Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada
Affaires autochtones et du Nord Canada

PO BOX 1500
YELLOWKNIFE, NT X1A 2R3

August 15, 2017

NCR#9912553

Dr. Kathleen Racher
Chair
Giant Mine Oversight Board
Box 1602, 5015 - 50th Avenue
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 2P2

Dear Dr. Racher:

Thank you for providing me with the Giant Mine Oversight Board comments on our draft report on Long Term Funding Options – Giant Mine Remediation Project (May 2017). We are currently reviewing the comments provided by various stakeholders on the preliminary draft we provided to the Giant Mine Working Group in June 2017, and will be making a revised draft of the report available to the broader public in the near future through our website, as required by Measure 6 of the Final Report of Environmental Assessment (August 2017). You will note certain changes to the version you reviewed based on these preliminary comments, with the hope of clarifying certain aspects. We would also be appreciative of any input you receive from members of the public on this subject.

We agree that the subject of long term funding is important in the context of community concerns and the protection of public health and safety, and the environment, and the Project team is working diligently to ensure that funding is available as and when required for the remediation phase, and post remediation. That being said, our understanding of Measure 6 is to "investigate long-term funding options for the ongoing maintenance of the project" and "involve stakeholders and the public in discussion on funding options", not necessarily to "ensure a stable financial platform for the ongoing maintenance of the Project and its contingencies". As with other aspects of the Giant Mine project, stable long-term funding is something we are working towards – with stakeholders and others – but the final decision will be made by the elected Parliament on advice from the appropriate government officials.

As indicated by the Measure, the intent of the report is to provide various options, and identify some of the benefits and detriments to each in the context of a project that is fully funded by the Government of Canada (and for which other funding sources, such as private sector funding, have not been offered to date), and does not rule out any option involving third party management, such as a trust fund. If there was any language in the report that explicitly ruled out any of these possibilities, it was not intended and we would be happy to amend accordingly.

Our report was intended to be a fact-based presentation of options for review by others to foster ongoing discussion, and while our approach was to provide options that are realistic, we strived to be open-minded and inclusive; if this is not seen to be the case we are happy to discuss and clarify as required, especially if, as stated in your letter, you feel the report does not meet the intent of Measure 6.

As indicated in the report, and during our discussion at the June Working Group meeting, we are actively seeking input from stakeholders on the report, by making it available through the various engagement committees for the Giant Mine Remediation project as well as to the broader public on our website. Given that you have indicated you will be engaging a third party to provide input by the end of August, I would suggest that a subsequent Working Group meeting be held in the fall to discuss all comments, and develop a path forward for continued engagement on the subject. Leading up to our licensing process it will be important for us to understand the expectations of the Oversight Board and other stakeholders as it relates to long term funding for the project.

Thank you for your continued involvement in advancing the Giant Mine Remediation project.

Sincerely,

Natalie Plato

Natalie Plato
Deputy Director
Giant Mine Remediation Project
Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada

Cc: Parties to the Environmental Agreement
Slater Environemental