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<b>DATE:</b>	February 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 2018
<b>PLACE:</b>	COMEX office 800, rue Square-Victoria, suite 25.30 Montréal (Québec) H4Z 1J2
<b>PRESENT:</b>	Suzann Méthot, Chairperson, Québec Daniel Berrouard, Québec Robert Joly, Québec Brian Craik, CNG (by phone) John Paul Murdoch, CNG (by phone)  Vanessa Chalifour, Executive Secretary

**1) Call to order and adoption of the agenda**

The agenda was adopted with the addition of the following matters to “Other business”:

- a. Cree-Québec Forestry Board
- b. Condition 8.1 of the Eastmain 1-A/Rupert diversion hydroelectric project

**2) Adoption of the minutes of the 359<sup>th</sup> meeting**

The minutes of the 359<sup>th</sup> meeting were adopted as presented.

**Action: Translate and file the 359<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes**

**3) Correspondence and follow-up action**

Correspondence and follow-up action from December 8, 2017 to February 1, 2018 are presented in Appendix A.

**4) Wood pellet production plant project in Chapais, Les Entreprises Barrette Itée**

**REF. No.: 3214-23-005**

- a. Supplementary information to the impact study: Dispersion of atmospheric emissions and project schedule
  - For recommendation

WHEREAS a full environmental and social impact assessment of the project to build a wood pellet production plant in Chapais has been completed;

WHEREAS, after reviewing the documents submitted by the proponent and in accordance with section 162 of the *Environment Quality Act* and paragraph 22.6.13 of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, COMEX finds the project acceptable subject to the following conditions:

**Condition (1):** The proponent must submit to the Administrator, prior to authorization of the project in accordance with the provisions of Chapter I of the *Environment Quality Act* (section 22), a new emissions modelling study covering non-point and stationary emission sources in order to demonstrate compliance with the *Regulation respecting the quality of the atmosphere*. The study must analyze the following three scenarios:

- pre-project scenario (operation of the sawmill only, that is, the existing situation);
- scenario with operation of the wood pellet plant only;
- post-project scenario (operation of both the sawmill and the wood pellet plant).

In the event that the updated modelling study shows that air quality standards and criteria would be exceeded, the proponent must inform the Administrator, within three months following authorization of the project, of the modifications and/or mitigation measures to be made or put in place in the sawmill and wood pellet production plant to ensure compliance with the air quality standards and criteria.

**Condition (2):** The proponent must submit to the Administrator for approval, three months following authorization of the project, an environmental and social impact monitoring program including monitoring and follow-up of atmospheric emissions. The program must contain protocols for monitoring compliance with the air quality standards and criteria set out in the *Clean Air Regulation* as well as the planned implementation of mitigation measures. This information must be sent to the Administrator annually.

**Condition (3):** In order to assess the cumulative impacts of GHG emissions from all of the wood pellet plant operations, the proponent must assess emissions generated by transportation to and from the wood pellet plant by service, shipping and delivery vehicles travelling to the harbour in Grande-Anse (Ville de Saguenay). The assessment method used must be detailed and the related information must be provided within three months following the project's authorization.

**Condition (4):** Prior to building the wood pellet plant, the proponent must hold public information sessions for the communities of Waswanipi, Oujé-Bougoumou, Mistissini and Chapais and submit a detailed report on the sessions to the Administrator three months following the project's authorization.

**Condition (5):** The proponent must submit to the Administrator, for information purposes, as well as to the communities of Waswanipi, Oujé-Bougoumou and Mistissini, no later than two months following authorization of the project, the list of job opportunities and related requirements (education, training, degrees, driver's licence, etc.).

**Condition (6):** Three months following authorization of the project, the proponent must submit an updated project schedule to the Administrator, for information purposes, report on the steps taken to reach Cree and Jamésien communities, and clearly identify workforce training requirements as well as hiring prospects.

**Condition (7):** Three months following authorization of the project, the proponent must submit to the Administrator, for approval, an environmental and social monitoring program that includes the socioeconomic benefits of the project for Crees and Jamésiens. This information must be sent to the Administrator annually.

**Condition (8):** Should the proponent consider harvesting raw wood materials in addition to or instead of sawmill co-products for the purpose of supplying the wood pellet plant, it must submit a request to amend the certificate of authorization to the Administrator, for authorization.

CONSEQUENTLY, the COMEX members decided:

**#2018-0201-01:** *to recommend that the Provincial Administrator authorize the project to build a wood pellet production plant in Chapais subject to the above conditions.*

**Action: Write to the Provincial Administrator**

**5) Construction of forest roads “H, Section west” and “I”, Matériaux Blanchet**

**REF. No.: 3214-05-075**

- a. Updated characterization program for the natural environment – Condition 4
  - For discussion

The COMEX secretariat has not yet received the English version of the updated characterization program for the natural environment, and the community of Waswanipi received it late. It was therefore decided to discuss the program at the next COMEX meeting so as to give the community of Waswanipi time to go over it and submit any comments.

**6) Whabouchi mining project, Nemaska Lithium Inc.**

**REF. No.: 3214-14-052**

- a. Environmental and social monitoring program – revised report (v1)
  - For approval

WHEREAS on September 5, 2017, COMEX received, for approval, the revised report on the environmental and social monitoring program (Version 1) for Nemaska Lithium’s Whabouchi mining project;

WHEREAS the COMEX members reviewed the document sent by the proponent and would like the proponent to respond to the following questions and comments and modify its environmental and social monitoring program accordingly:

**GENERAL SCHEDULE**

1. The authorized mine life is 26 years. If mining operations begin in 2019, the overall implementation schedule for the various biophysical environment monitoring plans for the Whabouchi project must be changed to continue to 2045 for the operation phase.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL MONITORING PROGRAM**

In the cover letter for its environmental and social monitoring program, the proponent mentions that it is difficult to foresee and mitigate the project's cumulative impacts because there is no regional environmental assessment. In the proponent's view, the government authorities are the best placed to do so. The proponent instead proposes to update certain information in the impact study every five years.

Although that would help in monitoring the cumulative impacts, COMEX thinks the proponent has a responsibility to submit a proper monitoring program that covers the cumulative impacts of its mining project.

For example, the trucking/transportation required by mining operations is definitely one of the cumulative impacts that need to be assessed as such and the information related to transportation monitoring identified in section 3.3.4 should be used in assessing this cumulative impact. A similar exercise should be conducted to identify other valued components of the environment that might be cumulatively affected by the project.

2. The monitoring of cumulative impacts must be formally set out in the proponent's environmental and social monitoring program.

### **3.1 PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

#### **3.1.1 Ambient air and atmospheric emissions (NMX P1)**

##### **3.1.1.3.1. Ambient air monitoring**

3. The ambient air monitoring schedule must account for the application for accreditation under the MDDELCC's Analytical Laboratory Accreditation Program (PALA) for the ambient air quality sampling stations.
4. Sampling stations QA-1 and QA-4 will be set up in areas of little interest and do not need to be included in the ambient air quality monitoring program. However, the proponent must revalidate that there are no sensitive receptors in the areas north, south and east near the mine site.
5. The planned sampling method for fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) does not meet MDDELCC requirements. The method is too unreliable and does not enable adequate measurement of ambient air concentrations of PM<sub>2.5</sub>. The proponent must find another method that is suitable for this project. Ideally, the sampling method and measuring equipment used should be on the Environmental Protection Agency's list of designated reference or equivalent methods.

### 3.1.1.3.2 Atmospheric emissions monitoring

6. The proponent must undertake to submit the sampling specifications, for approval, prior to commencing the point source sampling campaign. Note that section 6.5 of Booklet 4 of the *Sampling Guide for Environmental Analyses* published by the CEAEQ sets out the content of sampling specifications for atmospheric emissions from stationary sources. Also note that Booklet 4 was updated in September 2016. The latest version of the Guide, which must be used, is available online at:  
[http://www.ceaeq.gouv.qc.ca/documents/publications/echantillonnage/emiss\\_atm\\_fixesC4\\_ang.pdf](http://www.ceaeq.gouv.qc.ca/documents/publications/echantillonnage/emiss_atm_fixesC4_ang.pdf).
7. The proponent must undertake to submit its report on atmospheric emissions characterization, for information purposes, within 120 days following the end of the sampling campaign.

### 3.1.1.3.3 Greenhouse gas (GHG) monitoring

8. The proponent must specify in its monitoring program whether the procedures used to calculate GHG emissions comply with the ISO 14064-2 standard.
9. An annual report estimating GHG emissions will be submitted during the construction and operation phases only. The document does not contain details regarding the different phases (closure plan, list of activities during these phases), but there will certainly be GHG emissions during the post-operation phase. The proponent must include the post-operation and post-restoration phases in its GHG gas monitoring, unless otherwise justified.
10. The proponent must list all anticipated GHG sources, sinks and reservoirs (SSR) for every phase of the mining project. A sample but not exhaustive list of SSRs associated with a mining project is appended.
11. In order to assess the cumulative impacts of GHGs emitted by the mining operations as a whole, the proponent must assess, at the very least, the emissions generated by transportation to and from the mine by workers, service and supply vehicles, as well as GHG emissions generated by the disturbance of wetlands. COMEX would point out in this regard that Michelle Garneau, the researcher participating in the proponent's research project, is an expert in the field and the lead author of the report *Synthèse de la valeur et la répartition de carbone terrestre au Québec* produced for the MDDELCC  
[http://www.mddelcc.gouv.qc.ca/changementsclimatiques/Rapport\\_final.PDF](http://www.mddelcc.gouv.qc.ca/changementsclimatiques/Rapport_final.PDF)

#### **3.1.1.3.4 Road watering plan for the mine site**

12. Table 3.1 outlines the parameters of the road watering plan. The proponent must explain in detail where the different values indicated in the table came from.

#### **3.1.1.6 Response mechanisms in the event of environmental degradation**

13. The proponent says that in case of exceedance of ambient air quality standards at the Bible Camp or at the hunting camp the most susceptible to be affected by the project, additional mitigation measures will be implemented. The proponent must specify the planned mitigation measures or the corrective measures that may be applied.

#### **3.1.2 Vibration and noise levels (NMX P2)**

14. To better protect land users, noise level sampling must be done bimonthly during the first year of the construction phase.
15. The proponent must undertake to implement mitigation measures in case noise levels exceed the standards specified in the *Memorandum of Instruction 98-01* (MDDELCC). It must also specify the measures in the compensation program.

#### **3.1.3 Surface water quality (NMX P3)**

16. Appendix 1 of the *Guide de caractérisation physico-chimique de l'état initial avant l'implantation d'un projet industriel* states that to monitor the trophic status of a lake, monitoring stations must be located in the deepest parts of the lake. If that is the case, then the location of stations ST-5 and ST-12 seems questionable. The proponent must re-evaluate the location of these stations.
17. The proponent must specify whether station ST-8 is a reference (control) station. If so, this station should be installed farther upstream, where the river widens.
18. The proponent must discuss Nemaska Cree involvement, in particular the tallyman and family R20, in selecting the location of surface water sampling stations. The proponent must indicate in what way the selected locations address the concerns raised by the community.
19. Table 3.3 presents the list of surface water quality monitoring parameters in the Whabouchi project study area. The analytical detection limit for total phosphorus indicated in the table is 0.02 mg/L. However, trace total phosphorus is what needs to be analyzed for lake water (CEAEQ method MA. 303-P 5.2). The analytical detection limit for method MA. 303-P 5.2 is 0.0006 mg/L. The proponent must correct the information accordingly.

### 3.1.5 Final mine effluent (NMX P5)

20. The proponent must monitor final effluent concentrations of all contaminants on a quarterly basis along with chronic toxicity testing for contaminants subject to an EDO and monthly acute toxicity testing.
21. The references cited in condition 31 have been amended since the certificate of authorization was issued. For the purposes of the EDO monitoring report, the proponent must follow the guidelines for applying environmental discharge objectives to industrial discharges in an aquatic environment (*Lignes directrices pour l'utilisation des objectifs environnementaux de rejet relatifs aux rejets industriels dans le milieu aquatique*, MDDEP, 2008) and its addendum *Comparaison entre les concentrations mesurées à l'effluent et les objectifs environnementaux de rejet (OER) pour les entreprises existantes* (MDDELCC, 2017). Accordingly, the proponent must submit a monitoring report three years after the start of operations and every five years thereafter.
22. The proponent must add quarterly monitoring of rare earth and rare metal elements to its final effluent monitoring and modify Table 3.6 accordingly.
23. Table 3.8 must be modified to include the requirements set out in the technical references for an initial depollution attestation issued for mining projects (*Références techniques pour la première attestation d'assainissement – secteur minier, usines de traitement de minerais métalliques*), that is, weekly monitoring of conductivity and arsenic (As) and monthly monitoring of petroleum hydrocarbons (C10-C50).

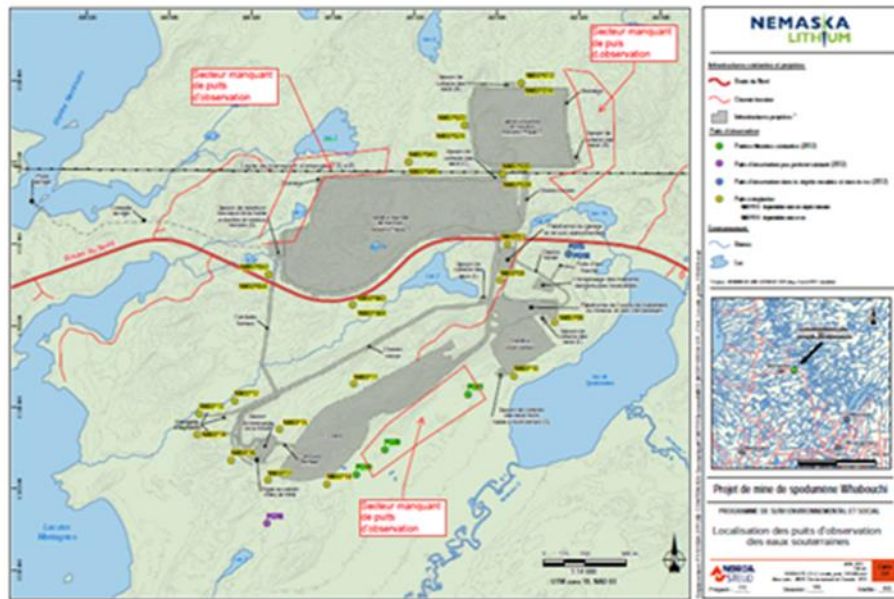
### 3.1.6 Weather and Climate

24. The proponent must explain the methodology and running of field campaigns for characterizing ice cover, in particular, the sites selected for measuring ice cover thickness. The proponent must also explain how it intends to work with the Crees and how the information will be communicated to Cree users.

### 3.1.8 Groundwater (NMX P8)

25. The direction of groundwater flow, if known, must be shown on Map 3.6 so as to help better identify at-risk areas.
26. The planned groundwater monitoring does not cover all three areas shown on Map 3.6. The proponent must adjust its methodology to include those areas.





### 3.2 BIOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT

#### 3.2.1 Effects of final effluent on sediment, benthos and fish in the Nemiscau River (NMX B1)

##### 3.2.1.3.1 Sediment

27. Effluent contaminants are liable to settle and accumulate in Lac des Montagnes over the medium and long terms. The proponent must monitor the physicochemical quality of sediment, commencing the fifth year after the start of mining operations and using the same sampling stations as for initial characterization purposes. Thereafter, monitoring should be conducted every five years for the duration of the project. Overall, the monitoring procedures would be the same as those set out in the guide to physicochemical characterization of the baseline state of an aquatic ecosystem prior to an industrial project (*Guide de caractérisation physicochimique de l'état initial du milieu aquatique avant l'implantation d'un projet industriel*).

##### 3.2.1.3.3 Fish populations

28. Age readings for walleye will be based on the first ray of the pectoral fin. However, the otolith is better for determining age, especially in Northern Québec walleye, which exhibit slower growth compared to walleye in other parts of Québec. The proponent must modify its methodology accordingly.

29. The proponent must specify what other species, apart from walleye, will be used for this study. It must also explain how it will work with land users for the purposes of the study. Their contribution could be useful, particularly for collecting additional data on fish caught in the project study area.

#### **3.2.5.1 Rationale (for monitoring fish habitat compensation measures)**

30. Add condition 14 of the general CA to the list of reasons a monitoring program is required.

#### **3.2.5.3 Methodology**

31. The monitoring stations for this procedure must be shown on a map once DFO **and the Administrator** have approved the final compensation project.

#### **3.2.6 Agronomic monitoring of vegetation**

32. The proponent must explain how Cree input will be included in the agronomic monitoring and research program established with the University of Sherbrooke.

#### **3.2.7 Monitoring of hydrological, ecological and habitat functions in the Lac du Spodumène fen and shrub swamp(NMX B7)**

33. The proponent must include pH in water pools in the elements to be monitored in the Lac du Spodumène fen.

##### **Section 3.2.7.3.1 – Study of the flow at the outlet of the swamp downstream from Lac du Spodumène**

34. The proponent must explain the planned method for characterizing the initial flow exiting the swamp downstream from Lac du Spodumène, specifying, among other things, how long and how many times the flow will be measured.

##### **Section 3.2.7.5 – Reporting requirements**

35. The proponent must identify Gramineae, Juncaceae and Cyperaceae species, given that the herbaceous layer will respond the most quickly to future changes in ecological conditions in the peatland.

##### **Section 3.2.7.4 – Drone flyovers**

36. Aerial photos taken by drone are different from LIDAR data. The proponent must specify whether a LIDAR data acquisition program for the study area will be conducted in parallel to drone overflights.

#### **3.2.7.5.2 Plant and wildlife surveys (bird inventory)**

37. The proponent must specify whether bird inventories have already been conducted? If so, when (exact date)? Note that the building already erected is very noisy and may already have altered species' distribution range.
38. In all likelihood, species at risk (olive-sided flycatcher, rusty blackbird) occur in this area. Therefore, it would be worthwhile to use the broadcast calls of these species at the end of a listening session if they have not been heard. The proponent must also ensure that listening sessions are conducted in ideal weather conditions (no wind or rain), particularly if each listening session is conducted only one every two years. The proponent must modify its methodology accordingly.
39. Considering the life of the project, changes in the bird habitat covered by the inventory may occur naturally and, consequently, changes in the bird communities could also be identified. To determine whether the changes are caused by mining operations, it may be worthwhile conducting surveys/inventories for the purpose of monitoring changes in bird communities on a control site near the mine. Note that the same could be done for all of the planned surveys/inventories.

#### **3.2.7.5.2 Plant and wildlife surveys (small mammals)**

40. The monitoring program, as submitted, uses the sampling protocol recommended in Jutras (2005). However, that is not the protocol described in the application for a SEG licence received by the Direction de la gestion de la faune du Nord-du-Québec (DGFa-10). The proponent must clarify which protocol will be used and why.

#### **3.2.8 Chiroptera (NMX B8)**

41. The proponent must correct the following:
- The information regarding the owner of the camp located on the north shore of Lac du Spodumène: The camp now belongs to the Direction de la gestion de la faune du Nord-du-Québec (DGFa-10).
  - The information regarding monitoring of the maternity colony by the MFFP: The white nose syndrome is not the main reason for the monitoring; the main reason is because this is the largest maternity colony on public land in the Nord-du-Québec region. Furthermore, the mine facilities are located less than 1 km away from the maternity colony, the minimum protection zone required by the MFFP to ensure the colony's survival.

- The information regarding demolition of the camp: FaunENord, in cooperation with the DGFa-10, installed roosts. There are no plans to demolish the camp in the short term, but it is in an advanced state of deterioration and may no longer be usable within a few years. The purpose of the monitoring is to document use of the new roosts, but mainly to make sure that the population is not adversely affected by mining operations.
- This monitoring must be incorporated into the overall implementation schedule.

42. In addition to completing the online form, the proponent must send the ultrasound results along with the photographic reports to the MFFP. The MFFP has been monitoring this maternity colony for several years now and wants to continue doing so.

### **3.2.9 Wildlife species of interest and wildlife sightings (NMX B9)**

43. One of the objectives mentioned in this section is to raise awareness among employees and contractors about the impacts of feeding, poaching and disturbing wildlife. However, the proponent does not explain how this objective will be achieved. The proponent must explain the planned means of raising awareness among employees and contractors about this potential impact.

- This monitoring must be incorporated into the implementation schedule.

## **3.3 Human environment**

### **3.3.1 Use of land and resources (NMX H1)**

44. The community of Nemaska is concerned about the potential sport fishing arising from the arrival of mine workers. The proponent must explain how it intends to raise awareness among mine workers about the issue and possibly contribute to or implement measures to attenuate this fear and take steps to ensure sport fishing is practised in an orderly manner.

### **3.3.3 Monitoring of community wellness (NMX H3)**

45. The proponent must specify whether the drug and alcohol prevention program will be a new program developed by Nemaska Lithium, by the CBHSSJB, or by both. The proponent must also specify whether the program will be intended for mine workers, members of the community or both.

46. The proponent must specify whether the employee assistance program adapted to Cree reality, which would include financial planning, will be a new program developed by Nemaska Lithium, by the community of Nemaska or by both. Note that in certain communities, the housing department offers financial planning courses.
47. It says in the environmental and social monitoring program that information for this study will be obtained from various informants, including local representatives of the CBHSSJB. The proponent must correct that information to read “local representatives and the CBHSSJB’s Public Health Team.”
48. It also says that the survey proposed in the response document submitted to COMEX appears to be culturally less appropriate than interviews and group discussion and will not be used. The proponent reminds the reader that the final monitoring procedures (information collection method, activities, indicators, etc.) will be agreed upon with the Crees; in compliance with the Chinuchi Agreement, this will be done under the auspices of the Environment Committee. The proponent must send COMEX the final monitoring procedures agreed upon with the Cree bodies.

### **3.3.4 Monitoring of transportation on the Route du Nord (NMX H4)**

#### **3.3.4.1 Rationale**

49. The proponent must describe in detail the commitments made in the monitoring program by specifying:
  - the speed limit for vehicles carrying the concentrate;
  - the location of adapted passing zones;
  - how upgrading and maintenance of the Route du Nord will be ensured;
  - how the special signs to be installed around the mine perimeter were chosen;
  - if the design of signs at the intersection comply with the applicable standards and regulations;
  - who will be responsible for policing and ambulance services for the mine and the Route du Nord.

#### **3.3.4.5 Reporting requirements**

50. The proponent must inform the Direction de la santé publique of the Centre régional de santé et de services sociaux de la Baie-James of the results of the environmental and social monitoring program and it must do so for the entire duration of the monitoring. The text in section 3.3.4.5 must be modified accordingly.

### **3.3.6 Cree involvement in monitoring (NMX H6)**

51. In section 3.3.6.4, the proponent must correct the monitoring description by replacing “Monitoring of land use” by “The study of Cree involvement in monitoring.”
52. The proponent must indicate whether all of the monitoring results will be communicated to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities, as stipulated in condition 10 of the general certificate of authorization. Moreover, the proponent must specify whether all cases of non-compliance or exceedance reported to the competent authorities will also be reported to the signatory partners of the Chinuchi Agreement. What does the proponent mean by “when necessary” when it says “Inform the environment coordinator and, when necessary, the Weh-Sees Indohoun Corporation, the MFFP and/or Environment Canada of any issues with wildlife populations (i.e. nuisances or sick animals, significant drop in sightings)”?

### **STABILITY OF STRUCTURES**

53. The proponent must incorporate proper monitoring of dike conditions in its environmental and social monitoring program. The monitoring must be designed to ensure dike stability and integrity.

For information purposes, the goal of a dike stability monitoring program is to ensure integrity of the accumulation area (tailings pile), retention structure or basin during its useful life and until it is dismantled and restoration of the mine site is completed. Such a monitoring program should include the following activities:

- daily reconnaissance visits: cursory visual verification of retention structures and related infrastructure;
  - regular weekly inspections: detailed visual examination of retention structures and related infrastructure, which may include measurements where necessary. Such inspections may be conducted by a technician, under the supervision of a member of the Ordre des ingénieurs du Québec;
  - detailed annual inspections: detailed visual examination of retention structures, with tools, and of related infrastructure, which may include measurements where necessary. The inspection must be conducted by an outside, independent firm.
54. The proponent must confirm that the design criteria for the sedimentation ponds are those set out in Directive 019. (Directive 019, point 2.9.3.1: 1000-year recurrence interval for a 24-hour rainfall and a 100-year recurrence interval for a 30-day snowmelt).

**EXTENSION OF MINE LIFE**

The proponent must specify whether it intends to request an amendment to the general certificate of authorization to extend the mine life. If so, the proponent must modify its environmental and social monitoring program accordingly, in terms of the schedule as well as if any changes to the project could affect the program.

CONSEQUENTLY, the COMEX members decided:

**#2018-0201-02:** *to write to the Provincial Administrator to inform him that the COMEX members reviewed the revised environmental and social monitoring program and would like the proponent to respond to the above questions and comments and modify its environmental and social monitoring program accordingly.*

**Action: Write to the Provincial Administrator**

- b.** Request to amend the location of the final effluent discharge point
  - For approval

WHEREAS on June 14, 2017, COMEX received, for recommendation, the request to change the location of the final effluent discharge point for Nemaska Lithium's Whabouchi mining project;

WHEREAS the COMEX members went over the proponent's request to change the location of the final effluent discharge point as well as the additional information received on December 13, 2017, are satisfied with the proponent's responses and therefore recommend that the request to change the location be approved under the following conditions:

**Condition (1):** The location of the final effluent discharge point is still uncertain because the bathymetry cannot be validated until the next field season in summer 2018. The proponent must confirm the location of the discharge point based on the latest field data collected in summer 2018.

**Condition (2):** COMEX knows that the presence of hoary bat, a species likely to be designated as threatened or vulnerable, was confirmed in the immediate vicinity of the maternity colony at Lac du Spodumène by recordings made in summer 2017 by the Direction de la gestion de la faune du Nord-du-Québec. This species could therefore be present on the site where the effluent pipe is to be installed. Special attention must be paid during tree felling to identify the possible presence of hoary bat.

**Condition (3):** As part of its mine water management plan, the proponent must undertake to meet the retention pond (impoundment) safety factors set out in Table 2.7 of Directive 019 (March 2012 version). The proponent must provide the assumptions used and the calculations performed to determine the applied safety factors.

CONSEQUENTLY, the COMEX members decided:

**#2018-0201-03:** *to write to the Provincial Administrator to inform him that the COMEX members reviewed the request to change the location of the final effluent discharge point and recommend that the request be approved under the above conditions.*

**Action: Write to the Provincial Administrator**

## **7) Eastmain 1-A/Rupert diversion hydroelectric project**

**REF. No.: 3214-10-017**

- a.** Monitoring of the multispecies spawning grounds developed at KP 203 and KP 207 on Eastmain River
- b.** Monitoring of the fish pass at KP 207 on Eastmain River
- c.** Fish population monitoring in the increased-flow section – 2015 monitoring report
  - For information

WHEREAS on December 10, 2015, COMEX received, for information purposes, the report on monitoring of the multispecies spawning grounds developed at KP 203 and KP 207 on Eastmain River – environmental follow-up during the operation phase, 2014, for the Eastmain 1-A/Rupert diversion project. On January 20, 2016, COMEX received, for information purposes, the report on monitoring of lake sturgeon at KP 207 on Eastmain River in 2013 and 2014 for the same project, which includes monitoring of the fish pass at KP 207. Lastly, on September 14, 2017, the Review Committee received, for information purposes, the report on environmental monitoring of fish populations between KP 193 and KP 217 on Eastmain River (increased-flow section) during the operation phase in 2015, for the same project;

WHEREAS these are three separate reports, COMEX nevertheless reviewed them as a whole, deeming them to be complementary and to enable an overall assessment of achievement of the objectives of the 2007-2023 environmental follow-up program to assess the anticipated impacts of habitat alterations and characterize fish populations between KP 193 and KP 217;



CONSEQUENTLY, the COMEX members decided:

**#2018-0201-04:** *to write to the Provincial Administrator to inform him that the COMEX members reviewed the above three monitoring reports and wish to make the following comments:*

*With regard to monitoring of the spawning grounds developed at KP 203 and KP 207 on Eastmain River (2014) and monitoring of the fish pass at KP 207 on Eastmain River (2013 and 2014), COMEX reviewed the documents sent by the proponent and finds that the monitoring data collected to date meet the related monitoring objectives. Another year of monitoring is planned in 2016.*

*With regard to monitoring fish populations between KP 193 and KP 217 on Eastmain River, increased-flow section (2015), the COMEX members reviewed the monitoring report and find that the monitoring data collected in 2015 meet the related monitoring objectives. However, in light of the monitoring results in 2013 and 2015, and as suggested by the Monitoring Committee, COMEX recommends monitoring fish populations in the increased-flow section of Eastmain River between KP 193 and KP 217 for an extra year. The proponent must also indicate what year it will be conducting the next monitoring operation. It must also indicate if the methodology, including the choice of monitoring stations, fishing gear, fishing effort, number of summer fishing campaigns and periods for the fishing campaigns, will be similar to those in 2008, 2013 and 2015. Lastly, the proponent has already specified that future monitoring will be conducted downstream of KP 207. It must therefore justify its decision not to catch fish at the two monitoring stations located upstream of KP 207, that is, the stations at KP 214.5 and 211.*

**Action: Write to the Provincial Administrator**

- d. Monitoring of the multispecies spawning ground developed downstream of the Sarcelle generating station – 2015 monitoring report
  - For information

WHEREAS on September 15, 2017, COMEX received, for information purposes, the report on environmental monitoring in 2015 of the multispecies spawning ground developed downstream of the Sarcelle generating station during the operation phase of the Eastmain 1-A/Rupert diversion project;

WHEREAS the COMEX members reviewed the document submitted by the proponent as well as the MDDELCC's in-house analysis, COMEX deems that the 2015 monitoring data so far meet the objectives of this specific monitoring requirement. Since there are two years left in the monitoring of this spawning ground, it will be possible to verify if the silting of substrate in the spawning ground tends to stabilize or not;

CONSEQUENTLY, the COMEX members decided:

**#2018-0201-05:** *to write to the Provincial Administrator to inform him that the COMEX members reviewed the 2015 environmental monitoring report on the multispecies spawning ground downstream of the Sarcelle generating station for the operation phase and consider that the 2015 monitoring data meet the objectives of this specific monitoring requirement.*

**Action: Write to the Provincial Administrator**

- e. Request to amend the certificate of authorization – Permanent housing complex on the site of the temporary workcamp for Eastmain-1 – Resumption of the analysis
  - For recommendation

WHEREAS on December 1, 2017, COMEX received, for recommendation, the request to amend the certificate of authorization for the permanent housing complex on the site of the temporary Eastmain-1 workcamp for the Eastmain 1-A/Rupert hydroelectric project;

WHEREAS the COMEX members reviewed the document submitted by the proponent and lament the overly general, patchy and incomplete nature of the information provided in respect of this request to amend the CA to build a permanent housing complex at the Eastmain workcamp. Considering the importance of this request as well as the questions raised by the review of the request, COMEX recommends that the proponent submit the whole project in a comprehensive, detailed document containing, without being limited to, the answers to the following questions:

**SITE DEVELOPMENT, ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE AND RE-DEVELOPMENT**

1. The proponent must provide a detailed description of the dismantling, re-development, renaturalization and other work the proponent wishes to carry out at the Eastmain camp. It must also provide the timeline for this work.
2. The proponent must document the potential presence of contaminated soil on the site and, if applicable, the planned decontamination measures.
3. The proponent must indicate the anticipated volume of fuel storage on the site and whether decontamination work is necessary before or during site redevelopment.
4. The proponent must specify which airport the Hydro-Québec workers housed at the Eastmain camp will be flying through. It must also indicate the construction schedule for the housing complex, including all associated activities (power transmission lines, etc.).

5. The proponent says that the housing will be built by Hydro-Québec, but will ultimately be owned and operated by a Cree company. The proponent needs to know that it may have to request an amendment to the certification of authorization to change the name of the holder for this component of the Eastmain-1-A/Rupert project as well as apply to have the related certificates of authorization issued pursuant to sections 22, 32 or other sections of the *Environment Quality Act* transferred.
6. In relation to the preceding question in particular and to the overall project in general, the proponent must report to the Administrator on the outcome of discussions held with the community of Nemaska and/or Eastmain, including the tallymen concerned.
7. The proponent must specify whether, in future, the housing and related infrastructure will house Hydro-Québec workers only or if rooms could eventually be made available to other workers or land users. In such case, the proponent must consider this perspective in its responses.
8. The proponent must discuss the effectiveness of wastewater treatment by septic tanks and peatland in light of the currently anticipated reduction in effluent flow.
9. The proponent must also evaluate and discuss the relevance of maintaining the discharge point in peatland or if developments are planned. It must also indicate whether it considered other ways to prevent long-term disturbance of the peatland as a result of the permanent housing complex.
10. The proponent must indicate how, where and by whom residual materials generated by the future housing complex will be managed. It must submit, to the Administrators, the alternative solutions considered for preventing and reducing the generation of residual materials on site. COMEX expects the proponent to examine, in particular, the feasibility of on-site composting and reclamation of organic waste generated by the camp.
11. The proponent must indicate whether construction of the new 25-kV distribution line will necessitate work in wetlands or bodies of water. If so, it must indicate where wetlands and bodies of waters will be crossed as well as indicate any mitigation measures to be implemented, including the use of untreated poles/posts.
12. The proponent must indicate whether dismantling of the temporary 69-kV line linking the Eastmain-1 camp to the Muskeg substation will necessitate temporary or permanent developments (e.g. watercourse/wetland crossings) or work (e.g. excavation) in wetlands or bodies of water. If so, it must indicate the location of such work or developments and specify any mitigation measures to be implemented.

**BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

In COMEX's opinion, construction of a permanent building in James Bay is not a trivial matter and affords an opportunity to take meaningful action in favour of the environment and the residents' health. The architectural design of buildings offering an appealing and sustainable living environment can meet environmental objectives by using the best energy-efficient solutions and local procurement policies, as well as be architecturally pleasing while fulfilling the buildings' housing function. The Waskaganish airport terminal is a case in point. The terminal was built in 2011 following sustainable development principles and received LEED Canada—NC certification. Located in the Cree northern village of Waskaganish, the building required high-energy measures such as a well-insulated envelope and energy-efficient windows. Its aerodynamic shape, inspired by Cree cultural traditions, was designed to effectively fight strain from wind and reduce snow build-up. Among other qualities, the building's total energy performance cuts energy costs by more than 30% relative to the *Model National Energy Code for Buildings* and the project was carried out in partnership with the community of Waskaganish (<http://projetsverts.voirvert.ca/projets/aerogare-waskaganish>).

Whereas Hydro-Québec is a leader in technological innovation for a low-carbon economy and energy efficiency is central to its strategic directions:

13. The proponent must explain and justify its energy-efficient solutions, including the use of prefabricated modules and their source, building materials, energy sources for the buildings' operation as well as the measures taken to minimize the ecological footprint during the project's entire life cycle for components to be renovated or built.

The consolidated document must discuss the potential impacts of the camp's construction, including the use of prefabricated modules from unidentified sources.

Using basic building materials from James Bay contributes to the regional economy as well as minimizes the environmental impact of the project as a whole.

14. The proponent must indicate whether it intends to use building materials sourced from the region in which the project is to be built and explain why or why not.
15. The proponent must explain in what way the project design, particularly construction of a new housing complex, was planned so as to reduce its ecological footprint and take regional climate change into account. Will the new residential block reflect new approaches to building design and use? For example, will the buildings be positioned on the basis of natural lighting and be built using material that does not contain volatile organic compounds (VOC)?

#### **TRANSPORTATION ELECTRIFICATION**

As mentioned on the corporation's website, by developing innovative battery and motor technology for electric vehicles as well as a charging network, and producing clean and renewable energy, Hydro-Québec is actively involved in transportation electrification. It is also involved in feasibility studies and pilot projects.<sup>1</sup>

16. Does the proponent intend to give preference to electric transportation for the workcamp? For example, would the proponent consider using electric vehicles and installing charging stations for electric vehicles? The proponent must justify its answer to this question.

#### **JOBS**

COMEX is also wondering about local workforce involvement in the construction project.

17. Even though the proponent states that this project will be carried out in partnership with a Cree company, in order to evaluate the actual economic benefits in terms of employment, COMEX would like to know in what way this partnership ensures involvement of the local workforce and local spinoffs for the region.

#### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

18. COMEX would like to receive a report on the meeting held with the monitoring committee set up by the proponent and be informed of any concerns expressed by the monitoring committee, the municipality of Eeyou Istchee James Bay or the public and whether their concerns informed and were taken into account in the project design.

#### **OTHER PROJECT**

COMEX was informed that another project by another proponent envisages housing workers on the same site as that identified in the present request to amend the certificate of authorization.

19. Is the proponent considering opening its site or camp to other users? If so, it must provide details and incorporate this option into the overall design of its own project.
20. If applicable, could water supply, wastewater treatment and waste management infrastructure be shared with another housing project nearby the proponent's project?

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.hydroquebec.com/electrification-transport/>

21. Is the proponent considering discussing the general site layout/development or building standards with another proponent?
22. To what extent does planned redevelopment work on the site need to be adjusting according to this new context and who will be responsible for it?

CONSEQUENTLY, the COMEX members decided:

**#2018-0201-06:** *to write to the Provincial Administrator to inform him that the COMEX members reviewed the request to amend the certificate of authorization for the permanent housing complex on the temporary Eastmain-1 workcamp and that, considering the importance of this request as well as the questions raised by its review, COMEX recommends that the proponent submit the whole project in a comprehensive, detailed document that incorporates, without being limited to, the answers to the above questions.*

**Action: Write to the Provincial Administrator**

**8) Rose Lithium – Tantalum mining project, Critical Elements Corporation**

**REF. No.: 3214-14-053**

- a. Updated environmental impact study
  - For discussion

Everyone received the environmental impact study documents for Critical Element's Rose Lithium – Tantalum mining project. The project review should be completed in spring 2018. It goes without saying that COMEX will no doubt have questions and comments in relation to this project.

**9) Eleonore mining project, Opinaca Mines Ltd.**

**REF. No.: 3214-14-042**

- a. Revision of the 2016 annual report: monitoring of Cree land use
  - For discussion

COMEX is waiting to receive an addendum concerning Cree land use for Opinaca Mines' Eleonore mining project.

**10) Other business**

**a. COMEV website**

Everyone familiarized themselves with COMEV's website. Suzann Méthot said that she noted a few typos. Vanessa Chalifour will make the necessary corrections.

- b. Publication on the COMEX website of documents related to projects submitted to the review procedure / Presentation of the new environmental assessment register / new EQA: current and forthcoming regulation – implications for project reviews**

COMEX had a chance to attend a presentation on the new environmental assessment register to take effect in March 2018. The new register will not include northern projects right away, but the framework provides for such later on. Issues related to the unconfirmed publication of certain documents such as expert opinions and follow-up of authorization conditions still need to be ironed out.

- c. Obtaining of departmental and expert opinions**

In the interest of accountability and transparency, COMEX reiterated numerous times to the Direction des évaluations environnementales, to no avail, that it wished to obtain, for information purposes, the sector-based and departmental opinions on which the people at MDDELCC base their analyses. Suzann Méthot will make a formal request to the Provincial Administrator to obtain the departmental and expert opinions used for project analyses.

- d. AQÉI convention, May 3-4 in Québec City: Human beings at the heart of environmental impact assessment: proposal for COMEX presentation**

Suzann Méthot and Robert Joly will draw up a proposal for a presentation for the 26th congress of the Association québécoise pour l'évaluation des impacts.

- e. Cree-Québec Forestry Board**

The chairperson of COMEX had a discussion with the chairman of the CCFQ, Hervé Deschênes, particularly regarding the shared interest in holding a meeting to discuss progress in issues common to both bodies. They agreed that such a meeting would be good. COMEX is waiting for a written reply to the request it made to the CQFB to obtain information on the consultations regarding forest management plans. Another meeting will be proposed for the purpose of taking stock of the issues common to both bodies.

- f. Condition 8.1 of the Eastmain-1-A/Rupert diversion hydroelectric project**

Paul John Murdoch informed the COMEX members of the Comprehensive Coastal Research Program set up by Niskamoon in relation to condition 8.1 of the CA for the EM1A/Rupert project. Chisasibi, Wildlife Canada, Nunavut and the CNG (steering committee) are involved in the program. Paul John proposed that a presentation of the program be given to COMEX. The Review Committee is interested and Paul John will follow up on the matter.

**11) Next meetings**

- a.** March 1, 2018, Montréal
- b.** April 6, 2018, Montréal
- c.** May 9, 2018, Montréal
- d.** June 13, 2018, Montréal



<b>Appendix A</b> <b>Correspondence and follow-up: December 8, 2017 to February 1, 2018</b>					
<b>Project</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Document</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Action - Comments</b>
Eastmain-1-A/Rupert diversion project, Hydro-Québec REF. NO.: 3214-10-017	Suzann Méthot COMEX	Patrick Beauchesne Deputy Minister MDDELCC	List of flow, water level and temperature measuring stations in operation in 2014 and 2015	Sent: December 11, 2017 Acknowledgement of receipt: December 12, 2017	
Eastmain-1-A/Rupert diversion project, Hydro-Québec REF. NO.: 3214-10-017	Simon Marcotte Hydro-Québec	Patrick Beauchesne Deputy Minister MDDELCC	Monitoring of eelgrass beds along the northeast coast of James Bay	Sent: November 27, 2017	
	Mireille Paul MDDELCC	Suzann Méthot COMEX	Monitoring of eelgrass beds along the northeast coast of James Bay	Sent: December 19, 2017 Received by COMEX: December 20, 2017	<i>For information</i>
Eastmain-1-A/Rupert diversion project, Hydro-Québec REF. NO.: 3214-10-017	Jérôme Gingras Hydro-Québec	Patrick Beauchesne Deputy Minister MDDELCC	Niskamoon Corporation annual reports	Sent: December 14, 2017	
	Mireille Paul MDDELCC	Suzann Méthot COMEX	Niskamoon Corporation annual reports	Sent: January 9, 2018 Received by COMEX: January 10, 2018	<i>For information</i>
Wood pellet production plant in Chapais, Les Entreprises Barrette Ltée REF. NO.: 3214-23-005	Suzann Méthot COMEX	Benoit Barrette Barrette-Chapais Ltée	Public hearings	Sent: December 13, 2017	
	Benoit Barrette Barrette-Chapais Ltée	Patrick Beauchesne Deputy Minister MDDELCC	Supplementary information to the impact study (Dispersion of atmospheric emissions and project schedule)	Sent: December 4, 2017	
	Mireille Paul MDDELCC	Suzann Méthot COMEX	Supplementary information to the impact study (Dispersion of atmospheric emissions and project schedule)	Sent: December 12, 2017 Received by COMEX: December 13, 2017	<i>For recommendation</i>

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<b>Project</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Document</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Action - Comments</b>
Wood pellet production plant in Chapais, Les Entreprises Barrette Itée REF. NO.: 3214-23-005	Steve Gamache Ville de Chapais	Suzann Méthot COMEX	Withdrawal of request for public hearings	Sent: January 10, 2018 Received by COMEX: January 10, 2018	
	René Dubé Administration régionale Baie-James	Suzann Méthot COMEX	Support for withdrawal of request for public hearings	Sent: January 10, 2018 Received by COMEX: January 10, 2018	
Extension of Route 167 Nord, MTMDET REF. NO.: 3214-05-077	Suzann Méthot COMEX	Patrick Beauchesne Deputy Minister MDDELCC	Follow-up information on the false mountain willow	Sent: December 11, 2017 Acknowledgement of receipt: December 12, 2017	
Extension of Route 167 Nord, MTMDET REF. NO.: 3214-05-077	Suzann Méthot COMEX	Patrick Beauchesne Deputy Minister MDDELCC	Summary of the 29 conditions related to the initial certificate of authorization	Sent: December 12, 2017 Acknowledgement of receipt: December 12, 2017	
	Mireille Paul MDDELCC	Philippe Lemire MTMDET	Summary of the 29 conditions related to the initial certificate of authorization	Sent: January 15, 2018 Received by COMEX: January 31, 2018	
Troilus mining project, First Quantum Minerals Ltd. REF. NO.: 3214-14-025	Samuel Allard SNC Lavalin	Patrick Beauchesne Deputy Minister MDDELCC	Troilus ore dust column tests / Final report	Sent: November 21, 2017	
	Mireille Paul MDDELCC	Suzann Méthot COMEX	Troilus ore dust column tests / Final report	Sent: December 5, 2017 Received by COMEX: December 14, 2017	<i>For information</i>
Project to restore the Principale mine site in Chibougamau REF. NO.: 3214-14-058	Suzann Méthot COMEX	Patrick Beauchesne Deputy Minister MDDELCC	Restoration of the Principale mine site	Sent: December 12, 2017 Acknowledgement of receipt: December 12, 2017	
	Mireille Paul MDDELCC	Josée Morency MERN	Restoration of the Principale mine site	Sent: January 9, 2018 Received by COMEX: January 10, 2018	

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<b>Project</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Document</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Action - Comments</b>
Eleonore mine site, Opinaca Mines Ltd. REF. NO.: 3214-14-042	Suzann Méthot COMEX	Patrick Beauchesne Deputy Minister MDDELCC	Annual environmental follow-up and monitoring report, 2016	Sent: December 14, 2017	
	Mireille Paul MDDELCC	France Trépanier Opinaca Mines Ltd.	Annual environmental follow-up and monitoring report, 2016	Sent: January 9, 2018 Received by COMEX: January 10, 2018	
Eleonore mine site, Opinaca Mines Ltd. REF. NO.: 3214-14-042	Martin Duclos GoldCorp Éléonore	Patrick Beauchesne Deputy Minister MDDELCC	Revised 2016 follow-up report on Cree land use	Sent: January 8, 2018	
	Mireille Paul MDDELCC	Suzann Méthot COMEX	Revised 2016 follow-up report on Cree land use	Sent: January 29, 2018 Received by COMEX: January 29, 2018	<i>For information</i>
Whabouchi project, Nemaska Lithium REF. NO.: 3214-14-052	Simon Thibault Nemaska Lithium	Patrick Beauchesne Deputy Minister MDDELCC	Request to change final effluent discharge point: questions and comments	Sent: November 9, 2017	
	Mireille Paul MDDELCC	Suzann Méthot COMEX	Request to change final effluent discharge point: questions and comments	Sent: December 13, 2017 Received by COMEX: December 15, 2017	<i>For recommendation</i>
Iron-vanadium exploration project, BlackRock Metals Inc. REF. NO.: 3214-14-050	Mireille Paul MDDELCC	Suzann Méthot COMEX	Request to amend the general CA	Sent: December 15, 2017 Received by COMEX: December 20, 2017	<i>For recommendation</i>
Project to mine and process 600 000 tonnes of additional ore from Bachelor Lake property, Metanor Resources REF. NO.: 3214-14-027	Julie Raiche Metanor Resources	Patrick Beauchesne Deputy Minister MDDELCC	Updated restoration plan (Condition 18)	Sent: December 4, 2017	
	Mireille Paul MDDELCC	Suzann Méthot COMEX	Updated restoration plan (Condition 18)	Sent: December 15, 2017 Received by COMEX: December 19, 2017	<i>For information</i>

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<b>Project</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Document</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Action - Comments</b>
Project to mine and process 600 000 tonnes of additional ore from Bachelor Lake property, Metanor Resources REF. NO.: 3214-14-027	Pascal Hamelin Metanor Resources Inc.	Patrick Beauchesne Deputy Minister MDDELCC	Report on follow-up of conditions	Sent: December 12, 2017	
	Mireille Paul MDDELCC	Suzann Méthot COMEX	Report on follow-up of conditions	Sent: January 9, 2018 Received by COMEX: January 10, 2018	<i>For information</i>
Renard Diamond Project, Diamants Stornoway (Canada) inc. REF. NO.: 3214-14-041	Martin Boucher Les Diamants Stornoway (Canada) inc.	Marie-Renée Roy Deputy Minister MDDELCC	Fish habitat compensation program - Responses to COMEX's questions and comments	Sent: December 1, 2017	
	Mireille Paul MDDELCC	Suzann Méthot COMEX	Fish habitat compensation program - Responses to COMEX's questions and comments	Sent: January 15, 2018 Received by COMEX: January 17, 2018	<i>For recommendation</i>
Rose Lithium – Tantalum mining project, Critical Elements Corporation REF. NO.: 3214-14-053	Vanessa Millette WSP Canada Inc.	Patrick Beauchesne Deputy Minister MDDELCC	Updated environmental impact study	Sent: December 22, 2017	
	Mireille Paul MDDELCC	Suzann Méthot COMEX	Updated environmental impact study	Sent: January 9, 2018 Received by COMEX: January 10, 2018	<i>For recommendation</i>
Rose Lithium – Tantalum mining project, Critical Elements Corporation REF. NO.: 3214-14-053	Suzann Méthot COMEX	Jean-Sébastien Lavallée Critical Elements Corporation	Publication of documents on the COMEX website	Sent: December 20, 2017	

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<b>Project</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Document</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Action - Comments</b>
Construction of forest roads “H, Section west” and “I” REF. NO.: 3214-05-075	Alexis Deshaies EnviroCri	Patrick Beauchesne Deputy Minister MDDELCC	Characterization program for the natural environment – Condition 4, Responses to questions and comments	Sent: January 15, 2018	
	Mireille Paul MDDELCC	Suzann Méthot COMEX	Characterization program for the natural environment – Condition 4, Responses to questions and comments	Sent: January 18, 2018 Received by COMEX: January 19, 2018	<i>For recommendation</i>
Nibiischii national park project	Suzann Méthot COMEX	Line Drouin Deputy Minister MFFP	Nibiischii national park project	Sent: December 13, 2017 Acknowledgement of receipt: December 13, 2017	
	Line Drouin Deputy Minister MFFP	Suzann Méthot COMEX	Nibiischii national park project	Sent: January 11, 2018 Received by COMEX: January 18, 2018	
JBACE Annual Report 2016-2017	Graeme Morin JBACE	Vanessa Chalifour COMEX	Annual Report 2016-2017	Sent: December 14, 2017	