

RioTinto

Kennecott Eagle Minerals

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RECEIVED

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UIC BRANCH
EPA REGION 5

December 22, 2008

Rebecca L. Harvey
United States Environmental Protection Agency
Underground Injection Control Branch
Region 5
Attention Mail Code WU-16J
77 West Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, Illinois, 60604-3590

Subject: **Response to EPA's Request for Additional Information, Submitted on December 5, 2008, Kennecott Eagle Minerals Company (KEMC), UIC Permit Application Number MI-103-5W20-0002**

Dear Ms. Harvey,

A request for additional information in an e-mail sent on December 5, 2008 was received from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) titled "Gray Wolf and Kennecott Eagle Mine." In response to your December 5, 2008 e-mail please find attached, a copy of the 2008 Wildlife Species and Vegetative Assessment report and additional information on the gray wolf.

Possible evidence of gray wolves was observed within the Kennecott Eagle mine proposed disturbed area (action area) during the 2006 and 2007 surveys, which included tracks and scat. No evidence of gray wolves in the action area was observed in 2008.

According to Jim Hammill, President of Iron Range Consulting & Services Inc., a wildlife and land management company, and a retired State of Michigan wildlife biologist where for 12 years he was responsible for monitoring Michigan's wolf population, gray wolves are known to be habitat generalists, therefore no cumulative effect models of habitat loss have been developed. However, wolf den sites and rendezvous areas often are viewed as the most sensitive known components of wolf home ranges and accepted by biologists as "critical habitat".

In Mr. Hammill's consultation with Brian Roell, the current Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) Wolf Program Coordinator the action area is not now nor has it been used by wolves for den or rendezvous activities. No den sites have been recorded in the action area and the nearest known rendezvous site is approximately 5 ½ miles west-northwest of the action area, last known to be used in 2007.

Ms. Rebecca Harvey
United States Environmental Protection Agency
December 19, 2008
Page 2

The Kennecott Eagle mine project is not likely to have any significant impacts on the gray wolf. Should you have any additional questions please don't hesitate to contact me at 906-486-1257.

Sincerely,



Jon Cherry
General Manager

cc: Gene Smary, Warner Norcross and Judd
Dennis Donohue, Warner Norcross and Judd
Steve Donohue, Foth Infrastructure & Environment
Matt MacGregor, King and MacGregor
Vicky Peacey, Kennecott Eagle Minerals Company
Alicia Duex, Kennecott Eagle minerals Company

File: EC-Eagle-UIC-Corres to EPA