spill Contingency Plan confirming that the reflects updates made in response to review comments received through the Sahtú Land and Water Board co-management review process, including comments raised by Tuli't'a District Land Corporation through the Online Review System. • Applicant will add additional information on how hazardous wastes are to be stored using secondary containment. • Applicant will create a standalone Closure and Reclamation Plan which will contain reclamation procedures for helipads, sample sites, trails, and camp locations. <p>The Board has standard permit conditions that are used to mitigate the</p>	<p>public review;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The low impact nature of the Project and; • The Applicants past performance in the Wek'éezhii Resource Management Area under W2025L2-0001 (Diavik Diamond Mines Inc.).

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
		<p>identified potential impacts. These standard conditions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LOCATION OF ACTIVITIES • CAMP SETBACK • USE EXISTING CAMP • SUMP SETBACK • USE APPROVED EQUIPMENT • SEASONAL SHUT DOWN • CLEAN WORK AREA • PERMAFROST PROTECTION • NATURAL DRAINAGE • REPAIR EROSION • EQUIPMENT: WATERCOURSE BUFFER • RECLAIM NON-OIL AND GAS SUMPS • WASTE PETROLEUM DISPOSAL • NOTIFICATION OF SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL • WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN • GARBAGE CONTAINER • SEWAGE DISPOSAL – SUMP SETBACK • SECURITY DEPOSIT • RESPONSIBILITY FOR REMEDIATION COSTS • REPAIR LEAKS • FUEL STORAGE SETBACK • FUEL CACHE SECONDARY CONTAINMENT • SECONDARY CONTAINMENT – REFUELING • FUEL CONTAINMENT • MARK CONTAINERS AND TANKS • MARK FUEL LOCATION • MAXIMUM FUEL ON SITE • SPILL CONTINGENCY PLAN 	

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPILL RESPONSE • DRIP TRAYS • CLEAN UP SPILLS • REPORT SPILLS • BRUSH DISPOSAL/TIME • MINIMIZE AREA CLEARED • CLOSURE AND RECLAMATION PLAN • FINAL CLEANUP AND RESTORATION • PROGRESSIVE RECLAMATION • ENGAGEMENT PLAN 	
TERRESTRIAL WILDLIFE HABITAT			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct loss or removal of habitat, dens, or nests • Fragmentation of wildlife corridor • Direct injury or mortality • Disturbances to key lifecycle stages: breeding, feeding, nesting, staging • Effects on population abundance • Change in species diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of Vehicles, Machines, and Equipment • Brush Clearing • Mineral Exploration • Establishment and Use of a Camp • Storage of Fuel • Closure and Reclamation and Associated Activities • Mobilization/Demobil 	<p>The Applicant proposed the following mitigations in the Application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No wildlife habitat, dens, or nests will be removed or disturbed, as activities do not involve land clearing, excavation, or construction. • Helicopter landings will utilize existing natural clearings where possible and avoid known or suspected wildlife use areas. • If wildlife dens, nests, or sensitive features are observed, activities will be relocated or suspended until appropriate buffers are established. • Activities are non-invasive and temporary, resulting in no permanent alteration or removal of habitat used by Species at Risk, including caribou, grizzly bear, wolverine, birds, fish, or insects. • Project planning incorporates information from the Government of the Northwest Territories Species and Habitat Viewer and engagement feedback to avoid sensitive areas where feasible. • No linear features, trails, or infrastructure will be created. • Temporary access by helicopter ensures that wildlife movement corridors, including those used by caribou and Dall sheep, remain intact and unobstructed. 	<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 for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The small scope and scale of the project; • The Applicants willingness to incorporate mitigation measures provided by reviewers during the public review; • The low impact nature of the Project and;

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effects on wildlife health (toxin, metal, etc.) • Changes to migratory movement patterns • Changes to predator-prey relationships • Human-wildlife conflicts • Loss or removal of keystone species and/or Species at Risk habitat: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Species at Risk were identified using the GNWT Species and Habitat Viewer Tool. The Species at Risk Report has listing the following species that may occur within or adjacent to the project area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Grizzly Bear (Urus arctos)</i> – Special Concern; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ization of Workers, Equipment, Camp Materials • Geological Mapping and Soil and Rock Sampling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No direct injury or mortality is expected due to the absence of habitat disturbance and permanent infrastructure. • Wildlife awareness protocols will be implemented for all personnel. • Aircraft will maintain safe flight altitudes where practicable to minimize wildlife disturbance. • No pursuit, harassment, feeding, or interaction with wildlife is permitted. • Any wildlife incidents will be documented and reported in accordance with regulatory requirements. • Engagement has identified September as a critical harvesting and wildlife sensitivity period, particularly for caribou and Dall sheep. Exploration activities will be scheduled to avoid September wherever practicable. • To minimize potential effects on calving and other sensitive life stages, early-stage exploration activities will be planned with consideration of seasonal timing and location, helicopter operations will maintain appropriate separation distances from observed wildlife, and activities will be modified or suspended to the extent safely possible if caribou are encountered. • Given the short duration, small footprint, and non-disturbing nature of the program, no measurable effects on wildlife population abundance are anticipated. Ongoing monitoring and adaptive management will be used if unexpected wildlife interactions occur. • No change to species diversity is expected, as habitat structure and ecological function will be maintained. • Fuel and hazardous materials, if required for helicopter support, will be managed in accordance with spill prevention and response procedures. • All waste will be removed from site. • Activity timing and aviation practices are intended to reduce disturbance to migratory birds and caribou moving through the area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicants past performance in the Wek' éezhii Resource Management Area under W2025L2-0001 (Diavik Diamond Mines Inc.).

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Northern Mountain Caribou (Ranger tarandus caribou)</i> – Special Concern; ▪ <i>Wolverine (Gulo gulo)</i> – Special Concern; ▪ <i>Collared Pika (Ochotona collaris)</i> – Special Concern; ▪ <i>Bank Swallow (Riparia riparia)</i> – Threatened; ▪ <i>Barn Shallow (Hirundo rustica)</i> – Threatened; ▪ <i>Common Nighthawk (Chordeiles minor)</i> – Special Concern; ▪ <i>Harris’s Sparrow (Zonotrichia querula)</i> – Special Concern; ▪ <i>Horned Grebe (Podiceps auritus)</i> – Special Concern; ▪ <i>Lesser Yellowlegs</i> 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No alteration of habitat, prey availability, or predator behavior is anticipated due to the absence of habitat disturbance and permanent infrastructure. • Encounters will be managed using avoidance and deterrence measures consistent with GNWT Bear Guidance. • Personnel will receive wildlife awareness training, including bear safety protocols. • Food and attractants will be securely stored; no feeding of wildlife is permitted. • Electric bear fences will be installed around camps when occupied. • Prior to setting out field geologists, the helicopter will be used to conduct a high level check for wildlife in the proposed work area; and the crew’s planned work will be adjusted if wildlife is in area. • Crews will carry bear bangers and bear spray, as well as firearms with hazing rounds (bean bags/rubber bullets), as well as lethal rounds (slugs); the latter to be used only as needed in defense. <p>Applicant Responses to Reviewer Comments and Board Clarifying Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant will revise its Wildlife Monitoring and Management Plan to include feedback through engagement with Renewable Resources Councils. The anticipated program start has been adjusted from mid-June to July 1 to better align with community and wildlife considerations. Similarly, activities are planned to conclude with demobilization by the end of August, in advance of the fall hunting season. At this stage, the plan for 2027 and beyond is adaptive, results-driven, reflecting the realities of early-stage exploration. 	

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
<p><i>(Tringa flavipes)</i> – Threatened;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Olive-sided Flycatcher (Contopus cooperi)</i> – Special Concern; ▪ <i>Red-necked Phalarope (Phalaropus lobatus)</i> – Special Concern; ▪ <i>Rusty Blackbird (Euphagus carolinus)</i> – Special Concern; ▪ <i>Short-eared Owl (Asio flammeus)</i> Threatened / Special Concern; ▪ <i>Bull Trout (Salvelinus confluentus)</i> – Special Concern; ▪ <i>Dolly Varden (Salvelinus malma malma)</i> – Special Concern; ▪ <i>Gypsy Cuckoo Bumble Bee (Bombus bohemicus)</i> – Endangered; 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant will revise its Wildlife Monitoring and Management Plan to include integration of Traditional Knowledge and land use considerations through dedicated subsections regarding cultural, heritage, and traditional use area buffers. • The Applicant will revise its Wildlife Monitoring and Management Plan to include language on mandatory no-helicopter operations during known caribou calving including deviation documentation requirements. • The Applicant will revise its Wildlife Monitoring and Management Plan to include language on mandatory no-helicopter operations during known Dall’s sheep lambing area including deviation documentation requirements. • The Applicant will revise its Wildlife Monitoring and Management Plan to include caribou flight altitude requirements as mandatory measures with deviation documentation requirements. • The Applicant will revise its Wildlife Monitoring and Management Plan to include mandatory lateral buffers for known Dall’s sheep habitat and mineral licks, which have been added to the mitigation section, and Appendix C to include a project-specific mineral lick row for tracking purposes. • The Applicant will revise its Wildlife Monitoring and Management Plan to include Tuliit’a Renewable Resources Council, and Norman Wells Renewable Resources Council as reporting contacts for 	

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Suckley's Cuckoo Bumble Bee (Bombus suckleyi)</i> – Threatened; and ▪ <i>Transverse Lady Beetle (Coccinella transversoguttata)</i> – Special Concern. 		<p>wildlife observation summary and information sharing. Tuli't'a District Land Corporation will be added to the reporting contact framework for wildlife-human interactions notifications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant will revise its Wildlife Monitoring and Management Plan to include a requirement for Tuli't'a District Land Corporation to be notified within 24 hours for wildlife-human interactions and will define the types of interactions to be reported. • The Applicant will revise its Wildlife Monitoring and Management Plan to include a requirement that a dedicated Wildlife Monitor shall be assigned during all active field operations. • The Applicant will revise its anticipated program start from mid-June to July 1 and will end by September 1 based on feedback received from the Renewable Resources Councils. • The Applicant will revise its Wildlife Monitoring and Management Plan to strengthen core mitigation language so required measures are implemented as written, and deviations must be documented where measures cannot be applied as described. Additional adjustments will be made in wildlife encounter, bird mitigation, large carnivore, general wildlife protection, in Appendix C's supporting language. • The Applicant will revise its Wildlife Monitoring and Management Plan to amend the reporting section to state that wildlife observations will be recorded in a standardized format and, where 	

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
		<p>possible, compiled spatially in post-season reporting to support mapping and broader regional wildlife understanding. The amended reporting section will also require GPS coordinates for wildlife observations rather than approximate location descriptions.</p> <p>The Board has standard permit conditions that are typically used to mitigate the identified potential impacts. These standard conditions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LOCATION OF ACTIVITIES • CAMP SETBACK • USE EXISTING CAMP • SUMP SETBACK • USE APPROVED EQUIPMENT • SEASONAL SHUT DOWN • CLEAN WORK AREA • PERMAFROST PROTECTION • NATURAL DRAINAGE • REPAIR EROSION • EQUIPMENT: WATERCOURSE BUFFER • RECLAIM NON-OIL AND GAS SUMPS • WASTE PETROLEUM DISPOSAL • NOTIFICATION OF SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL • WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN • GARBAGE CONTAINER • SEWAGE DISPOSAL – SUMP SETBACK • SECURITY DEPOSIT • RESPONSIBILITY FOR REMEDIATION COSTS • REPAIR LEAKS • FUEL STORAGE SETBACK • FUEL CACHE SECONDARY CONTAINMENT 	

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SECONDARY CONTAINMENT – REFUELING • FUEL CONTAINMENT • MARK CONTAINERS AND TANKS • MARK FUEL LOCATION • MAXIMUM FUEL ON SITE • SPILL CONTINGENCY PLAN • SPILL RESPONSE • DRIP TRAYS • CLEAN UP SPILLS • REPORT SPILLS • BRUSH DISPOSAL/TIME • MINIMIZE AREA CLEARED • CLOSURE AND RECLAMATION PLAN • FINAL CLEANUP AND RESTORATION • PROGRESSIVE RECLAMATION • ENGAGEMENT PLAN • HABITAT DAMAGE • MIGRATORY BIRD NEST DISTURBANCE 	
AQUATIC HABITAT			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breeding disturbances • Changes in species diversity • Effects on health (toxins, metals, sediment, etc.) • Changes to migratory movement patterns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of Vehicles, Machines, and Equipment • Brush Clearing • Mineral Exploration • Establishment and Use of a Camp 	<p>The Applicant proposed the following mitigations in the Application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant states no impacts will occur. <p>Applicant Responses to Reviewer Comments and Board Clarifying Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant states that the planned activities involve drawing water from surface water sources for camp needs, with a maximum estimated total draw of 5m³/day (at low flow rate). 	<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 for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The small scope and scale of the project;

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to predator-prey relationships • Effects on health (toxins, metals, sediment, etc.) • Changes to predator-prey relationships • Effects on population abundance • Changes in species diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storage of Fuel • Closure and Reclamation and Associated Activities • Mobilization/Demo bilization of Workers, Equipment, Camp Materials • Geological Mapping and Soil and Rock Sampling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant will ensure that it meets the protective measures in the guidelines, including end-of-pipe fish screen. • The Applicant states that no activities undertaken will require large water withdrawals. Additionally, no activities will involve ‘in-water’ works. • The Applicant will revise its Wildlife Monitoring and Management Plan to ensure compliance with the Fisheries act, Fisheries and Oceans Canada Protective Measures for fish and fish habitat and standard codes of practice, as well as the interim code of practice: End-of-pipe fish protection screens when using fish screens and if the water intake flow is up to 0.5m³/s, or 150 litres per second (L/s). <p>The Board has standard permit conditions that are used to mitigate the identified potential impacts. These standard conditions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LOCATION OF ACTIVITIES • CAMP SETBACK • USE EXISTING CAMP • SUMP SETBACK • USE APPROVED EQUIPMENT • SEASONAL SHUT DOWN • CLEAN WORK AREA • PERMAFROST PROTECTION • NATURAL DRAINAGE • REPAIR EROSION • EQUIPMENT: WATERCOURSE BUFFER • RECLAIM NON-OIL AND GAS SUMPS • WASTE PETROLEUM DISPOSAL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicants willingness to incorporate mitigation measures provided by reviewers during the public review; • The low impact nature of the Project and; • The Applicants past performance in the Wek’éezhii Resource Management Area under W2025L2-0001 (Diavik Diamond Mines Inc.).

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOTIFICATION OF SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL • WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN • GARBAGE CONTAINER • SEWAGE DISPOSAL – SUMP SETBACK • SECURITY DEPOSIT • RESPONSIBILITY FOR REMEDIATION COSTS • REPAIR LEAKS • FUEL STORAGE SETBACK • FUEL CACHE SECONDARY CONTAINMENT • SECONDARY CONTAINMENT – REFUELING • FUEL CONTAINMENT • MARK CONTAINERS AND TANKS • MARK FUEL LOCATION • MAXIMUM FUEL ON SITE • SPILL CONTINGENCY PLAN • SPILL RESPONSE • DRIP TRAYS • CLEAN UP SPILLS • REPORT SPILLS • BRUSH DISPOSAL/TIME • MINIMIZE AREA CLEARED • CLOSURE AND RECLAMATION PLAN • FINAL CLEANUP AND RESTORATION • PROGRESSIVE RECLAMATION • ENGAGEMENT PLAN • HABITAT DAMAGE • MIGRATORY BIRD NEST DISTURBANCE 	

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
CULTURAL INTEGRITY AND HERITAGE RESOURCES/SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC WELL-BEING			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss or reduction in game species populations Effects on traditional land use, subsistence, and harvesting rights Change to or loss of cultural integrity Change to or loss of traditional lifestyle Change to or loss of heritage resource Increased human health hazard and risk Economic opportunities or losses (employment, training) Change in ecological, cultural, social, or economic values identified for protection in approved Land Use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of Vehicles, Machines, and Equipment Brush Clearing Mineral Exploration Establishment and Use of a Camp Storage of Fuel Closure and Reclamation and Associated Activities Mobilization / Demobilization of Workers, Equipment, Camp Materials Geological Mapping and Soil and Rock Sampling 	<p>The Applicant proposed the following mitigations in the Application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field activities are limited to a short duration (July–late August) and avoid peak fall harvesting periods identified by Sahtú communities (i.e. September). Helicopter use will be minimized and limited to crew transport, with no repeated low-level circling or hovering. No hunting, fishing, or harvesting by project personnel will be permitted. Field staff will receive wildlife awareness and Sahtú cultural sensitivity training prior to mobilization. Observations of wildlife will be recorded, and work will be adjusted as needed to avoid disturbance. Short-term presence of personnel may overlap spatially with areas traditionally used for travel, harvesting, or cultural activities. No impairment of traditional land use, subsistence, or harvesting rights is anticipated. Temporary disturbance to wildlife from helicopter overflights and the presence of field crews. No significant effect on wildlife harvesting or availability is anticipated. No permanent infrastructure or surface alteration is proposed. Engagement has been initiated with the Tuli't'a District Land Corporation and Renewable Resource Councils and will continue prior to and following the field season. The Applicant will respect any site-specific guidance provided by landholding organizations or communities regarding sensitive areas or seasonal considerations. No direct effects on cultural integrity or traditional lifestyle are anticipated due to the short-term, low-intensity nature of the program. Early and ongoing engagement with Sahtú organizations to ensure 	<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 for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The small scope and scale of the project; The Applicants willingness to incorporate mitigation measures provided by reviewers during the public review; The low impact nature of the Project and; The Applicants past performance in the Wek'éezhii Resource Management Area under W2025L2-0001 (Diavik Diamond Mines Inc.).

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
<p>Plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impairment of the recreational or traditional uses of the land and water • Impairment of the aesthetic quality of the land or water • Changes to the use of the area by other non-indigenous people (e.g., trappers, outfitters, residents, hunters, forest harvesters, other authorized projects) 		<p>activities align with community expectations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear communication that the project is early-stage exploration only and does not represent a commitment to advanced exploration or development. • No ground disturbance is proposed; therefore, the risk to heritage resources is very low. No effect on heritage resources is anticipated. • A chance-find procedure will be implemented, requiring immediate cessation of work if heritage resources are encountered. • Buffer zones to be established around known archaeological sites. • Field crews will be instructed to avoid known or identified culturally sensitive areas. • If any previously unidentified cultural or heritage features are encountered, work will cease immediately in the vicinity and the appropriate authorities and landholders will be notified. • The Applicant will implement Rio Tinto health, safety, and emergency response standards, including wilderness safety training, communications protocols, and emergency evacuation planning. • Field personnel in a remote environment will have a temporary presence, with no significant health or safety effects anticipated. • Limited short-term opportunities due to the small scale of the program. No adverse economic effects anticipated. • Where practicable, the Applicant will explore opportunities for local or regional services, including aviation, logistics, wildlife monitor and/or other support services. • Engagement will continue to identify appropriate opportunities aligned with the scale and duration of the work, particularly, the Community Renewable Resource Councils in the Tuli't'a District. • The proposed activities are consistent with early-stage exploration permitted under the Sahtú Land Use Plan and do not involve land transformation. 	

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities have been designed to avoid ground disturbance and respect identified cultural, ecological, and land use values. • Any future changes in activity level would be subject to additional engagement and regulatory review. • Helicopter use will be short-term and limited to necessary transport. • No permanent structures or visual alterations will remain following completion of the program. • Minimal, temporary overlap with other users such as outfitters or recreational users. • Activities will not restrict access or interfere with authorized land uses. • The Applicant will coordinate as needed with landholders, outfitters and regulators to avoid conflicts. <p>Applicant Responses to Reviewer Comments and Board Clarifying Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant will revise its Wildlife and Monitoring Plan to address Traditional Knowledge integration and land use considerations through dedicated subsections on cultural and heritage site buffers and traditional use area buffers, supported by plan review language for future refinement. • The Applicant will revise its Wildlife Monitoring and Management Plan to include a dedicated cultural and heritage site buffer subsection, including Canol Heritage Trail protection language and confirmation of project specific buffers to be reflected in project mapping through Tulit'a District Land Corporation consultation. • The Applicant will revise its Wildlife and Monitoring Plan to include a dedicated traditional use area subsection confirming that 	

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
		<p>engagement identified traditional use areas, and are reflected in operational planning, project mapping, and project-specific buffers or restrictions as agreed or required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant will revise its Engagement Plan to confirm that the Applicant acknowledges Tuli't'a District Land Corporations Interim Engagement Protocol and that protocol related matters raised by Tuli't'a District Land Corporation, including notification, information sharing, and engagement expectations, will continue to be reviewed and addressed through ongoing engagement, project planning, and any applicable agreements associated with authorized activities. • The Applicant acknowledges Tuli't'a District Land Corporations position regarding Significant Activities under the Interim Engagement Protocol. The Applicant is continuing to review how this request applies to the current 2026 program and welcomes any further discussion with Tuli't'a District Land Corporation to clarify how these Protocol provisions are intended to apply in relation to established regulatory processes. • The Applicant will revise its Engagement Plan to confirm that access to Sahtú Settlement Lands including parcels 114, 115, and 116, is subject to a separate land access process with Tuli't'a District Land Corporation and that any access would occur only in accordance with applicable agreements or written consent requirements. • The Applicant acknowledges Tuli't'a District Land Corporations request regarding capacity support and welcomes further discussion with Tuli't'a District Land Corporation on priorities, anticipated 	

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
		<p>review requirements, and the appropriate scope of any capacity contribution arrangement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant will revise its Engagement Plan to confirm that the Applicant will undertake a Traditional Knowledge study for the CopperCap Project, with the scope of work and approach to be developed through engagement with Tuli't'a District Land Corporation and informed by the nature and scope of authorized activities. • The Applicant will revise its Engagement Plan to confirm that the Applicant will work with Tuli't'a District Land Corporation and the local Renewable Resources Councils to support wildlife monitor and field support participation from either Tuli't'a or Norman Wells, as appropriate. • The Applicant will revise its Engagement Plan to confirm that the Applicant will provide Tuli't'a District Land Corporation with concurrent copies of plans, reports, and related materials submitted under the Project, alongside applicable regulatory filing requirements. • The Applicant will revise its Engagement Plan to confirm that the Applicant will provide an annual cumulative-activity report to Tuli't'a District Land Corporation and the Board within 60 days of year-end summarizing project activities undertaken during the reporting period. 	

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Applicant will revise its Engagement Plan to include that Tuli't'a District Land Corporation will be notified within 24 hours of any heritage or cultural site discovery, in addition to Government of the Northwest Territories – Education, Culture, and Employment – Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centres and any other required regulators or authorities. • The Applicant will revise its Engagement Plan to include a full stakeholder contact list rather than a standalone Tuli't'a District Land Corporation contact appendix. • The Applicant will revise its Engagement Plan to include text confirming that helicopter timing and altitude restrictions will be scoped in consultation with Tuli't'a District Land Corporation and Sahtú Renewable Resources Board, as applicable to authorized activities. • The Applicant will revise its Engagement Plan to require immediate suspension of operations and to apply a 150 metre buffer for known or suspected or historical or archaeological sites and a 500 metre buffer for burial grounds. • The proposed land use activities are not associated with new land use disturbance, and the proposed camp location coincides with a previously disturbed area at the historical Shell Airstrip. The Applicant does not anticipate an Archaeological Overview or AIA-High Potential under the current scope of work. 	

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
		<p>The Board has standard permit conditions that are typically used to mitigate the identified potential impacts. These standard conditions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LOCATION OF ACTIVITIES • CAMP SETBACK • USE EXISTING CAMP • SUMP SETBACK • USE APPROVED EQUIPMENT • SEASONAL SHUT DOWN • CLEAN WORK AREA • PERMAFROST PROTECTION • NATURAL DRAINAGE • REPAIR EROSION • EQUIPMENT: WATERCOURSE BUFFER • RECLAIM NON-OIL AND GAS SUMPS • WASTE PETROLEUM DISPOSAL • NOTIFICATION OF SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL • WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN • GARBAGE CONTAINER • SEWAGE DISPOSAL – SUMP SETBACK • SECURITY DEPOSIT • RESPONSIBILITY FOR REMEDIATION COSTS • REPAIR LEAKS • FUEL STORAGE SETBACK • FUEL CACHE SECONDARY CONTAINMENT • SECONDARY CONTAINMENT – REFUELING • FUEL CONTAINMENT • MARK CONTAINERS AND TANKS • MARK FUEL LOCATION • MAXIMUM FUEL ON SITE 	

Potential Impact	Activity	Proposed Mitigations	Board Analysis and Determination
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPILL CONTINGENCY PLAN • SPILL RESPONSE • DRIP TRAYS • CLEAN UP SPILLS • REPORT SPILLS • BRUSH DISPOSAL/TIME • MINIMIZE AREA CLEARED • CLOSURE AND RECLAMATION PLAN • FINAL CLEANUP AND RESTORATION • PROGRESSIVE RECLAMATION • ENGAGEMENT PLAN • HABITAT DAMAGE • MIGRATORY BIRD NEST DISTURBANCE • ARCHAEOLOGICAL BUFFER • SITE DISTURBANCE • SITE DISCOVERY AND NOTIFICATION 	

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.

The Tuli't'a District Land Corporation provided comments related to permit conditions in a letter to the Sahtú Land and Water Board, which Rio Tinto responded to. The Board believes evidence submitted by the Tuli't'a District Land Corporation can be addressed through the revisions the Applicant has committed to make in its Wildlife Monitoring and Management Plan to be approved by the GNWT-ECC, Spill Contingency Plan, Waste Management Plan, Engagement Plan, and a standalone Closure and Reclamation Plan. These four revised Plans will be posted for public review and for Board approval, once re-submitted to the Board.

Once Board approval is received for the revised Spill Contingency Plan, Waste Management Plan, Engagement Plan, and the stand-alone Closure and Reclamation Plan, the Applicant will be required to follow the commitments made through these revised Plans based on the Conditions contained in the Permit as discussed in detail above.

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 June 22, 2026, the Board can issue the Permit on Tuesday June 23, 2026.



Valerie Gordon, Chair
Sahtú Land and Water Board

June 12, 2026

Date