

0.88Version 3 Hammond Reef Gold Project EIS/EA – Addendum (Part B)
Responses to Provincial Information Requests

1656263

Identifier	Topic	Reference to EIS/EA Report	Summary of Comment	Proponent's Response	Subsequent Comment
			<i>Date: March 2014</i>	<i>Date: June 2015</i>	
MNR-Terrestrial 5	Terrestrial		<p>This section should identify weather conditions during survey periods. Since weather can have a great influence on identifying bat activity, i.e., activity has the potential to be underestimated if acoustic monitoring is undertaken in less than ideal conditions, it is important to document conditions.</p> <p>Habitats may be used differently by different organisms at different times of year in the study areas. There are a number of times in this document where there are statements implying that there is uncertainty related to winter use of a site (ex. page 52 related to moose). If habitat suitability modelling was the only method of assessing winter use the text needs to state this more clearly so that the reader understands where conclusions are derived from. Please describe the data referenced that MNR supplied is Golder. If it is related to the moose aerial survey data, the stratification of these cells indicates that this is moderate moose habitat; however this is subject to change over time with disturbance and forest succession.</p> <p>The text should specifically reflect which areas (i.e., RSA, LSA or MSA) surveys were conducted within. In the case of the secretive marsh bird surveys it appears that the surveys were only conducted in the LSA based on responses received. This should be stated clearly in the text.</p> <p>The comment is to correct the nomenclature of Bear Baiting Station. These are Bear Population Index Lines that are designed to provide information about bear populations in the area. Also, the text here appears to reference the wrong figure when cross-referenced back to the text. The comment about habitat loss under potential environmental effects is meant to accompany a comment made about the camp "Building of the accommodation camp would result in the clearing of some forest cover. The construction of the ore processing facility will also result in clearing an area of forest cover" in Section 3.2.1, Table 3-4. It would appear that there was a shift in the information during consolidation of comments as this has been observed in a few other places in the responses document.</p> <p>The SWHTG is a guide used for municipal planning. Please describe how it was used for this project, and how it applies to mine development.</p>	<p>Weather conditions were recorded and are included in the detailed field notes for each study.</p> <p>A summary of field sampling efforts is provided in Table 2-2 of the Terrestrial Ecology TSD. Field programs did not include any winter campaigns due to safety and logistical concerns. Winter habitat use by moose was assumed based on the availability of suitable winter habitat on and in the vicinity of the proposed mine.</p> <p>A secondary data review (Natural Resource Values Information System) as outlined in Section 2.1.3 of the Terrestrial Ecology TSD as well as stakeholder feedback, , email communication with the Atikokan MNR Biologist pertaining to wetland evaluations, incidental observations of moose and moose signs were used to determine the presence of moose in the study area.</p> <p>Secretive marsh bird survey locations were conducted within the LSA and are depicted on Figure 2.2 of the Final EIS/EA. Results for secretive marsh surveys are provided in Table 3-41 of the Final EIS/EA Report.</p> <p>Noted that Bear Baiting Stations should be referenced as Bear Population Index Lines.</p> <p>As per the Significant Wildlife Habitat Technical Guide (SWHTG), the wildlife habitat evaluated as part of the environmental assessment was considered "significant" where it was "ecologically important in terms of features, functions, representation or amount and contributing to the quality and diversity of an identifiable geographic area or Natural</p>	N/A

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				<p><i>Heritage System.”</i></p> <p>Significant habitats considered for this Project include seasonal concentration areas of animals, rare vegetation communities and specialized habitat for wildlife, habitat for species of conservation concern (excluding Endangered and Threatened species), and animal movement corridors.</p>	
			<p>There should be some acknowledgement of the pre-disturbance before the baseline studies were conducted. That is, there were several years of aggressive exploration that involved, clearing, digging, trenching, blasting, road construction, water crossings, etc. Any natural heritage value that may have existed at these sites, was previously disturbed/destroyed and not included in the baseline data.</p>	<p>A description of land use within the Project area, including mineral exploration, is provided in Chapter 1, Section 1.7 of the Final EIS/EA Report.</p>	
			<p>Disturbance may direct wildlife to the TMF. Wildlife research and observations show that wildlife does encounter TMF, particularly moose and waterfowl. Please provide data for review and suggest revising this section and addressing the potential impact. The EA does not provide a clear picture of what the TMF will look like and there needs to be a common understanding of ecological risks.</p>	<p>Since wildlife could be exposed to ponded water in the TMF reclaim pond during operations, water quality in the TMF was also considered with respect to the potential for ingestion by wildlife. The predicted water quality in the reclaim pond is provided in the Lake Water Quality TSD. The predicted concentrations were compared against guidelines for livestock consumption, since these would also protect wildlife. None of the parameters exceeded the guidelines and as a result there is no predicted effect on wildlife from ingestion of water from the TMF reclaim pond.</p>	
			<p>It is expected that the EA would provide more reference and information to the predicted outcome. If the concern is not an issue, there needs to be more information presented to defend this conclusion. The study area was not defined.</p>	<p>Potential impacts to wetlands were considered in the terrestrial TSD Section 3.3 Wetlands. This section identifies changes to water quality as a potential pathway and concludes that the residual effects are loss of vegetation and alteration of flows. Runoff from the Project Site will be collected and managed in the site drainage systems and transferred to the PPCP or TMF retention pond. Excess water will be pumped into the effluent treatment facility and released through a diffuser. Implementation of these environmental design features is expected to result in no detectable changes to water quality.</p>	
			<p>The impact on snapping turtles is likely to be from direct physical impact (running them over on the road) or impacts to roadside nesting habitat. Other amphibians would be much more sensitive to changes in water quality and would measure important mining impacts that may not affect snapping turtles.</p>	<p>Snapping turtles are considered an appropriate VEC because they are herpetofaunal SAR observed on and in the vicinity of the Project Site and one of few reptile species in this northern ecosystem. Snapping turtles are also an indicator of wetland function.</p> <p>In addition to snapping turtle, several other VECs were used to determine the impact of changes in water quality including fish VECs.</p>	