



APPENDIX C

EIS/EA CONCORDANCE WITH RESPONSES TO COMMENTS RECEIVED

(Provided digitally on USB flash drive with Volume 1 binder and on website address:
<https://www.firstmininggold.com/springpole-ea>)

- C-1 Federal Impact Assessment Agency of Canada and Environment and Climate Change Canada
Comments on Baseline Study Reports and the Draft EIS/EA
- C-2 Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks; Ministry of Northern Development
and Mines; Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry; Ministry of Mines, and Ministry of Tourism,
Culture and Sport Comments on Baseline Study Reports and the Draft EIS/EA
- C-3 Shared Territory Protocol Nations Comments on Baseline Study Reports
- C-4 Cat Lake First Nation and Lac Seul First Nation Comments on the Draft EIS/EA**
- C-5 Mishkeegogamang Ojibway Nation Comments on Baseline Study Reports and the Draft EIS/EA
- C-6 Slate Falls Nation Comments on Baseline Study Reports and the Draft EIS/EA
- C-7 Northwestern Ontario Métis Community Comments on the Draft EIS/EA

Table C-4.1: First Mining Gold Response to Cat Lake First Nation and Lac Seul First Nation Comments on the Springpole Gold Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Assessment

ID	Specific Reference	Initial Comments & Rationale	Proposed Action / Solution	FMG Response	Where Addressed
CLLSFN-2024-001	General	CLFN and LSFN are undertaking the Kita-ki-nan assessment process that will rely on information from FMG's EIS/EA as well as information collected in the Indigenous Knowledge and Use Study and Socio-Economic Study being conducted by CLFN and LSFN as well as other information as needed.	CLFN and LSFN request that FMG make updates to the draft EIS/EA in response to information requests in this table and any additional requests made by CLFN and LSFN in cover letter materials. Please ensure these requests are also responded to clearly in a tracking table.	Information and requests will be incorporated into the final EIS/EA where applicable and as noted in the responses to the comments. A concordance table will be included in the final EIS/EA to track how and where this has been done. The draft EIS/EA included a concordance table from previous input received as Appendix C.	Appendix C
CLLSFN-2024-002	Section 4.0 Project Description (including subsections 4.17 and 4.18)	<p>The current closure plan is "conceptual" in nature, lacks details.</p> <p>FMG summarizes the current closure objectives as follows: <i>"Mine decommissioning / closure must be completed to satisfy the Mine Reclamation Code under Ontario Regulation 240/00 of the Mining Act. The primary goal of decommissioning and closure of mine sites is to establish a site that is physically, chemically, and biologically stable. The Project footprint will be rehabilitated to a productive and natural state as practical. The reclamation and decommissioning / closure objectives for the Project include: re-establish natural drainage; rehabilitate disturbed lands; ensure site runoff meets regulatory criteria; and establish a self-sustaining vegetative cover"</i> (p.4-49, emphasis added).</p> <p>There are no stated cultural or socio-economic objectives.</p> <p>FMG states that <i>"a comprehensive regulatory closure plan will be developed for the Project as required by the Mining Act"</i> (p.4-47). It adds that <i>"feedback gained through ongoing consultation and engagement activities, and including on the draft EIS/EA, will be fully considered in the regulatory closure plan"</i> (p.4-47).</p> <p>CLFN and LSFN are responsible for transferring knowledge of their cultural practices with the intention "that the grandchildren and their children continue using that area for a long time. And that's why it's important... that use of that land continues with the next".[1] It is critical that FMG address these long-term considerations at this stage in the process: "I still want that livelihood as Anishinaabe people, that we can still enjoy what the land has to offer. And the water. The animals on the land, in the water. The berries. Ensuring that's all going to be there when they complete the project."[2]</p> <p>[1] C10 and C12. 2023. Transcripts of November 21, 2023 Interview from the Kita-ki-nan Traditional Land Use Study. Firelight Research Inc. for the Cat Lake First Nation.</p> <p>[2] L04. 2023. Transcripts of November 14, 2023 Interview from the Kita-ki-nan Traditional Land Use Study. Firelight Research Inc. for the Lac Seul First Nation."</p>	<p>CLFN and LSFN request that FMG develop closure objectives that meet cultural and socio-economic objectives.</p> <p>This includes but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Ensuring the conservation and continued use of sites near the mine site;– Supporting CLFN and LSFN members' ability to practice their way of life and to transfer knowledge and teachings specific to the area;– Ensuring long-term benefits while minimizing post-closure socio-economic impacts, including job loss and gender-, addiction-, and mental health-related issues;– Mitigating impacts to harvesting practices as well as to water, fish, and non-human relatives within the flooded open pit and the mine waste co-disposal facility areas; and– Mitigating long-term risks of erosion, accidents, spills, or structural failures of the mine waste facility, including due to flooding or extreme meteorological events (e.g. 100-year floods). <p>CLFN and LSFN requests that closure objectives and detailed plans be develop before the Project is approved so CLFN and LSFN can support development and approve of the objectives and plans.</p> <p>The closure plan is very important to CLFN and LSFN request more specific information, including feasibility of and alternatives considered for these elements of the closure be described in the final EIS/EA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– backfilling and flooding the pit,– co-disposal facility for tailings and related electricity requirements,– sediment and erosion control of the site and decommissioning and reclamation activities,– shoreline, aquatic, and terrestrial ecological restoration, including fish and fish habitat,– decommissioning of linear corridors, including roads and transmission lines,– more detailed timeline of closure activities, including duration of progressive reclamation, key elements of the final reclamation work such as infrastructure decommissioning, post-closure activities, including when the closure objectives (i.e. pristine condition) will be achieved. <p>Specific elements relates to erosion and sediment control measures. It will be important to ensure detailed plans are independently reviewed, including as it relates to long-term tailings management.</p>	<p>The closure concept for the environmental assessment considers the noted objectives and includes the restoration of the open pit basin with the construction of additional enhanced fish habitat, infrastructure removal and revegetation, long-term stability of the CDF, and maintenance of transmission line infrastructure for long-term socio-economic benefit. A detailed Closure Plan requires detailed engineering and is a permitting requirement and will be developed, in accordance with O.Reg. 35/24 (formerly 240/00, revoked April 1 2024), after the EIS/EA but prior to construction. The closure plan will also be updated periodically during the life of mine. FMG will continue to work with LSFN and CLFN on closure planning during all phases of the Project.</p> <p>An assessment of alternative closure concepts is provided in Section 5.31 to 5.36 of the draft EIS/EA, including the dewatered open pit basin and co-disposal facility.</p> <p>FMG would be pleased to present and clarify the Closure Plan process, and receive additional feedback from CLFN and LSFN during upcoming technical meetings.</p>	EIS Section 5

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ID	Specific Reference	Initial Comments & Rationale	Proposed Action / Solution	FMG Response	Where Addressed
CLLSFN-2024-003	Section 4.0, including subsection 4.18.3.4	<p>FMG partially addressed STPN original comments STPN-2021-111 and STPN-2021-131. FMG has not provided sufficient information on the quality and availability of soil necessary to support the proposed reclamation work, nor did it assess how the soil quality could be affected overtime, chemically and physically, by the various activities related to the soil removal, handling, and storage.</p> <p>FMG states: "FMG proposes to utilize the overburden materials stored in the surficial soil stockpiles and any small local topsoil or organics stockpiles to support revegetation efforts progressively during operation and during closure. Stockpiled organics will be fully utilized during reclamation activities" (p.4-53).</p> <p>However, there are no detailed analyses to support this statement. There is a concern there will not be sufficient soil with good quality available for the reclamation of all impacted areas, especially for the extensive soil cover planned for the tailings and mine waste co-disposal facility. If the soil quality is inadequate at the outset or degrades overtime as a result of handling and storage for many years, it may impact revegetation options and performance.</p>	CLFN and LSFN request that FMG perform detailed analyses of soil quality and availability to fully sustain progressive and post-closure reclamation work, including considerations for how the soil quality would be affected overtime after all the removal, handling, and storage. CLFN and LSFN requests that FMG provide this additional information to them before the Project is approved to include in our Kita-ki-nan process.	<p>Approximately 11 Mm³ of overburden is expected to be stockpiled in the surficial soil stockpile during site development. A total of 36 samples of overburden from areas to be stripped were tested for acid generating potential and metals leaching conditions.</p> <p>Static testing results indicated that the overburden samples tested were non-acid generating. Metal content analyses indicated that the samples generally contained low concentrations of metals, and metal leaching test results based on shake flask extraction testing indicated a generally low potential for metal leaching in the baseline condition.</p> <p>Details of the overburden analysis is provided in Appendix K-3 of the draft EIS/EA. An erosion and sediment control plan will be prepared during permitting and provide further details on location and timing of measures to minimize slope length and grade, ditching and diversion berms, contact water management ponds, use of natural vegetation buffers and runoff controls.</p>	Appendix K-3
CLLSFN-2024-004	Section 4.0 (including subsections 4.17 and 4.18) PFS 2021 (including section 21, subsection 21.2.11, and tables 21-1 and 21-3)	<p>There are no detailed closure costs and associated financial security analyses in the draft EIS/EA 2023, and the estimated CDN \$39.3M provided in the pre-feasibility study in 2021 (pp. 21-31) appears insufficient and excludes important costs and liabilities, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs associated with ensuring CLFN and LSFN closure objectives and responsibilities are fulfilled; Long-term water treatment costs if the current closure design fails to mitigate long-term metal leaching and acid rock drainage; Decommissioning costs for the cofferdams, access roads, and transmission line if required by CLFN and LSFN; and Costs that could arise from an unlikely, but possible, premature erosion or accidental failure or spill of the tailings and waste rock co-disposal facility. 	<p>CLFN and LSFN requests FMG provide a detailed closure plan and costing analysis for our Kita-ki-nan assessment process, including but not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Costs associated with ensuring CLFN and LSFN closure objectives (i.e. bring site to pristine condition) and responsibilities are implemented; Long-term water treatment costs if the current closure design fails to mitigate long-term metal leaching and acid rock drainage; Decommissioning costs for the cofferdams, access roads, and transmission line; and Costs that could arise from an unlikely, but possible, premature erosion or accidental failure or spill of the tailings and waste rock co-disposal facility or other unforeseen circumstance. <p>CLFN and LSFN request FMG demonstrate they may provide the financial securities to fund the plan for all elements above, including contingencies.</p> <p>The CLFN and LSFN people would like to know:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> How long it will take for the open pit hole to fill with water and where will the water come from without affecting water levels for Springpole Lake and downstream? Who will be there to monitor the integrity of the dams? Who will be there to monitor the fish populations and test the fish to determine their suitability for consumption? How long will it take for natural vegetation to return to the site? How long will it take before it will be safe to consume berries and plants that grow on the soils left behind at the site? If animals and birds return to the site to feed, how long will it be before it will be safe to consume them? 	<p>The Prefeasibility Study provides an estimate of closure cost. A more detailed Closure Plan and updated cost estimate will be developed with detailed engineering and scheduling information after the environmental assessment process as required in Ontario and includes the provision of reclamation financial security prior to construction. This regulatory closure plan will also address input received during consultation which will occur through life of mine based on continual improvement as new strategies and technologies may emerge.</p> <p>While FMG will be required to include costs for the decommissioning of the transmission line, we believe that this is long-term sustainable infrastructure that can be constructed, owned and operated by the First Nations and support renewable energy projects well into the future.</p> <p>With respect to the six questions posed by CLFN and LSFN:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> One of the advantages of the ore body being partially situated in the north bay of the north basin is the expedited reclamation timeframe where it is expected, based on the assessment work, the bay is expected to be restored within a 5-year period without causing fluctuations in Springpole Lake water levels beyond natural variation (Section 6.7.4.1 of the draft EIS/EA). In comparison, it takes much longer for forested lands to be restored naturally. 	N/A

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				<p>2. FMG will be required to carry out monitoring during all phases of the Project. This monitoring can be done in collaboration with CLFN and LSFN. The monitoring programs will also be subject to review by the IGTRB.</p> <p>3. FMG will be required to carry out monitoring during all phases of the Project. This monitoring can be done in collaboration with CLFN and LSFN.</p> <p>4. Natural successional vegetation can take a long time to establish however one of the closure goals will be to actively re- establish caribou habitat. This can be achieved through active seeding and planting of key species. Trials would be carried out during life of mine to test and optimize the revegetation strategy. These trials can be done in collaboration with CLFN and LSFN.</p> <p>5. Berries and plants that grow on site post closure will be safe to eat right away.</p> <p>6. It will be safe to eat animals and birds during all phases of the project including post closure. Monitoring of country foods can be done in collaboration with CLFN and LSFN.</p>	
CLLSFN -2024-005	Sections 4.0 and 5.0 Appendices E and T1	<p>FMG remains vague and provides no details about how consultations with affected Indigenous communities or new information provided by Indigenous communities will be considered in the alternatives assessment, if at all, including for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– The routing options for the access roads and the transmission line;– The location options for the cofferdams’ locations in Springpole Lake;– The area required for dewatering to access the pit area;– The location options for the tailings and waste rocks facility;– The in-pit disposal options of the tailings and waste rocks;– The location options for the mine effluent discharge point; <p>The water treatment options for the mine effluent (the current option appears to heavily rely on a “dilution is the solution” approach, without detailing how other discharge location or treatment options could effectively reduce potential contaminants prior to being discharged into the environment); and</p> <p>The closure plan options (see other comments made on this topic).</p> <p>FMG states: <i>“The indicators and criteria detailed in Section 5.2 and the alternatives assessed, are the culmination of comments received on the both the draft and final ToR from Indigenous communities and stakeholders, as well as through other means”</i> (p. 5-10, emphasis added).</p> <p>FMG provides no further details on how those consultations influenced each of the alternative’s assessment made or how new information collected since the draft EIS/EA was published, including the Indigenous Knowledge and Use Study and Socio-economic Study, will be considered for each alternative.</p>	<p>CLFN and LSFN requests that:</p> <p>1. FMG provide more details about how new information will inform each of the alternatives assessment outcomes, if at all, including for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. the routing options for the access roads and the transmission line;b. the location options for the cofferdams’ locations in Springpole Lake;c. the footprint options for dewatering the area to access the mine pit;d. the location options for the tailings and waste rocks facility;e. the in-pit disposal options for a portion of the tailings and waste rocks;f. the location options for the mine effluent discharge point;g. the water treatment options for the mine effluent prior to being discharged into the environment; andh. the closure plan options (see other comments made on this topic). <p>2. FMG assess how the alternatives assessment outcomes could meet social and cultural objectives. This includes, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The conservation and continued use of sacred sites near the mine site and along the access road and transmission line;b. Impacts to harvesting practices as well as to water, fish, and non-human relatives;c. CLFN and LSFN members’ ability to practice their way of life and to transfer knowledge and teachings specific to the affected areas; andd. Long-term benefits of the Project while minimizing negative socio-economic impacts, including potential job loss, and gender-, addiction-, and mental health-related issues. <p>This information will be used to inform our Kita-ki-nan assessment process being completed for the Springpole Project.</p>	<p>Information that is provided to FMG by CLFN and LSFN will be reviewed for its applicability to various aspects of the EIS/EA, including baseline reports, alternatives assessment and the effects assessment for specific valued components. Non-confidential traditional knowledge and land use information will be evaluated and considered in the assessment of the alternatives for components of the Project, and the selection of preferred options. The detailed effects assessment for relevant valued components will include non-confidential information in the analysis and assessment of potential effects, and the development of mitigation measures.</p> <p>The alternatives assessment in Section 4 of the draft EIS/EA includes a number of criteria and indicators to assess the alternatives. As described in Section 4.2.1.2, and Appendix T the assessment considers several noteworthy criteria that would support the identified social and cultural objectives including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Effect on heritage resources including archaeology, built heritage and cultural heritage landscapes– Effect on archaeological resources– Effect on spiritual, ceremonial, and cultural heritage, and archaeological sites– Effects on traditional land use– Effect on local residents and recreational users– Public health and safety– Effect on local businesses and economy	EIS Section 4 Appendix T

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		<p>Community-led studies will provide significant new information that will be able to inform much of FMG’s final EIS/EA. It is important that Anishinaabe laws, including the Kita-ki-nan process, is respected and adhered to. This is central to CLFN and LSFN way of life, as noted by one CLFN member:</p> <p>“Between Gaul and Springpole Lake, my dad and I walked there, we took my kids there. He told me someday I’ll be sitting talking about this. Our people always knew there was gold there. That’s not our role, our role is to be responsible for keeping our land pristine and to have that ability to use it”.²³</p> <p>There is a story at Springpole, a medicine woman who died and came back to life two or three days later. She wanted to be put in the water, pushed down with the rocks and the next day she was floating, alive. She did die a week later and those who pass continue to make an offering. To this day, you can hear the rocks hum to remind you to make the offering.</p> <p>The land is sacred. Two medicine men used to come to Springpole and meet; they would come to a sacred place and have a shake for two or three days. There are a few places where you can hear the drum from a medicine man who passed away. There are graves at Springpole.</p> <p>There are pictographs at Springpole where our people go. The pictographs teach our people the traditional ways. The pictographs are teachings from our ancestors and the Creator.</p> <p>23 C05. 2023. Transcripts of November 22, 2023 Interview from the Kita-ki-nan Traditional Land Use Study. Firelight Research Inc. for the Cat Lake First Nation.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Regional economy– Effect on government services <p>FMG would be pleased to present and clarify how the alternatives assessment in the draft EIS/EA was carried out, and receive additional feedback from CLFN and LSFN in a meeting.</p>	
CLLSFN-2024-006		<p>Water intake systems need to be carefully designed to prevent fish from being drawn into the system (entrainment), as improperly designed screens can allow fish to be drawn against the screen surface and kill the fish (impingement). To properly design a water intake system, the proponent must understand fish life history and behaviour traits (so that the intake is not located near critical fish habitat), know the swimming capabilities of vulnerable life stages, and know the size of the fish the vulnerable list stages (to correctly choose the screen size and mesh size).</p>	<p>To address these concerns the Proponent must complete the tasks listed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Conduct an assessment of the area around the water intake to determine locations of critical habitat.– Provide detailed information to CLFN and LSFN on the calculations used to determine mesh size, screen size, position within the lake, and intake velocities based on species present (Gowan & Garman, 2002).– For reference, follow both the Fish Screening Guide for Water Intakes (Katopodis, 1992), and the Freshwater Intake End-of-Pipe Fish Screen Guideline (DFO, 1996) to evaluate and alter current intake plans.– Provide a monitoring plan to determine the effectiveness of the intake pipe. <p>References Department of Fisheries and Oceans. 1996. “Freshwater Intake End-of-Pipe Fish Screen Guideline”. Ottawa, ON. Gowan, Charles and Greg Garman. 2002. “Design Criteria for Fish Screens In Virginia: Recommendations Based on a Review of the Literature”. https://doi.org/10.1080/00357529.1980.11764651. Katopodis, Chris. 1992. “Fish Screening Guide for Water Intakes”. Department of Fisheries and Oceans</p>	<p>1. FMG will follow best management practices related water intake design, installation, and operation. With regards to the requested tasks:</p> <p>The fish habitat characterization studies (Appendix O of EIS/EA) completed to date provide ample information to develop intake designs. The proposed intake location will extend into Birch Lake to a depth greater than 9 metres. This will reduce the interaction of the intake with larval and juvenile fish which favour the shallower littoral areas.</p> <p>For the purpose of assessing effects and determining no residual effects, the current DFO Interim Code of Practice for End-of-pipe fish protection screens for small water intakes in freshwater was considered (https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/pnw-ppe/codes/screen-ecran-eng.html). The detailed design of the water intake will be completed during the permitting stage of the Project as part of the provincial environmental compliance approval (ECA) process. The Code describes best</p>	Appendices F, O

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				<p>practices for the design, installation and maintenance of small water intakes with flow rates up to 0.150 m3/s. Currently, the Birch Lake average water intake flow rate is proposed to be approximately 0.03 m3/s, which is at the low end of the flow range for the Code. Typically, the deterrent to entrainment for a small water intake such as the Birch Lake water intake would be the use of a screened structure (box, cylinder or drum), which is consistent with the Code.</p> <p>Noted as per above.</p> <p>Monitoring plans will be based on extensive baseline programs and updated following environmental assessment approval, to consider conditions of approval and for the permitting stage of the Project as part of the provincial environmental compliance approval (ECA) process.</p>	
CLLSFN -2024-007	Section 6.11.4.4	This section discusses groundwater drawdown as a result of pit dewatering and the impacts on wetland connectivity. In addition to changes in vegetation community composition, this could impact carbon dynamics and wildlife habitat quality and/or quantity. Further, the report states the significance of the residual effects on the quality and function of wetlands is low. However, long-term water table drawdown can alter wetland form and function which may not be recoverable after activities have ceased (e.g., changes to the surface Sphagnum layer of peatlands).	CLFN and LSFN requests that FMG state in the draft EIS/EA if there is expected to be residual impacts with respect to carbon dynamics and wetland wildlife habitat from groundwater drawdown. Additionally, CLFN and LSFN requests that FMG re-examine the significance of residual effects as it pertains to wetlands.	<p>Changes in carbon dynamics is included as land use changes (including wetlands) in the assessment of greenhouse gas emissions (Section 6.4 of the draft EIS/EA).</p> <p>Groundwater drawdown during operations is being updated based on the updated hydrogeological modelling for the final EIS/EA. The potential drawdown would occur during the operation phase of the Project and will recover during the active closure phase when dewatering activities cease. The change in groundwater levels will be incorporated into the assessment of potential effects on wetlands, including changes in wetland vegetation communities. The change in wetland form and function is further considered in the assessment of potential for wildlife and wildlife habitat.</p> <p>A follow-up monitoring program for wetlands will validate the accuracy of effects predictions.</p>	EIS Sections 6.4, 6.5, 6.11
CLLSFN -2024-008	Section 6.15.3	This section suggests mitigation measures to avoid impacts to Species at Risk bats and bat habitat. The EIS states that during construction the proponent will “avoid the removal of bat maternity habitat outside the bat active season of May 1 to August 31 for northern Ontario (MECP 2021), to the extent practical.” Maternity roosting habitat for species-at-risk bats is protected under the Endangered Species Act and cannot be removed without appropriate consultation and permits. Maternity roosting habitat for bat species that are not at risk should only be removed outside of the bat active season.	CLFN and LSFN requests that FMG provide clarification in the EIS that maternity roosting habitat for bats that are not at-risk will occur outside of the active season, and that maternity roosting habitat for Species at Risk will be protected during construction works.	Migratory bat species are included as SAR in the final EIS/EA. Mitigation for SAR includes avoiding Project construction activities during the bat active season to the extent feasible and minimizing habitat loss as well as indirect effects to bat habitat. Residual effects will be further addressed through offsetting measures during the overall benefit permitting process.	EIS Section 6.15
CLLSFN -2024-009	Appendix P-3, Section 5.4.5.3	This section states that “the hourly pattern of high-frequency bat activity at M5 and M6 was highest one to two hours later in the night which is consistent with the proposed activity pattern at hibernacula. Despite this, the proportion of high-frequency to low-frequency activity at these sites did not meet the criteria for a potential hibernaculum.”	CLFN and LSFN requests that FMG clarify why the proportion of high frequency and low frequency was used as a criterion to determine potential hibernaculum. Critical habitat for SAR bats in the Ontario Recovery Strategy for the species (Humphrey and Fotherby 2019, 23) is “the presence of one or more Little Brown Myotis, Northern Myotis and/or Tri-colored Bat or their genetic material within, at, or within 30 m of the	The proportion of high-frequency to low-frequency species was used as one of several criteria employed when determining use of a potential hibernaculum. This is because the majority of high-frequency calls were by hibernating species, while the majority of low-frequency calls were by	Appendix P-1

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			<p>entrance to a cave, abandoned mine, well or tunnel, or any other site which may provide suitable environmental conditions (i.e., stable, cool, humid climate as described in the federal recovery strategy), as documented between August 1 and May 15.”</p> <p>Reference: Humphrey, Christy and Heather Fotherby. 2019. Recovery Strategy for the Little Brown Myotis (Myotis lucifugus), Northern Myotis (Myotis septentrionalis), and Tri-coloured Bat (Perimyotis subflavus) in Ontario. Peterborough, ON: Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Parks.</p>	<p>non-hibernating species. It was predicted that the majority of activity recorded at the entrance of a potential hibernaculum during the swarming period would be by hibernating species and thus, high-frequency bats. This was only one criterion used to infer whether bats used a hibernaculum. In the end, M3, M5, and M6 were qualified as candidate bat hibernacula.</p> <p>A conservative approach was employed to identify potential hibernacula. It was important to document any feature that might serve as a hibernaculum. However, the conditions within these features are unknown and could be unfavourable to bats. Therefore, accurately quantifying impacts necessitates identifying true hibernacula (features used by bats). To this end, a rigorous scientific approach was followed. As previously noted, SAR bats (hibernating species) were detected at every monitoring station except one. Under these conditions, the recovery strategy would be overly sensitive and result in an inaccurate assessment of impacts. The approach used remains conservative while taking into consideration expected patterns of activity over two seasons.</p>	
CLLSFN -2024- 010	Section 6.13.4.1	<p>This section states that details of the caribou habitat restoration and rehabilitation will be further discussed during consultation on the draft EIS.</p> <p>CLFN and LSFN has identified that caribou is a culturally important species that CLFN and LSFN are conducting an Indigenous Knowledge and Use Study and Socio-economic Study as part of the Kita-ki-nan process which is expected to produce Indigenous knowledge relating to caribou will be shared. CLFN and LSFN are interested in sharing non-confidential portions of these studies with FMG once available to be considered in the development of the caribou habitat restoration and rehabilitation plan provided in the draft EIS/EA.</p> <p>FMG has also not provided any compensation plan for alteration or destruction of caribou habitat.</p>	<p>CLFN and LSFN requests that FMG prioritize further data collection and analysis prior to finalizing the EIS/EA with consideration of ongoing CLFN and LSFN studies (summarized in Comment STPN-2021-1), relating to caribou habitat restoration and rehabilitation.</p> <p>CLFN and LSFN also expect that FMG will work with all regulatory authorities, including CLFN and LSFN, to develop an adequate management plan and compensation plan for caribou and caribou habitat.</p>	<p>An extensive field data collection program has been undertaken to contribute to development of a habitat compensation plan. FMG is reviewing the CLFN and LSFN Indigenous Knowledge and Use and Socio-economic Studies, to be considered in the development of the caribou habitat restoration and rehabilitation plan . Further, FMG is interested to seek additional Indigenous input and collaboration towards development of the caribou habitat compensation plan. At present, potential options to support development of a compensation plan are being evaluated, and might include (1) Averted habitat loss through Project design, (2) Minimization of potential effects by applying Best Practices and mitigation, (3) Onsite habitat restoration (progressive revegetation and enhanced revegetation to accelerate restoration of caribou habitat throughout the life of the Project, construction of a caribou calving island at closure), (4) Offsite habitat restoration and conservation (e.g. a linear disturbance restoration project, forestry development deferral area) and (5) Complimentary measures (monitoring and research study, stewardship partnership).</p> <p>FMG is interested in further discussion with Indigenous communities to seek input, and gauge interest in collaborative opportunities. A workshop with CLFN and LSFN to thoroughly discuss the Caribou studies and assessments has been proposed by FMG and we would be happy to schedule this in July.</p>	EIS Section 6.13

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CLLSFN-2024-011	Appendix P-1	On Figure 3.3.1.5, the symbology for common nighthawk and Bonaparte gull are indistinguishable from one another.	CLFN and LSFN requests that FMG update the symbology on Figure 3.3.1.5 of Appendix P-1 for the common nighthawk and Bonaparte gull, as they appear indistinguishable.	Appendix P-1 was a baseline report that was finalized in early 2021 and will not be updated at this time considering that additional studies and reports are being produced. The data included is historical and was not used to inform more recent investigations conducted after 2020. The final EIS/EA will refer to the data in Appendix P-1 as historical/ incidental/ supplemental information.	Appendix P-1
CLLSFN-2024-012	Appendix P-1, Section 2.3.3	This section indicated visual encounter surveys were completed, but the methodology appears to be describing incidental surveys. Visual encounter surveys are systematic surveys with standardized approaches (e.g., Survey Protocol for Ontario's species at risk snakes, MECP 2016; Survey protocol for Blanding's Turtle in Ontario, MECP 2015).	CLFN and LSFN requests that FMG update this section to more clearly describe the methodology of the surveys undertaken to identify reptiles and reptile habitat within the study areas. It is understood that additional early spring surveys were planned for amphibians and turtles for completion in target wetlands in 2022. CLFN and LSFN requests that FMG prioritize further data collection and analysis prior to finalizing the EIS/EA with consideration of ongoing CLFN and LSFN studies (summarized in Comment STPN-2021-1).	The data included in Appendix P-1 of the draft EIS/EA is historical and was not used to inform more recent investigations conducted after 2020. The final EIS/EA will refer to the data in Appendix P-1 as historical/ incidental/ supplemental information. The methods and results from terrestrial studies completed since 2020, including the methods for calling amphibians, will be provided in baseline terrestrial report in production that will be appended as part of the final EIS/EA.	Appendix P-1
CLLSFN-2024-013	Sections 8.0 and 9.0 (including subsections 8.3, 8.5, 8.7 and 9.6) Section 4.0 (including subsections 4.4, 4.7, 4.10, 4.11)	While FMG is proposing to deploy some of the best industry practices to ensure the stability of the tailings and mine waste facility to prevent accidental failures, it did not provide sufficient details to assess all possible and credible failure modes and their associated mitigation and contingency measures, including possible failures related to dam foundation stability, geochemical effectiveness of the co-disposal system, potential long-term seepage and infiltration effects, climate change, and extreme meteorological events. FMG has not assessed how these possible failure modes could impact CLFN and LSFN rights and responsibilities, including those identified in the Kita-ki-nan (Our Land) process. Despite the best practices being applied to FMG's tailings and mine waste co-disposal facility, FMG did not provide sufficient details to assess how all possible and credible failure modes will be prevented or mitigated. These gaps include, but are not limited to: – How the soil and ground stability was assessed for the tailings dam foundations (e.g., geotechnical sampling and testing methods); – How effective will the co-disposal method be to prevent long-term metal leaching and acid rock drainage, and what are the contingency measures (e.g., no available data for mid- to large-scale in-situ testing); – How the facility will meet its stated design to capture 90% of all contaminated seepage and possible infiltration, and what may be the long-term residual effects of the remaining 10% on surface and groundwaters (no assessment or contingency measures found); – How the water treatment plant would meet best available technologies and regulatory standards, including CLFN and LSFN water standards (details lacking on proposed technologies, treatment methods, operation and maintenance procedures, contingency measures in the event the treatment plant is ineffective or cease to function for a long period, etc.); and – A lesser flooding resistance standard (1 in 10-year rainfall events) used	CLFN and LSFN requests that: 1. FMG provide detailed analyses of all possible and credible failure modes of key project components, and their associated mitigation and contingency measures for use in the Kita-ki-nan assessment process, including but not limited to possible failures related to: a Dam foundation stability (details on ground stability sampling and testing lacking); b Geochemical effectiveness of the co-disposal system (data about large-scale in-situ testing lacking); c Long-term residual effects from contaminated seepage and infiltration to surface and underground waters; d Water treatment technologies, methods, and possible malfunctions or interruptions; e Climate change, flooding, and extreme meteorological events; and f The use of a lesser flooding resistance standard (1 in 10-year rainfall events) for the design of the seepage collection system (ditches) and for the general stormwater drainage facilities, as well as for the plant site and water storage ponds (100-year, 24-hour storm event). 2. FMG also assess how the above failure modes and associated contingency measures in relation to the CLFN and LSFN study findings currently being undertaken, including but not limited to: a The conservation and continued use of sacred sites near the mine site; b Harvesting practices as well as water, fish, and non-human relatives; c CLFN and LSFN members' ability to practice their way of life and to transfer knowledge and teachings specific to the area; and d Anticipated long-term benefits of the project as compared to the potential negative socio-economic impacts, including potential mine interruption, job loss, and mental health-related issues.	1a) Extensive geotechnical investigations have been undertaken in connection with the proposed co-disposal facility (CDF) inclusive of: • Fracflow (2020) – 6 boreholes and 13 test pits • Ausenco (2022) – 4 boreholes and 17 test pits • Knight Piesold (2022) – 11 boreholes and 39 test pits • WSP (2024) – 7 boreholes and 4 monitoring wells Details are being prepared in an optimized and updated design report for the CDF that will be appended to the final EIS/EA. Results of the investigation show that the major portion of CDF embankments will be constructed on a bedrock foundation, with remaining portions being constructed mainly on areas of shallow overburden. Borehole and test pit locations referenced by WSP (2024) are shown in Attachment CLLSFN-2024-13. 1b) The CDF is designed to safely store both potentially acid generating (PAG) mine rock and thickened non-acid generating (NAG) tailings in the larger north cell, and thickened PAG tailings in the south cell. The design of the CDF is, in part, based on a geochemical program for the Project that has been ongoing over a number of years. Co-depositing PAG mine rock with NAG tailings in the north cell will result in the PAG mine rock being encapsulated within the NAG tailings, and therefore retained in an anoxic environment. This will prevent the PAG rock from oxidizing and leaching metals. At closure the north cell tailings surface	EIS Sections 5, 6.5, 6.21, 6.22, 6.26 Appendices L-1, L-2, V-1, Q-3

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		<p>for the design of the seepage collection system (ditches) and for the general stormwater drainage facilities, as well as for the plant site and water storage ponds (100-year, 24-hour storm event).</p> <p>Regarding the latter point (flood design and potential failure modes of certain project components), it is not prudent for FMG to assume that “extreme flood events are not expected to affect the Project” (p. 8-2), or that due to “the relatively short life of the Project (12 years of operations)... the changes in climate are unlikely to be noticeable over the operating life of the Project” (p. 8-6), and to use these arguments to justify lesser design standards for various project components. These statements contradict other statements FMG make about the increased risks associated with a changing climate in the region:</p> <p><i>“Generally, the future climate presented for the Project area is of increasing temperatures in both the summer and winter for all of the forecast horizons. For precipitation, the summer rates are projected to increase for the 2011 to 2040 horizon, changing to a decrease for the 2041 to 2070 and 2071 to 2100 horizons.” (page 8-5, emphasis added)</i></p> <p><i>“Changes in climate could potentially affect the Project by resulting in increased frequency or magnitude of severe extreme or severe weather events involving rain, ice, snow, thunderstorms, wind and increased temperatures resulting in drought and/or risk of fire in the area.” (page 8-6, emphasis added)</i></p> <p>CLFN and LSFN are conducting an Indigenous Knowledge and Use Study and Socio-economic Study as part of the Kita-ki-nan process. CLFN and LSFN are interested in sharing non-confidential portions of these studies with FMG once available to be considered in the draft EIS/EA.</p>	<p>CLFN and LSFN requests that FMG prioritize further data collection and analysis prior to finalizing the EIS/EA with consideration of ongoing CLFN and LSFN studies (summarized in Comment STPN-2021-1).</p>	<p>will be covered with a layer of overburden to support revegetation of the tailings surface. PAG rock will be placed within the north cell in such a manner that it will remain within a saturated environment.</p> <p>1c) Modeling in support of the draft EIS document, indicates seepage will not increase concentrations of contaminants of concern beyond PAL (or background) concentrations in the receiving waters. This modeling is currently being updated as more data becomes available, but the conclusion is not expected to change (i.e., waters adjacent to the CDF are expected to continue to meet PAL or background water quality criteria during the mine Operations and Post-closure Phases). An extensive surface water monitoring program is in place and will continue to verify environmental assessment predictions with some refinements to incorporate permitting conditions and on-going consultation.</p> <p>1d) In-plant cyanide destruction using SO₂/Air will be used to destroy cyanide and to precipitate metals in the processing plant tailings before it is discharged to the CDF. This technology has been in use in Ontario since the mid-1980s, and is the proven technology used at most mines in Ontario. The CDF will have considerable water holding capacity in the south cell, such that short-term interruptions to the SO₂/Air treatment system would not have a meaningful effect on CDF reclaim pond quality. The CDF will be operated as a closed loop system. A commitment has also been made to construct an Effluent Treatment Plant (ETP) to treat waters collected in the Central Water Storage Pond (CWSP) before water is released to the environment. The ETP will be designed to produce an effluent quality appropriate for discharge to the environment. Best available technologies that are economical achievable (BATEA) will be considered for the ETP to meet protection requirements. Effluent treatment systems for mines like Springpole are well-established and effective.</p> <p>1e) Based on the dam classification under the CDA guidelines (CDA 2019), the recommended Inflow Design Flood (IDF) during operations is defined as two-thirds between the 1/1,000-year return period flood and the Probable Maximum Flood for a Very High dam classification. A minimum freeboard of 2 m above the maximum IDF value is also currently considered for the south and north cell embankments to prevent risk of embankment overtopping during a severe storm event. Ground Motion parameters have</p>	

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				<p>been determined for the CDF using estimates from the Natural Resources Canada seismic hazard calculator. The design earthquake is characterized as halfway between the 2,475-year and the 10,000-year return period seismic events, resulting in a peak ground acceleration of 0.056 gravity. As such, the CDF has been designed to manage flood waters over a very wide range of possible precipitation conditions, up to and including a condition between the 1,000 years return period and the Probable Maximum Flood.</p> <p>1f) The original concept of designing selected low risk stormwater collection ditches to manage a 10-year return period, 24-hour storm event, during the construction phase, has been improved to be more protective of the environment and now includes the proposed use of a 25-year return period, 24-hour storm water management criterion. Contact water collection systems designed for use during the mine Operations Phase, will be sized to manage the 100-year return period, 24-hour storm event.</p> <p>2a) Traditional knowledge and land use information has been reviewed for the Project and a Stage 1 archaeology assessment for the proposed mine site area was undertaken in 2020 to determine the archaeological potential for the investigation area. The Stage 1 archaeology assessment determined there were no registered archaeological sites within the mine site area and identified areas that may hold archaeological potential for future investigation.</p> <p>A Stage 2 archaeology assessment was completed subsequently in 2021 and no archaeological resources were identified and no further archaeological assessment work was proposed at that time for the mine site area.</p> <p>That said, the final EIS/EA will include the following additional follow-up to ensure protection of cultural heritage resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain a record of all cultural heritage resources known to occur in the vicinity of planned Project developments, such that intrusion or damage to such resources can be avoided during construction, recognizing and respecting confidentiality limitations;• Maintain an active dialogue with Indigenous community representatives, having knowledge of specific areas prior to and during major construction activities, to provide guidance to supervisory staff on	

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				<p>the likely or possible occurrence of as yet undocumented cultural heritage sites;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enlist the services of Elders or other Indigenous cultural advisors in the event that cultural heritage resources are encountered, as requested by communities (in addition to meeting all Regulatory requirements); and• Conduct a post-construction assessment of the state of known cultural heritage sites in the vicinity of Project activities / structures to confirm the integrity of such resources. <p>2b) No restrictions will be placed on Indigenous harvesting practices in the vicinity of the Project site, other than that required for safety with the PDA.</p> <p>The change in access to traditional land use areas will be mitigated with a small project footprint, the development of an access management strategy for the road, the establishment of an alternate portage route between Birch and Springpole Lakes, and on-going support for community based land use programs.</p> <p>Regarding the continued suitability of fish for human consumption, fish will remain healthy and productive. In addition to water quality sampling of waters peripheral to the site, direct sampling of fish tissues for metals concentrations will also be conducted one year after start of construction, and every three years (at the same time of year) thereafter, until the start of the Closure Phase or cessation of mining activity, and may be required during or beyond the Closure Phase or cessation of mining activity.. Results of the fish tissue sampling program will be shared with the local Indigenous communities and we support participation in their planning and implementation.</p> <p>Annual collection of fish samples for mercury testing is not proposed, in recognition of the fact that mercury biomagnification through the food chain is a slow process, the Project is not a source of mercury, and that annual sampling would likely result in unnecessarily high fish mortality rates.</p> <p>2c) Please see response to Comment 2b above.</p>	

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				<p>2d) Development of the Springpole Project will provide local Indigenous community members with training, employment and business opportunities. The current project life is projected at 18 years, inclusive of construction, operation and active closure phases.</p> <p>It is also important to acknowledge that skills associated training, employment and business development at the mine, are in many instances readily transferrable, not only to other existing and future mines in the region, but also to other businesses and economic activities.</p> <p>With respect to mental health-related issues, FMG is preparing an Employee Health & Wellness Strategy which will be shared with CLFN and LSFN for their review and input as part of the final EIS/EA.</p> <p>FMG recognizes that health and wellness support has traditionally been focused on reducing employee sickness and absenteeism, particularly relating to mental and physical health.</p> <p>This Strategy takes a new approach to account for the broader geographic, economic, social, and community factors that underpin an individual's ability to bring their best self to work. It considers the major factors that affect and could improve holistic health and wellness for a diverse workforce including physical, mental, cultural, family, and emotional issues. Additional considerations are also factored to address barriers to employment in remote work environments.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Strategy looks at employee health and wellbeing through a proactive lens by embracing education, prevention, and early intervention measures. From design to implementation, FMG proposes a collaborative framework that provides opportunities for continued input and guidance from northern and Indigenous employees and communities to ensure the relevancy of the services and supports offered.</p>	
CLLSFN -2024-014	Sections 8.0 and 9.0 (including subsections 8.3, 8.5, 8.7 and 9.6) Section 4.0 (including subsections 4.4, 4.7, 4.10, 4.11)	<p>FMG has provided some high-level accidental and spill scenarios, but no detailed scenarios, including worst-case scenarios with detailed inundation and impact studies and associated mitigation measures and emergency response plans. FMG has not assessed how accidental events could impact CLFN and LSFN rights and responsibilities.</p> <p>Key accidental risks identified by FMG include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Failure and spill of the tailings facility's south cell, with potential short-	<p>CLFN and LSFN requests that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. FMG provide detailed scenarios, including worst-case scenarios, involving the potential structural failure of the tailings dam and spills of toxic chemicals at the mine site and along the transportation routes, with detailed inundation and impact studies, and associated mitigation measures and emergency response plans.2. FMG also assess how accidental events could impact CLFN and LSFN rights and	<p>The identification of credible accidents and malfunction scenarios is important to understanding the mitigation measures that are required for prevention. Section 9 of the draft EIS/EA includes an assessment of potential malfunctions and accident and identifies scenarios such as CDF embankment failure, spills, vehicular accidents with material releases, and includes an assessment of potential effects, contingency and emergency response measures. Mitigation</p>	EIS Sections 6.26, 9

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		and long-term contamination of the surrounding lands and waters, including Springpole Lake (p. 9-9); – Cyanide spill during transportation and operations, with potential short-term, acute toxicity effects to wildlife and aquatic habitat (pp. 9-17 and 9-18); and – Potential fuel and chemical spills, with potential short- and long-term effects to local ecosystems (pp. 9-16 and 9-17); the fuel depot onsite could contain up to 150,000 to 250,000 L, which is significant (Table 4.6.1).	responsibilities, including but not limited to how accidents or spills could affect: a. The conservation and continued use of sacred sites near the mine site; b. Harvesting practices as well as water, fish, and non-human relatives; c. CLFN and LSFN members’ ability to practice their way of life and to transfer knowledge and teachings specific to the area; and d. Anticipated long-term benefits of the project as compared to the potential negative socio-economic impacts of structural failures or spills,, including mine interruption, job loss, and mental health-related issues. CLFN and LSFN will utilize the information requested above from FMG in the Kita-ki-nan assessment for the Springpole Project.	measures and emergency responses plans are included in Section 9.6 of the draft EIS/EA, and will be updated in the final EIS/EA based on the optimized CDF design. The final EIS/EA will include a stand-alone section for the assessment of Project effects on Indigenous People due to the Project.	
CLLSFN -2024-015	Appendix Q-1	Social determinants of health data (Appendix Q-1, Section 3.3.6) was not provided for the communities of CLFN and LSFN in the draft EIS/EA. The lack of information for the STPN communities limits the findings of the socioeconomic baseline assessment completed. CLFN and LSFN acknowledges that FMG has stated this data was unavailable when completing this analysis (pg. 3-40). CLFN and LSFN are conducting an Indigenous Knowledge and Use Study and Socio-economic Study, as part of the Kita-ki-nan process. CLFN and LSFN are interested in sharing non-confidential portions of these studies with FMG once available to be considered in the draft EIS/EA.	CLFN and LSFN requests that FMG prioritize further data collection and analysis prior to finalizing the EIS/EA with consideration of ongoing CLFN and LSFN studies (summarized in Comment STPN-2021-1), relating to the social determinants of health,	Non-confidential Traditional Knowledge and Land Use information provided to FMG by Cat Lake and Lac Seul First Nations will be incorporated into the final EIS/EA, and relevant assessment reports. Opportunities to review these assessment reports and the final EIS/EA will be provided to Cat Lake and Lac Seul First Nations during the review of the final EIS/EA once submitted targeting end of September 2024.	EIS Section 6.24
CLLSFN -2024-016	6.21 Traditional Land and Resource Use	CLFN and LSFN are conducting an Indigenous Knowledge and Use Study, as part of the Kita-ki-nan process. CLFN and LSFN are interested in sharing non-confidential portions of these studies with FMG once available. On page 6-478, FMG states that “TLRU information gathered to date was considered” for Cat Lake and Lac Seul First Nations “where available.” It is not clear how this information was collected. The only source of TLRU information that FMG appears to rely on is the Cat Lake – Slate Falls Community Based Land Use Plan. There are no references for how TLRU information was identified for Lac Seul First Nation (6-484), other than via engagement with technical staff and leadership, which is strictly not TLRU information. The Cat Lake – Slate Falls Community Based Land Use Plan provides information outside of the study area, but does NOT provide TLRU information. As such, information from the TLRU is not appropriate to use as data in the FMG EIS/EA TLRU section. If FMG used other sources of TLRU information from Cat Lake or Lac Seul, these sources are not disclosed. CLFN and LSFN are concerned that conversations with community members have been misconstrued as TLRU information that FMG has permission to use for this purpose. To be clear, CLFN and LSFN has not given permission for FMG to use this information at this time.	CLFN and LSFN request that FMG clearly outline what TLRU information has been drawn upon by FMG, and how it was collected, including detailed references, including personal communication if relevant. Currently, STPN have not given FMG permission to use TLRU information. Rather, CLFN and LSFN requests that FMG prioritize further data collection and analysis prior to finalizing the EIS/EA with consideration of ongoing CLFN and LSFN studies, including consideration of ongoing Indigenous Knowledge and Use and Socio-economic studies.	Section 6.21 (Traditional Land and Resource Use) of the draft EIS/EA used mainly published, publicly available documents as references in an effort to remain sensitive to on-going information sharing and studies underway at the time. The references are included in Section 6.21. FMG appreciates receiving the Traditional Knowledge and Use and Socio-economic studies and will integrate the non-confidential information from those studies into the EIS/EA. The development of the Provincial Terms of Reference and the review of the draft EIS/EA by Indigenous communities, government agencies, and the public was used to inform the selection of valued components and to contribute to the identification of potential effects and mitigation measures.	EIS Section 6.21

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		<p>At this point, NO TLRU information has been provided by Lac Seul or Cat Lake First Nation to FMG for the purposes of this assessment.</p> <p>Generally, nowhere does FMG indicate if Indigenous communities provided the information for the purpose of this assessment, had reviewed or independently verified that the information was correct, or sought permission from the communities to use this information in this way.</p> <p>Lastly, FMG does not disclose how the TLRU information is (or intends to) inform development of VCs, selection of sampling sites or monitoring locations, study area boundaries, or other IA methods or steps.</p>			
CLLSFN -2024- 017	Section 6.25.3	<p>Section 6.25.3, “Effects to Changes on the Environment to Indigenous People,” intends to fulfill FMG’s obligations to section 7.3.4 of the draft federal EIS Guidelines, including as it pertains to Current Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes (CULRTP). FMG’s less than 2-page description demonstrates FMG’s lack of attention to the IAAC Technical Guidance for Assessing the Current Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes under CEAA 201216, nor does FMG attempt to go beyond this standard under Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (2012) to the now nearly 5-year-old Impact Assessment Act (IAA, 2019) requirements.</p> <p>Specifically, the new IAA provides for the mandatory and enhanced consideration and protection of Indigenous Knowledge, requires a fulsome assessment of project impacts on Indigenous communities as their Aboriginal and Treaty rights, and refers to the obligations of IAAC and other intervening federal agencies under the United Nations Declaration for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Action Plan.</p> <p>CLFN and LSFN are conducting an Indigenous Knowledge and Use Study and Socio-economic Study as part of the Kita-ki-nan process. CLFN and LSFN are interested in sharing non-confidential portions of these studies with FMG once available.</p> <p>16 https://www.canada.ca/en/environmental-assessment-agency/services/policy-guidance/assessing-cumulative-environmental-effects-ceaa2012.html</p>	<p>CLFN and LSFN requests that FMG consider the Technical Guidance for Assessing CULRTP and, at minimum, provide more detailed analysis of impacts to Indigenous rights and interests. It is expected that FMG present all the information relevant to this analysis in a discrete report, rather than pointing the reader to other sections. This will ease CLFN and LSFN’s final review and ensure CLFN and LSFN have all relevant information in one place.</p> <p>CLFN and LSFN requests that FMG prioritize further data collection and analysis relating to Indigenous rights and interests, prior to finalizing the EIS/EA with consideration of ongoing CLFN and LSFN studies.</p>	<p>The draft EIS/EA was prepared and circulated to Indigenous communities, government agencies and the public to gather feedback during the environmental assessment process to help prepare a final EIS/EA. The information and input that has been received from Indigenous communities during the process is appreciated and being evaluated. Non- confidential information is being incorporated where applicable into the final EIS/EA.</p> <p>Section 6.25.3 of the draft EIS/EA includes a preliminary assessment of the effects of changes on the environment to Indigenous People. The preliminary information was provided to foster dialogue and support the gathering of additional feedback on the assessment to inform the development of the final EIS/EA.</p> <p>The final EIS/EA will include a stand-alone section for the assessment of effects on Indigenous People and aims to address the information requirements of the Technical Guidance for Assessing the Current Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes under CEAA 2012.</p>	EIS Section 6.26
CLLSFN -2024- 018	12.0 Follow-up and Monitoring	<p>FMG has not provide draft versions of the follow-up and monitoring plans proposed on pages 12-2, 12-4, 12-5. These are critical to understanding whether there is an adequate plan in place to detect likely adverse effects and what measures FMG have in place to address these if detected.</p> <p>FMG also does not provide clear information on how the LSFN and CLFN studies will be used to inform updates to the follow-up and monitoring plans.</p>	<p>CLFN and LSFN requests that FMG provide the follow-up and monitoring plans for review.</p> <p>CLFN and LSFN will require the draft versions to the proposed follow-up and monitoring plans for review as part of the Kita-ki-nan process.</p> <p>CLFN and LFSN require that FMG set out how it will monitor potential impacts on Indigenous rights and interests, and how it will include LSFN and CLFN in the follow-up and monitoring program.</p>	<p>FMG will be required to carry out monitoring during all phases of the Project. Monitoring plans will be based on extensive baseline programs and updated following environmental assessment approval, to consider conditions of approval and for the permitting stage of the Project. The final EIS/EA will include additional detail on the follow-up and monitoring programs for the Project.</p> <p>FMG is interested to learn more about how CLFN and LSFN</p>	EIS Section 12

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		Finally, FMG does not detail how it will monitor potential impacts on Indigenous rights and interests, and how it will include LSFN and CLFN in the follow-up and monitoring program.		would like to work with FMG to have potential impacts on the exercise of Indigenous rights and interests monitored during the implementation of the Project.	
CLLSFN -2024- 019	10.0 Summary of Economic Benefits	<p>This section is only 5 pages and offers only extremely basic description of potential project employment, contribution to government revenues, and total GDP. FMG merely lists potential economic benefits at a “local” and “regional” level without any numbers on likely inducted spending or labour (pg. 10-2). Benefits specific to local Indigenous communities (including CLFN and LSFN) are not discussed at all (Section 10). Framing benefits in this way does not provide CLFN and LSFN with the necessary information on how their communities can potentially benefit from the proposed Project.</p> <p>The only benefit identified for “local First Nations” is in regard to the transmission line being developed as part of the proposed project, and the potential for long-term sustainable business opportunities (pg.10-4). FMG provides no data on likely opportunities or commitments regarding minimum procurement, labour, or other targets to ensure benefits are maximized for the communities that are most adversely affected by the proposed Project.</p>	<p>CLFN and LSFN requests that FMG clearly identify the potential Project benefits for their communities and clearly articulate the minimum benefits that FMG commits to for the communities of CLFN and LSFN.</p> <p>CLFN and LSFN request that FMG identify how the Nation members’ will benefit from employment opportunities associated from the proposed Project.</p>	<p>FMG agrees with the comment and has been requesting that CLFN and LSFN work with FMG to identify the types of benefits that the communities may be interested in. FMG welcomes dialogue on community benefits to understand community employment and business opportunity interests, and to work together towards achieving mutual goals. We suggest scheduling a meeting to discuss how best to advance the development of a suite of community benefits for CLFN and LSFN.</p>	EIS Section 10
CLLSFN -2024- 020	7.0 Cumulative Effects	<p>Understanding cumulative effects are the highest priority for CLFN and LSFN. The draft EIS/EA does not apply best practice cumulative effects assessment methods, nor does it appear to consider existing or new / upcoming Indigenous land use or knowledge information. This is particularly important for effects on Springpole Lake.</p> <p>The assessment only considers those VCs and indicators that have a residual effect associated with them from previous sections. It will be critical that the conclusions of residual effects for most VCs are reconsidered with new information FMG obtains prior to submitting the final 2024 EIS/EA. This new information includes the CLFN and LSFN Indigenous Knowledge and Use studies and Socio-economic studies.</p> <p>The rationale behind selecting a 200km radius to assess cumulative effects. FMG does not identify if the radius used meets industry standards and best practices.</p> <p>FMG does not conduct any assessment of how historical, existing, and reasonably foreseeable future activities have cumulatively affected or could affect the conditions that support of limit the Indigenous community’s meaningful exercise of their rights. Recent interviews undertaken with CLFN and LSFN for the community-led studies on the Springpole Project underline the importance of cumulative effects, including notable historic declines in culturally important species and areas. For example, interviewees have “observed there’s a decline in the beaver population. When they first started going there it was quite abundant, and then – and now around the lake they have observed there’s only four locations where they have their habitat”. [1]</p>	<p>CLFN and LSFN requests that the cumulative effects assessment be updated with new information, including the Nation-led studies, prior to submitting the final EIS/EA. This includes a re-assessment of the spatial and temporal context, the section of VCs and physical activities, and the effects on several VCs to ensure scoping includes indicators for all residual effects. STPN will use the new cumulative effects assessment in the Kita-ki-nan assessment process.</p> <p>CLFN and LSFN also requests that FMG specifically review past cumulative effects studies to determine if the 200km radius used for the study area is sufficient.</p> <p>CLFN and LSFN request that FMG review the Nation-led studies and assess how historical and current cumulative effects impact the environmental, cultural, social and economic conditions necessary to allow the communities to exercise their rights, prior to submitting the final EIS/EA. FMG must establish the context of existing cumulative impacts before considering project-specific effects to the exercise of rights, when those effects are added to, and interact with, the existing cumulative effects. This assessment should span from the beginning of the project until reclamation, and should be done on a regional or territorial basis.</p>	<p>The final EIS/EA will include an updated cumulative effects assessment, based on the additional baseline information collected since the draft EIS/EA, an updated assessment of effects on valued components due to Project optimization and feedback received from Indigenous communities, government agencies and the public on the draft EIS/EA.</p> <p>The 200 kilometre distance from the Project centroid was considered conservative and appropriate. This distance coincided with the largest geographic study area used to assess Project effects, specifically the socioeconomic local study area, which included Dryden at a distance of approximately 190 km.</p>	EIS Section 7

Table C-4.1: First Mining Gold Response to Cat Lake First Nation and Lac Seul First Nation Comments on the Springpole Gold Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Assessment

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		<p>Interviewees have also observed significant changes, including poaching activities, that have increasingly taken place with introduction of new roads: "... Americans coming up the road and disturb our way of life... I've seen Americans come up and leave the meat and take the head. They could have given to one of our people. We call it our circle of life; it moves somewhere else the circle." [2]</p> <p>[1] C10 and C11. 2023. Transcripts of November 21, 2023 Interview from the Kita-ki-nan Traditional Land Use Study. Firelight Research Inc. for the Cat Lake First Nation. [2] C02. 2023. Transcripts of November 20, 2023 Interview from the Kita-ki-nan Traditional Land Use Study. Firelight Research Inc. for the Cat Lake First Nation.</p>			
CLLSFN -2024- 021	6.20 Local and Regional Infrastructure and Services	<p>Socio-economic impacts from the Project were not adequately assessed for the communities of CLFN and LSFN, including the potential effects related to community safety.</p> <p>CLFN and LSFN are conducting Indigenous Knowledge and Use Studies and Socio-economic Studies as part of the Kita-ki-nan process. CLFN and LSFN are interested in sharing non-confidential portions of these studies with FMG once available.</p>	CLFN and LSFN requests that FMG prioritize further data collection and analysis relating to infrastructure and services, prior to finalizing the EIS/EA with consideration of ongoing CLFN and LSFN studies.	Non-confidential socioeconomic information provided to FMG by CLFN and LSFN will be incorporated into the final EIS/EA. Opportunities to review the final EIS/EA will be provided to CLFN and LSFN during the review of the final EIS/EA once submitted targeting end of September 2024.	EIS Section 6.24
CLLSFN -2024- 022	11.0 Environmental Approval Requirements	CLFN and LSFN's Kita-ki-nan process is not mentioned by FMG as an approval process.	CLFN and LSFN recommends FMG understand, incorporate, and respect the decision resulting from the Kita-ki-nan process.	FMG looks forward to learning more about the process.	N/A
CLLSFN -2024- 023	6.1.1.3 and 6.1.1.4 Selection of Human Environment Valued Components	<p>6.1.1.3 and 6.1.1.4 Selection of Human Environment Valued Components indicates:</p> <p><i>"Human environment VCs are defined as components of the human environment that are important in terms of people's values and quality of life."</i> The STPN's note that what is "important" in this context may not be universally understood or assumed. As such, the stated VCs may not be sufficiently nuanced to be fully aligned with what the STPNs view as important in terms of the perspectives of their respective Members' values and quality of life. For example, the Social VC "Traditional Land and Resource Use" does not capture the reciprocal responsibilities which attach to and are engaged by uses of the land and resources – responsibilities which the Anishinaabe consider to be legally binding.</p> <p>Similarly, in the discussion of surface water as a VC in section 6.6, the reasons for which surface water is noted as critical for human and non-human life excludes any discussion or reference to the Indigenous values, uses, and responsibilities that related to water (nibi). As a result, the potential effects discussion is limited to an acknowledgement that "the Project has the potential to change water quality and quantify which may affect the use of lands and resources by Indigenous people," when in fact the Indigenous interests that are engaged extend beyond the "use of lands and resources" to include cultural, social, and spiritual aspects.</p>	CLFN and LSFN request that FMG prioritize and adjust further data collection and analysis efforts prior to finalizing the EIS/EA, including by re-examining VC selection, VC characterization and the cumulative effects on revised VCs in light of the conclusions and findings of the STPN studies. Indigenous peoples are best placed to identify the nature and content of their rights, and the proposed Project's impacts on these rights. Therefore, CLFN and LSFN request that FMG incorporate the STPN's priority values and topics associated with community well-being, cultural expressions, and the preferred means of exercising their rights in its data analyses, and assess how the biophysical effects of the proposed Project will impact the exercise of rights.	Upon receipt of the studies from CLFN and LSFN, the information will be cross-checked against the environmental assessment to consider the information in the final EIS/EA.	EIS Sections 6.6.1.2, 6.6.2.3
CLLSFN -2024- 024	6.5 Groundwater	Under Anishinaabe Law water (nibi) is life. Nibi is alive and has a spirit. It cannot be owned or controlled. Nibi is the lifeblood of Mother Earth and connects everything. Women have a sacred connection and responsibility to	LSFN and CLFN request funding for a technical review of the Project's impact on ground and surface water.	FMG has provided funding for the review of the draft EIS/EA and funding will be provided for the review of the final EIS/EA as well. We value the input of CLFN and LSFN and offer to	EIS Sections 6.5.1.2, 6.21

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ID	Specific Reference	Initial Comments & Rationale	Proposed Action / Solution	FMG Response	Where Addressed
		<p>water.</p> <p>The Project's impact on water is critical to our communities. We request funding for a thorough technical review of your assessment of the Project's impact on ground and surface water.</p> <p>S.6.5.2.4 states: <i>there are no potential effects to groundwater users from the Project and effects to groundwater users are not further assessed</i>"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Springpole and Birch Lake are within our traditional territory and are used by members and will be used in the future. Members may wish to construct wells. As a result, we request that you assess how the Project affects groundwater in the event of future use by our members. <p>S.6.5.2.4 states: <i>"groundwater changes from baseline for L-1, L-2, L-16 and L-19 is a relatively large proportion of the overall water budget. These small unnamed lakes have been offset or compensated, as described in the draft Fish Habitat Offsetting and Compensation Plan (Appendix F) and are not assessed further."</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appendix F is a fisheries offset plan. Water and lakes L-1, L-2, L-16 and L-19 are important to many species, not just fish. Please describe how the groundwater changes to these areas may impact the animals, plants and ecosystems of these areas. <p>S. 6.5.2.4 states: <i>"The predicted quality of seepage from the CDF and ore stockpile area during the operation phase is presented in Table 6.5-3. Results indicate that concentrations of cadmium, copper, and lead are greater than baseline groundwater quality and the identified APV in operations. This indicates a potential effect to groundwater quality and potential for loadings to surface water from seepage."</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please study and discuss how increased concentrations of cadmium copper and lead may impact aquatic species, ecosystems, and human consumption of surface water. <p>S. 6.5.5 states: <i>"The residual effect on groundwater quantity (flow) is that during mine dewatering, most surface water features experience an overall reduction in groundwater contributions to baseflow as the open pit acts as a local sink for groundwater."</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please study and discuss how the temporal reduction of groundwater flow may impact ecosystems and aquatic species. <p>S. 6.5.5 states: <i>"local groundwater quality will be affected by seepage by Project components during operations in the PDA, with seepage rate and quality simulated to improve in the final closure phase."</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please study and discuss how the degraded water quality will impact ecosystems and aquatic species. 	<p>LSFN and CLFN request that FMG assess how the Project's effects to groundwater will impact potential future use by Members.</p> <p>Please describe and study how the groundwater changes to L-1, L-2, L-16 and L-19 may impact the animals, plants, and ecosystems of these smaller lakes, and the incidental impacts to Indigenous rights and interests considering the findings and conclusions of the STPN studies.</p> <p>Please study and discuss how increased concentrations of cadmium copper and lead may impact aquatic species, ecosystems and human consumption or use of ground or surface water, and the incidental impacts to Indigenous rights and interests considering the findings and conclusions of the STPN studies.</p> <p>Please study and discuss how the temporal reduction of groundwater flow may impact ecosystems and aquatic species, and the incidental impacts to Indigenous rights and interests considering the findings and conclusions of the STPN studies.</p> <p>Please study and discuss how the degraded water quality will impact ecosystems and aquatic species, and the incidental impacts to Indigenous rights and interests considering the findings and conclusions of the STPN studies.</p> <p>Please discuss the risks of diminished water quantity and quality, and the impacts to human consumption and use, including the potential for contamination.</p>	<p>work together towards planning and monitoring the project through all phases.</p> <p>Section 6.5 of the draft EIS/EA provides an assessment of the potential effects of the Project on groundwater quantity and quality, and Section 6.6 to 6.19 provide an assessment of the effects on surface water quality and quantity. These assessments are supported by hydrogeology modelling report (Appendix L-2 of the draft EIS/EA), the mine site water balance (Appendix M-2), the receiver water balance (Appendix M-3), the mine site water quality model (Appendix K-4) and the surface water quality model (Appendix N-2). The results of the modelling reports and effects assessment supports the assessment of aquatic and terrestrial resources including fish (Section 6.10 of the draft EIS/EA), vegetation communities and wetlands (Section 6.11) and wildlife species (Section 6.12, 6.13, 6.14, 6.15 and 6.16). The predictive model developed to support the draft EA/EIS indicate</p> <p>that water quality parameters remain below applicable guidelines for surface water quality (Appendix N-2).</p> <p>The results of the assessment on water, plants and wildlife are considered in the assessment of potential effects on human and ecological health in Section 6.24 of the draft EIS/EA, along with the results of the Human and Ecological Health Risk Assessment (Appendix R of the draft EIS/EA).</p> <p>These sections and modelling reports inform potential effects on traditional land use as well.</p>	

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CLLSFN-2024-025	6.7	<p>Under Anishinaabe Law water (nibi) is life. Nibi is alive and has a spirit. It cannot be owned or controlled. Nibi is the lifeblood of Mother Earth and connects everything. Women have a sacred connection and responsibility to water</p> <p>6.7.1 states: <i>“Concentrations of total and dissolved metals in the north basin of Springpole Lake are also low, often at or below analytical detection limits, and are consistently below water quality guidelines for the protection of aquatic life except [phosphorous and copper].”</i></p> <p>– Please confirm: 1. Whether concentrations of total and dissolved metals are below water quality guidelines for human consumption; 2. Why concentrations of phosphorous and copper are above the guidelines for the protection of aquatic life.</p> <p>Section 6.7.4.1 states: <i>“During the construction phase, the development of cofferdams and associated water management infrastructure at the mine site will temporarily remove approximately 6.3 km2 of catchment area from the north basin of Springpole Lake... There are no predicted residual effects as a result of cofferdam construction and dewatering of the isolated basin.”</i></p> <p>– Construction is anticipated to take 3 years. Please study and discuss the possible and probable affects the temporary removal of the catchment area may, or is likely to have, on aquatic species and ecosystems.</p> <p>Section 6.7.4.1 states: <i>“The north basin of Springpole Lake will experience a reduction in groundwater contributions to baseflow as the development of the mine site reduces the area of the lake receiving groundwater discharge. Any changes to the groundwater regime are not expected to make a measurable contribution to the lake water balance or lake levels given the large size of Springpole Lake.”</i></p> <p>– Please study and discuss the aquatic ecosystems and species located in the North basin may be impacted y the reduction in groundwater contributions.</p> <p>Section 6.7.4.1 states: <i>“Incidences of increased TSS loading to surface waters due to sedimentation will be mitigated through the implementation of erosion and sediment control measures, resulting in no residual effects predicted for surface water in the north basin from sedimentation.”</i></p> <p>– Please explain this conclusion. In particular, whether you are representing that mitigation efforts will be 100% effective.</p> <p>Appendix N-2 states: <i>“Parameters above water quality guidelines (sulphate, arsenic, cobalt, copper, and phosphorus) are identified for nodes proximate to the mine in operations.”</i></p> <p>– Please study and discuss how levels of sulphate, arsenic, cobalt, copper, in excess of quality guidelines may impact aquatic specifiers, ecosystems, and human or animal consumption of surface water.</p>	<p>LSFN and CLFN request funding for a technical review of the Project’s impact on ground and surface water.</p> <p>Please confirm:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Whether concentrations of total and dissolved metals are below water quality guidelines for human consumption; Why concentrations of phosphorous and copper are above the guidelines for the protection of aquatic life. <p>Please study and discuss the possible effects the temporary removal of the catchment area may, or is likely to have, on aquatic species and ecosystems.</p> <p>Please study and discuss how the aquatic ecosystems and species located in the North basin may be impacted by the reduction in groundwater contributions.</p> <p>Please explain your conclusion that increased TSS loading to surface waters due to sedimentation will not have any residual impact due to mitigation efforts. In particular, whether you are representing that mitigation efforts will be 100% effective</p> <p>Please study and discuss how levels of sulphate, arsenic, cobalt, copper, in excess of quality guidelines may impact aquatic specifiers, ecosystems, and human or animal consumption of surface water.</p>	<p>FMG provided funding to CLFN and LSFN for the review of the draft EIS/EA which included surface water and groundwater materials. FMG continues dialogue with CLFN and LSFN on funding for the review of the final EIS/EA. In the interim FMG has provided interim funding to support capacity between April through September 2024 including for the engagement in technical meetings to discuss the draft EIS/EA comments and responses. We intend to facilitate dialogue during this period on surface water and groundwater to help clarify questions and comments on the draft EIS/EA.</p> <p>Surface water quality (concentrations of metals, nutrients and ions) monitored in the area are less than drinking water quality standards for all parameters with drinking water quality guidelines. Water quality guidelines for the protection of aquatic life are more stringent than drinking water quality guidelines for most parameters.</p> <p>It is not uncommon for concentrations of phosphorus and copper to be greater than guidelines for the protection of aquatic life in natural surface waters. These elements can originate from various natural sources, including weathering of rocks and minerals and decomposition of organic matter.</p> <p>The potential effects of temporary removal of the catchment area and any change that may occur on aquatic species and ecosystems are described in Section 5.2 of the draft Fish Habitat Offset and Compensation Plan (Wood, 2022) appended to the draft EIS/EA.</p> <p>Potential effects of the temporary reduction of catchment area and groundwater to the remaining north basin and southeast arm of Springpole Lake are not expected as the modeled influence of the open pit basin dewatering extends only a short distance beyond the open pit basin. The water levels in the north basin itself are controlled by the outlet of Springpole Lake and are not predicted to deviate beyond the observed natural variation. Baseline studies (summarized in Attachment STPN-2021-19) show that there is a high comparability between species utilizing the three deeper basins within the north basin such that Springpole Lake is expected to maintain and support all the life functions and requirements for the resident species and aquatic ecosystem. Monitoring data from other similar projects in Canada also supports this.</p>	EIS Sections 6.6.1.2, 6.5, 6.24, 6.26

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				<p>Monitoring of the effectiveness of erosion and sedimentation control measures will be a required component of the Project's permits and approvals; and protective limits for TSS will be included in the site-specific effluent criteria. As per Section 12.4 of the draft EIS/EA, an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan will be prepared for the site prior to construction based on the detailed designs and construction plans. A combination of site controls and effluent criteria will ensure that TSS mitigation is effective and complies with provincial and federal expectation to protect the aquatic receiving environments and biota.</p> <p>The potential for mine activities to affect human or ecological health (including aquatic species and ecosystems) was assessed through a rigorous Human and Ecological Health Risk Assessment (HEHRA) as described in Section 6.24 of the draft EIS/EA, with the detailed HEHRA modelling report (Appendix R) appended to the draft EIS/EA. The assessment included the results of the surface water model for changes in water quality parameters and, concluded that with the proposed design and mitigation measures, residual effects on human and ecological health are not predicted. The HEHRA modelling report will be updated and appended to the final EIS/EA, and used to update Section 6.24 of the final EIS/EA, to reflect Project optimization since the draft ESI/EA was first circulated for comment.</p>	
CLLSFN-2024-026	7.0 Cumulative Effects	<p>7.1 states: <i>"The approach used for assessing the potential cumulative effects of the Project herein is consistent with the requirements of the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC), specifically, the Technical Guidance for Assessing Cumulative Environmental Effects under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012 (CEAA 2014), and the operational policy statement, Assessing Cumulative Environmental Effects under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012 (CEAA 2015)."</i></p> <p>The CEAA 2015 guideline is out of date. The analysis must be conducted in accordance with the most recent policy statements regarding cumulative impacts, including the 2018 Technical Guide: https://www.canada.ca/en/impact-assessment-agency/services/policy-guidance/assessing-cumulative-environmental-effects-ceaa2012.html</p> <p>7.1 states: <i>"The IAAC guidance is clear that the Project can only have a cumulative effect on a VC if the:</i> <i>Project is assessed as having residual environmental effects on a VC; [...]"</i> – Residual effects from the Project overlap spatially and/or temporally with residual effects of other projects and physical activities on the same VC.</p> <p>Table 7.2.1. lists the Summary of VCs with anticipated residual effects.</p>	<p>Please re-do and update the Cumulative Effects Assessment in order to adhere to contemporary best practices and policy guidelines.</p> <p>The Cumulative Effect Assessments contains material errors with respect to the assessment of residual effects of Valued Components. These errors must be corrected for a meaningful assessment.</p> <p>The Cumulative Effects Assessment must be re-scoped to include pre-euro Canadian temporal boundaries.</p> <p>Reference cases, such as the development of the Red Lake Mine, Sultana Gold mine, and Porcupine Mine should be included as reference to understand the potential cumulative effects.</p>	<p>Section 7 of the draft EIS/EA includes the cumulative effects assessment and follows the best practice direction provided by Environmental Impact Statement Guidelines issued by IAAC in 2018. Further, this section addresses the requirements prescribed by the provincial Terms of Reference. This approach will be used for the final EIS/EA, subject to the revision of the effects assessment for specific valued components.</p> <p>The cumulative effects assessment considers residual effects determined through the effects assessment in Section 6 of the draft EIS/EA. Residual effects occur when potential effects on a valued component are not fully mitigated, regardless of the Project phase. For each valued component, the residual effects are described and characterized to support the determination of significance in Section 6.X.4. However, all residual effects are carried forward into the cumulative effects assessment regardless of their significance determination in Section 6.</p> <p>In terms of the temporal boundaries used for the cumulative</p>	EIS Section 7

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		<p>There are two methodological problems:</p> <p>1. The assessment of residual effects for VCs, appears to often be limited to effects which extend beyond construction and/or the life of mine. Residual effects for VCs should include all project effects which aren't wholly and completely mitigated. The duration of the effects is relevant to the temporal boundary for assessing the effects interaction with historical, existing, and future effects.</p> <p>2. The assessment of residual effects for many VCs integrates an assessment of their significance. Any effect, regardless of its significance, should be incorporated into the cumulative effects assessment, to determine its significance in the context of historical, existing and future effects.</p> <p>Section 7.2 states: "present-day conditions reflect the cumulative effects from past and most present activities. Existing (i.e., baseline) conditions will fully represent the cumulative effects associated with physical disturbances of developments, such as mining, forestry and hydroelectric projects, and infrastructure, including communities. Present-day conditions are also appropriate to reflect ongoing harvesting activities in the region."</p> <p>This approach is inadequate. As noted by the CEAA 2018 Guide, "baseline conditions....may not be fully representative of effects from other human activity.....The past temporal boundary would be set to a point in the past where a description of the past state of the VC is useful to understanding cumulative effects. Possible points in time that could serve as boundaries are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– When a certain land-use designation was made;– When environmental effects on the VC occurred;– When land use changed (e.g., the commencement of mechanized forest resources harvesting); and– A point in time when the VC was in a less disturbed condition, especially if the assessment includes determining to what degree past physical activities have affected the VC." <p>In this case, the temporal boundary must start at the date of euro-canadian incursion into the study area. This point of time is critical to understanding the project's cumulative effects on Indigenous peoples, rights, animals, water and ecosystems.</p> <p>The cumulative effects assessment does not include data from other areas with comparable conditions, as a reference case, to analyze or understand potential cumulative impacts. Reference cases, such as the development of the Red Lake Mine, Sultana Gold mine, and Porcupine Mine should be included as reference to understand the potential cumulative effects.</p>		<p>effects assessment, present- day conditions are reflective of the cumulative effects from past and present activities, as supported by the technical guidance issued by IAAC. The baseline data summarized in the draft EIS/EA was collected for the Project area over a period of more than 10 years, which is a substantial dataset compared to all previous environmental assessments in Canada, and supports an understanding of the natural variability for some valued components like water quality, fisheries and terrestrial resources. Relevant resource management information from existing studies, reports and plans was also considered in developing an understanding of the existing baseline conditions for the valued components. Further, non-confidential traditional knowledge and traditional land use activities information provided by Indigenous communities participating in the environmental assessment process has been reviewed to provide further context on relevant valued components. For example, information received from various Indigenous sources have identified Lake Sturgeon as being present in the Birch Lake watershed, despite the results of multiple years of fish surveys conducted. Regardless of presence of absence of Lake Sturgeon, opportunities to enhance their presence has been considered in the fish habitat offsetting strategy. Should additional TK/TLU information be provided to FMG, it will be reviewed to provide context to the baseline conditions for cumulative effects assessment. As a result, the existing conditions for the current temporal boundary represent the cumulative effects associated with past and present physical disturbances of developments and ongoing harvesting activities in the region and provide a reliable data set upon which the assessment could be based on.</p>	

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CLLSFN -2024- 027	3.1.1.1	<p>3.1.1.1 states: <i>“There have been three small historical mines in the region: McIntyre Gold Mine located on the northeast side of Birch Lake (about 7 km away), which operated between 1934 and 1945; Casey Summit Mine (later renamed the Casummit Mine) located on Casummit Lake, approximately 10 km north of the Springpole Gold Project, which operated between 1930 and 1952; and Kostynuk Brothers Mine, located on the north shore of Richardson Lake, approximately 12 km north of the Springpole Gold Project, which operated from 1963 to 1966.”</i></p> <p>Please study and discuss the environmental legacy of these mines, in particular how there operations affected the pre-mining environmental baseline.</p>	<p>Please study and discuss the environmental legacy of the McIntyre, Casummit and Kostynuk Mines, in particular how their operations affected the pre-mining environmental baseline, and the incidental impacts to Indigenous rights and interests considering the findings and conclusions of the STPN studies, prior to finalizing the EIS/EA.</p> <p>CLFN and LSFN are aware of culturally significant pictographs near the Project. Increased road access will introduce strangers to the site. The First Nations are aware that Pro Miner individuals and/or anti-Aboriginal people have damaged and defaced pictographs at other sites. What will FMG do to preserve and secure the pictographs that FMG is introducing to the outside world through increased road access?</p>	<p>Several water quality sampling stations are located in Birch Lake, including upstream of the outlet from Casummit Lake, and downstream of the outlet. Further, several terrestrial baseline studies have been undertaken in the area of these historic mines, including vegetation communities and wetlands, disturbance data, bat surveys, migratory bird surveys and large mammal surveys. These extensive regional baseline studies across multiple disciplines generally show that the baseline environment is representative of a highly functional and productive ecosystem. The main disturbance noted in the baseline environment is due to the forestry industry and natural forest fires.</p> <p>Project infrastructure will be constructed well away from the location of the pictographs and will not improve access to this area. There will be gated access to the mine access road past the terminus of the Wenasaga Forestry Road so access will not be provided to unauthorized persons. FMG will continue to work with Indigenous communities to develop an access management strategy to be implemented during the construction, operation and closure of the Springpole Project.</p>	N/A