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Honourable Shane Thompson
Minister of Lands
Government of the Northwest Territories

February 23, 2021

Giant Mine Site Land Use Planning

Hon. Minister Thompson:

The Giant Mine Oversight Board (GMOB) has frequently called on the Parties to the Giant Mine Remediation Project Environmental Agreement, notably the Government of Canada, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), the City of Yellowknife, the Yellowknives Dene First Nation and the North Slave Metis Alliance, to work together to jointly develop a post-remediation land use plan for the Giant Mine site. The remediation project represents both challenges and opportunities for residents. While a sound land use planning process will be challenging to create and implement, it is a singular opportunity to develop a consensus vision for the site post-remediation and capture as many opportunities as possible. I note that in its recent Reasons for Decision regarding the Giant Mine Remediation Project water licence application, the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board stated, "the responsibility of defining future land use opportunities or constraints rests with the landowner(s), not CIRNAC-GMRP or the Board".

Despite GMOB's urging, there is no currently clear process for how such a land use plan will be developed and no champion to lead the planning process. The development of a land use plan for the site and the adjoining impacted areas requires full discussion by all involved of their respective vision and future priorities for the site, a discussion that would be informed by the current remediation plan and the Perpetual Care Plan (currently in development). Such a dialogue has not occurred to date and in the view of the Board is both needed and long overdue.

Recognizing that the GNWT is the land owner of the Giant Mine site, and the Department of Lands is the GNWT lead for land use planning, GMOB is looking to your department to initiate a land use planning process for the area.

The key questions GMOB has for your department are: will the department take the lead for this initiative? If so, who will be the lead from your department, and when will the process of pulling together the affected parties to begin the discussion start?

We look forward to your reply in this regard. We would be pleased to meet with yourself and your staff to further explain why we feel land use planning for the site is important and should be initiated soon.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me through our office at ed@gmob.ca or 867-675-0788.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Livingstone". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'L'.

David Livingstone
Chair

cc

Hon. Minister Paulie Chinna. Municipal and Community Affairs

MLA Frame Lake

MLA Great Slave

MLA Kam Lake

MLA Range Lake

MLA Julie Green

MLA Yellowknife South

MLA Yellowknife North

MLA Tu Nedhé - Wiilideh

Parties to the EA