

# YUKON'S ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT ACT (EAA) SCREENING REPORT

## 1. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FILE INFORMATION

Application Number	Yukon Water Board:: QZ05-070	ECO DAP Branch: 5110-20-40
Proponent Name	Teck/Cominco Limited	
Contact Information	Bag 2000, Kimberly B.C. V1A 3E1	
Project Title	Sa Dena Hes Mine	
Physical Work or Activity	Undertaking in relation to a physical work (Care and Maintenance).	
Multiple Activity(ies)	no	
E. A. Start Date	01 August, 2005	
E. A. Finish Date	02 September, 2005	
E. A. Determination	EAA 16(1)a	
Subject Descriptor	Mining	
Project Category Code	Aerial, Point	

## 2. RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY IDENTIFICATION

Lead Responsible Authority	ECO, DAP Branch
Other Responsible Authorities	n/a
Date EAA coordination regs triggered	n/a
R. A. Contact Information	ECO DAP Branch A310 Box 2703 Whithorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6
Project Trigger	Type A Water Use Licence Amendment
Lead Type of Approval	Water Use Licence
Status of Approval	Amendment to current licence sought
Integrated Screening	n/a
Other Triggers	n/a
Other Types of Approval	n/a
Project File Location	DAP Branch Public Registry, Whitehorse.

## 3. PROJECT LOCATION

Region	Liard Basin		
NTS Map #	105A11	Quadrant ___NE ___SE ___SW ___NW	
Geographic Location Name	Sa Dena Hes		
Latitude and Longitude or UTM Coordinates	60°42'21" (max) 60°18'31" (min)	129°11'38" (max) 128°34'08" (min)	
Watershed and Drainage Region	Liard, Mackenzie		
Nearest Community(s)	Name: Watson Lake	Distance from project:	72 km (by road)
First Nation Traditional Territory(s)	Liard First Nation		
Surrounding Land Status	Commissioners		
Special Designation(s)	None identified		

### 3.1 Project Overview

In a July 14<sup>th</sup> 2005 letter to the Yukon Water Board (the board), the proponent requested an amendment to their Water Use Licence to extend the temporary closure provision of the Sa Dena Hes mine for a further four year period. The temporary closure period for the current Water Use Licence expires on January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2006. The requested extension would carry the temporary closure date to January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2010. In their July 14<sup>th</sup> letter, the proponent committed to submitting an update of a previously approved site decommissioning plan to the board by January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2006.

## 4. PROJECT SCOPING

### 4.1 Project Scope

The scope of the project is limited to the application to amend Water Use Licence QZ99-045 for the sole purpose of extending the temporary closure provision of the licence for a further four year period. The proponent has not proposed any other changes to the Sa Dena Hes project, therefore no additional physical works or activities have been included in the scope of the project for the purpose of this screening.

### 4.2 Scope of Assessment

The environmental assessment of this project shall consider the following factors:

1. the environmental effects of the project (four year extension of temporary closure), including the environmental effects of malfunctions or accidents
2. Cumulative effects that are likely to result from the project in combination with other projects or activities that have been or will be carried out
3. Measures that are technically or economically feasible and that would mitigate any significant adverse environmental effects of the project
4. The significance of the environmental effects
5. Comments from the public that are received in accordance with EAA
6. Any other matter that the Responsible Authority(s) (RA) consider relevant

With respect to #6 above, there are no additional matters that the RA considers relevant to the scope of this assessment.

## 5. CONSULTATION/REFERRAL LIST

The Water Use Licence amendment application was discussed with a narrow range of reviewers, all of whom had a comprehensive working knowledge of the Mine site. The RA determined that due to the limited scope of amendments sought, and the lack of substantive environmental concerns with the property, consultation beyond those immediately familiar with the property was not necessary.

Department or Organization	Contact person	Response
Environment Canada	Benoit Godin	No concerns identified.
Liard First Nation	Laurie Allen	Noted that she would respond to amendment request with Water Licence intervention rather than as part of this screening.

Environment (Yukon)	Randy Lamb/Kevin McDonnel	No major concern identified, though some concern with lack of clarity in wording of clause 7.3.1. in draft screening.
Energy, Mines and Resources (Yukon)	Bob Holmes	No concerns identified.

## 6. SUMMARY OF RESPONSES FROM REFERRAL LIST

None specifically identified as part of this screening.

## 7. MANAGING THE POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE PROJECT

### 7.1 Potential Adverse Effects on the Environment

A further four years of additional temporary closure status to the site may be interpreted as prolonging the temporal effects of the mine on the landscape, thereby increasing the likelihood of significant adverse environmental effects.

The Sa Dena Hes Project was subject to a detailed screening in 2001 prepared by DIAND pursuant to the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEAA). The scope of the 2001 screening was broad, including temporary closure, production and decommissioning. The proponent responded to many issues on the site identified during the 2001 screening, including capping the western portion of the tailings impoundment with gravel to prevent tailings movement by wind. The finding of the 2001 screening was that the project was not likely to result in significant adverse environmental effects with mitigation. Numerous mitigation measures were identified, all of them eventually becoming conditions of the Water Use or Quartz Mining Licences.

The proponent has been diligent in their care and maintenance of the site. Valid Water Use and Quartz Mining Licences are in place with numerous conditions requiring the proponent to maintain a presence at the site, maintain infrastructure and ensure environmental monitoring and reporting programs continue. An approved decommissioning plan exists, monitoring has not revealed significant environmental concern, a full time caretaker is on site to respond to accidents or malfunctions and financial security is in place. The RA is therefore of the view that a four year extension in the temporary closure status of the mine is not likely to result in significant adverse environmental effects with a continuation of existing Water Use Licence conditions.

### 7.2 Cumulative Environmental Effects

A comprehensive cumulative effects assessment (CEA) (*Cominco Ltd. Sa Dena Hes Mine Yukon Territory – Cumulative Effects Assessment*. Access Mining Consultants Ltd, 2000) was prepared and submitted in support of the 2001 CEAA Screening. The 2000 CEA was reviewed by the RA during the course of this screening. No additional activities have been identified within the scope of the 2000 CEA that warrant a reconsideration of the previous findings; therefore, it is the RA's view that cumulative environmental effects arising from a four year extension of the temporary closure status of the mine are not likely to be significant with a continuation of existing Water Use Licence conditions.

### 7.3 Required Mitigation Measures

Section 20(1) of the EAA allows a RA to use a previously conducted environmental assessment to the extent necessary in conducting a screening of the same project. The RA has relied upon the findings of the 2001 CEAA screening for the Sa Dena Hes Project in conducting this screening.

The RA reviewed the mitigation requirements of the 2001 screening in the context of the extension of the temporary closure provision of the Water Use Licence for a four year period. The RA is of the view that the mitigation measures identified in the 2001 screening adequately capture the scope of the amendment currently being sought. No environmental concerns have been identified since the 2001 screening that are beyond the scope of that screening or prompt a reconsideration of the monitoring and mitigation requirements currently in place. A four year extension in the temporary closure status of the mine will therefore not result in likely significant adverse environmental effects with a continuation of the mitigation identified in the 2001 screening (note that no changes are required to the terms of Water Use Licence QZ99-045 to meet the mitigation identified in the 2001 CEAA screening).

### 7.3.1 Metal Mine Effluent Regulations (Canada)

In light of s.13(5) and 13(7) of the *Waters Act*, the RA has considered whether inclusion of any conditions as specified in Schedule 4 of the *Metal Mine Effluent Regulations* (MMER) would affect the decision of an RA pursuant to s.16(1) of the EAA following completion of the screening. Note that in undertaking this action the RA is not making any determination as to whether or not the MMER do or will apply to the project. However, if the MMER do ultimately apply, as determined by application of s.2(1) of the MMER, modifications required to the Water Use Licence by virtue of s.13(5) and/or 13(7) of the *Waters Act* will have been considered in this assessment.

It is the RA's determination that there would be no likely significant adverse environmental affect associated with lowering the discharge threshold (allowing less discharge concentration of the parameter in question) of any parameter contained in Part E of QZ99-045 to meet the standards as specified in Schedule 4 of MMER, or by adding parameters (Nickel, Radium 226) specified in MMER that are not currently contained in the Water Use Licence.

## 7.4 Residual Effects

It is the RA's view that the mitigation measures contained in the 2001 screening mitigate the likelihood of significant adverse residual environmental effects.

## 7.5 Significance of Effects

Adverse environmental effects resulting from this project are not likely to be significant with a continuation of the mitigation identified in the 2001 screening.

## 7.6 Likelihood of Occurrence

Significant adverse environmental effects resulting from this project are not likely with a continuation of the mitigation identified in the 2001 screening.

## 8. EAA DETERMINATION

16(1)(a) project not likely to cause significant adverse effects with mitigation.

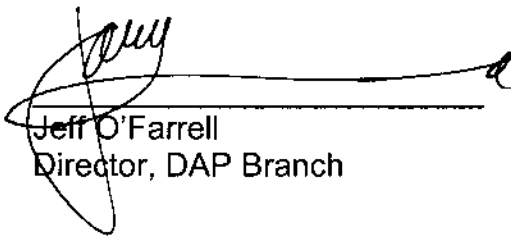
9. AUTHORIZATION

Prepared By:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Derek Fraser  
DAP Manager, ECO

02 Sept 2005  
Date

Authorized By:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeff O'Farrell  
Director, DAP Branch

Sept 2/05  
Date