

## HAMMOND REEF GOLD PROJECT RESPONSE TO COMMENTS ON FINAL EIS/EA

### COMMENT –T- 2

**Source:** Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency

#### Summary of Comment

The reasoning for environmental effects does not appear to be consistent. The section claims:

- a) Areas along a roadway will minimize vegetation clearing
- b) Alternative 3 is not solely along a roadway and will require clearing of new areas.
- c) Alternative 3 is the shortest of the three alternatives and will require the least vegetation clearance.

It is not clear why Alternative 1, which does not require any new right of way to be cleared, has more vegetation clearance than Alternative 3. It appears this decision was solely based on economics, not also on environmental reasons as the report implies.

#### Proposed Action

Clarify the reasoning used to choose Alternative 3.

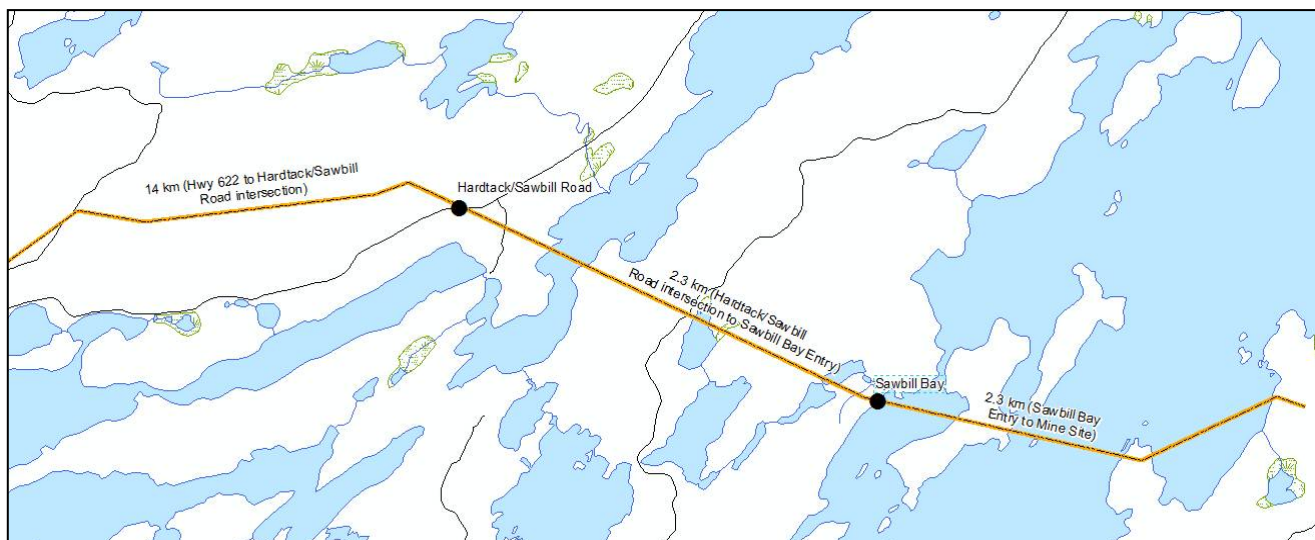
#### Reference to EIS

Alternatives Assessment TSD pages 46-47

#### Response

The preferred Project transmission line alignment is Alternative 3 – Hardtack/Sawbill Road across Sawbill Bay. The selected transmission line alignment will follow the upgraded Hardtack Road and Sawbill Road for the first 16 km then make a 2.3 km crossing to the Ore Processing Facility, for a total length of approximately 20 km.

An estimated 85 towers will be required for the transmission line, including wood (H-frame) structures for the first 14 km and larger steel towers for the remaining distance to allow for the longer spans across Sawbill Bay.



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The comment is correct in stating that Alternative 3 will require more clearing than Alternative 1, however the total amount of clearing is not considered significant. The manner in which the transmission line Right of Way is constructed is also anticipated to reduce environmental effects associated with land clearing. The pathway of the transmission line will be cleared but not graded and stripped of topsoil to allow for quick regrowth of vegetation in the transmission corridor.

The comment is correct in stating that economic considerations were important to the selection of Alternative 3 as the preferred alternative. The option of the transmission line crossing Sawbill Bay significantly reduces the length of the line, and in turn, the overall cost of installing the transmission line. As the Project transmission line will be strung across the bay, the potential effects to water quality and aquatic habitats will be minimized. The change to the visual landscape is expected to be a concern that will be addressed through ongoing work with the community. The changes to visual landscape will be fully reversible during mine closure because the infrastructure will be decommissioned.