

APPENDIX M MARINE MONITORING PLAN



BACK RIVER MINE

MARINE MONITORING PLAN, VERSION 2.0

DATE
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0773592



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March 2025

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

B2Gold	B2Gold Corp. Nunavut
CCME	Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment
chl <i>a</i>	chlorophyll <i>a</i>
MLA	Marine Laydown Area
NIRB	Nunavut Impact Review Board
PAH	Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon
Mine	Back River Mine

1. INTRODUCTION

The Back River Mine (the Mine) is a gold project owned by B2Gold Nunavut (B2Gold) within the West Kitikmeot region of southwestern Nunavut. It is situated approximately 400 kilometres (km) southwest of Cambridge Bay, 95 km southeast of the southern end of Bathurst Inlet (Kingaok), and 520 km northeast of Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. The Mine is located predominantly within the Queen Maud Gulf Watershed (*Nunavut Water Regulations*, Schedule 4, SOR/2013-69).

The Mine is comprised of two main areas, Goose Project Development Area (Goose Site), that includes the Back River Mine Energy Centre (Energy Centre), and the Marine Laydown Area (MLA) with interconnecting winter ice roads. The majority of annual resupply will be completed using the MLA situated along the western shore of southern Bathurst Inlet, which is connected seasonally to the Goose Site via an approximately 160 km long winter ice road.

The purpose of this Marine Monitoring Plan (Plan) is to monitor the marine receiving environment for Mine-related effects and to provide the basis for informed management decisions. The Mine has been designed to minimize, mitigate, and/or manage potential adverse effects on the marine environment.

The Plan is a requirement of Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) Project Certificate No. 007 Term and Condition 62 which states:

“The Proponent shall maintain a marine monitoring program at the Marine Laydown Area to enable identification of potential impacts of the Project on the marine environment and to inform adaptive management actions. The monitoring program shall be in line with the proposed monitoring in the Aquatic Effects Monitoring Program, or as required by applicable regulatory authorities. At a minimum, water sampling should include end of pipe and control area samples, collected on a regular basis to confirm salinity levels of the discharge and the receiving environment”

This Plan is a living document to be updated upon changes in related regulatory requirements, management reviews, incident investigations, changes to facility operation or maintenance, environmental monitoring results, best practice updates or other Mine specific protocols.

The Plan will be reviewed as needed for changes in operation and technology, and as directed by regulatory authorities where appropriate. Any updates to the Plan will be filed with the Annual Report to regulators.

Table 1-1 documents all significant revisions that have been incorporated in the Plan.

B2Gold will maintain a distribution list providing contact details for all parties to receive the Plan including key personnel, contractors, organizations, and external agencies.

Table 1-1 **Revision Log, Marine Monitoring Plan**

Version	Date	Revision	Author
Original		FEIS submission	ERM Consultants Canada Ltd.
1	October 2017	Supporting Document for Type A Water Licence Application, submitted to Nunavut Water Board for review and approval	Golder Associates Ltd.
1.1	May 2018	Inclusion of routine sediment quality sampling, addition of chlorophyll <i>a</i> and benthic invertebrate sampling. Inclusion of additional MLA and reference area sampling locations. Inclusion of additional methodological detail and updates as appropriate for an operational (rather than permitting) plan	Katsky Venter
2.0	March 2026	Update the Plan to reflect implementation, including revised reference stations, water and sediment parameters, and data analysis	ERM Consultants Canada Ltd.

2. SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the Plan is to monitor the marine receiving environment bordering the MLA through the life of the mine as outlined in the NIRB Project Certificate No. 007 Term and Condition 62. The Plan has been designed to monitor for Mine-related effects to a level of detail appropriate for the activity at the MLA, to comply with existing regulations, and to meet Mine-specific requirements and commitments.

The primary Mine activities that could affect the marine environment include water management infrastructure and associated discharge from the desalination plant (i.e., potential changes to water quality), and infrastructure for barge unloading activities (i.e., potential changes to water quality or sediment distribution). Results and recommendations from the monitoring program will be used to determine if existing management and mitigation measures are adequate and provide an opportunity for ongoing adaptive management. The Plan will operate through the life of the mine, with modifications made as appropriate.

2.1 RELATED PLANS AND DOCUMENTS

Documents supporting this plan include the following:

- ◆ Spill Contingency Plan;
- ◆ Oil Pollution Emergency Plan and Oil Pollution Prevention Plan;
- ◆ Quality Assurance and Quality Control Plan;
- ◆ Water Management Plan;
- ◆ Environmental Management and Protection Plan; and
- ◆ Risk Management and Emergency Response Plan.

It is anticipated that the Plan could be amended or updated in the event of a spill to support monitoring of spill clean-up and remediation activities. For additional information related to transportation management refer to the Oil Pollution Emergency Plan and Oil Pollution Prevention Plan. Refer to the Spill Contingency Plan for additional information related to spill management, and for information related to mitigation measures for spills refer to the Risk Management and Emergency Response Plan.

3. APPLICABLE LEGISLATION AND GUIDELINES

The Plan has been designed to comply with existing regulations including:

- ◆ *Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act (1985a);*
- ◆ *Canada Shipping Act (2001);*
- ◆ *Fisheries Act (1985b);*
- ◆ *Nunavut Environmental Protection Act (1988);*
- ◆ *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Act (1993); and*
- ◆ *Oceans Act (1996).*

4. SAMPLING PLAN

On an annual basis during the life of the Mine, samples will be collected from three locations near the MLA and at 2 locations within a reference area (Table 4-1, Figure 4-1) twice a year, when there is discharge from the desalination plant and barge activity (open-water only). Physical water column profiles, water quality samples and phytoplankton biomass samples will be collected annually while sediment quality and benthic invertebrate samples will be collected once every three years. A sampling overview is provided in Table 4-2, sampling locations are approximate and will be recorded and provided in the annual report.

Table 4-1 Sampling Locations

Location ID	Description	Target Water Depth (m)	Purpose	Geographic Location (UTM)	
				N	E
BRP-46	MLA deep station by the water discharge pipeline	13-15	Monitor marine environment near MLA water discharge/barge offload/bulk fuel transfer	7394861	381506
BRP-48	MLA deep station near the barge	13-15	Monitor marine environment near MLA water discharge/barge offload/bulk fuel transfer	7394912	381473
BRP-51	MLA shallow station north of the barge	4-5	Monitor marine environment near MLA water discharge/barge offload/bulk fuel transfer	7395041	381374
REF-04	Deep reference station	13-15	Reference station for comparison to deep exposure stations within the MLA.	7399671	378790
REF-05	Shallow reference station	4-5	Reference station for comparison to shallow exposure stations within the MLA.	7399660	378745

Projection: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 13N

4.1 PHYSICAL OCEANOGRAPHY

Physical oceanographic profiles (e.g., salinity, temperature, and dissolved oxygen) will be collected at each sampling location during the ice-covered and the open-water season annually. Field profiles will be recorded using a logger (conductivity, temperature, depth) and/or a multi-meter (e.g., YSI multimeter) with measurements recorded at least every 0.5 m in water depths less than 10 m and every 1 m in deeper water. Total water depth as well as ice thickness, snow cover and height of water from the ice surface (in winter) will be recorded. During the open-water season, Secchi depth will be measured with a 30-cm white disk which will be lowered over the shaded side of the boat until no longer visible, raised back into view again and re-lowered.

The second disappearance depth will be recorded as the Secchi depth, from which euphotic zone depth will be calculated.

Figure 4-1 Marine Monitoring Plan Sampling Stations, Back River

GIS NUMBER: BAC-10-133-01_T

Table 4-2 Sampling Overview

Monitoring Aspect	Sampling Locations	Sampling Frequency	Sample Replication and Depth	Sampling Equipment
Physical Oceanography				
Temperature, salinity, dissolved oxygen profiles, light penetration	MLA Stations: BRP-46, BRP-48, BRP-51	Twice annually; April and August	n = 1 profile/station; Entire water column	Conductivity- Temperature- Depth (CTD) probe or multimeter; dissolved oxygen meter; Secchi disk
	Reference Stations: REF-04, REF-05			
Water Quality				
Physical, anions and nutrients, organic carbon, total and dissolved metals, hydrocarbons (F1-F4 and BTEX)	MLA Stations: BRP-46, BRP-48, BRP-51	Twice annually; April and August	n = 1; 1 m below ice/water surface at shallow station BRP-51 and 1 m below ice/water surface and 2 m above bottom at each deeper station [BRP-46 and BRP-48]	Discrete water sampling Device (e.g., Niskin)
	Reference Stations: REF-04, REF-05		n = 1; 1 m below ice/water surface at shallow station REF-05 and 1 m below ice/water surface and 2 m above bottom at deeper station REF-04	
	QA/QC: Field duplicate, field blank, trip blank		n = 1 field duplicate, field blank, and trip blank	
Phytoplankton				
Biomass (chlorophyll <i>a</i>)	MLA Stations: BRP-46, BRP-48, BRP-51	Twice annually; April and August	n = 3/station @ 1 m below the ice/water surface	Discrete water sampling device (e.g., Niskin)
	Reference Stations: REF-04, REF-05			
Sediment Quality				
	MLA Stations: BRP-46, BRP-48, BRP-51			

Monitoring Aspect	Sampling Locations	Sampling Frequency	Sample Replication and Depth	Sampling Equipment
Physical, particle size, total organic carbon, metals, hydrocarbons (PAHs)	Reference Stations: REF-04, REF-05	Once every 3 years in August	n = 3/station; each replicate will be a composite of three surficial samples from each station.	Sediment Sampling Device (e.g. petite Ponar grab)
Benthic Macroinvertebrates (Benthos)				
Density and taxonomy	MLA Stations: BRP-46, BRP-48, BRP-51	Once every 3 years in August	n = 3/station	Sediment Sampling Device (e.g. petite Ponar grab); sieved to 500 µm
	Reference Stations: REF-04, REF-05			

n = number of replicates

The euphotic zone depth (Z) is calculated using the formula:

$$Z = 4.6/k'$$

Where 4.6 is a constant derived from Beer's Law, and k' is the extinction coefficient calculated from the Secchi depth (D_s) using the formula (Poole & Atkins 1929):

$$k' = 1.7/D_s$$

4.2 WATER QUALITY

Water quality samples will be collected twice annually; in April and in August, concurrent with physical oceanography. Water quality samples will be collected with a discrete grab sampler (e.g., Niskin water sampler) from specific sampling locations (Table 4-1) at 1 m below the water surface (summer) or bottom of the ice (in winter) and at 2 m above the sea floor at locations deeper than 5 m.

Samples will be collected in bottles provided by an accredited analytical laboratory. The suite of parameters to be analyzed and anticipated method detection limits are provided in Table 4.2-1. The method detection limits are less than the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) water quality guidelines for the protection of marine aquatic life (CCME MAL; CCME 2025).

Table 4.2-1 Water Quality Parameters

Parameter	Units	Detection Limits
General Constituents		
Hardness (as CaCO_3)	mg/L	0.60
pH	pH	0.10
Total Suspended Solids	mg/L	3.0
Turbidity	NTU	0.10
Alkalinity, Total (as CaCO_3)	mg/L	1.0
Conductivity	$\mu\text{S/cm}$	2.0
Salinity	psu	0.1
Major Ions		
Bromide (Br)	mg/L	0.010
Calcium (Ca)	mg/L	0.50
Chloride (Cl)	mg/L	0.50
Fluoride (F)	mg/L	0.050
Magnesium (Mg)	mg/L	1.0
Potassium (K)	mg/L	20
Sodium (Na)	mg/L	0.050

Parameter	Units	Detection Limits
Major Ions (cont'd)		
Sulfate (SO ₄)	mg/L	0.50
Sulphide as S	mg/L	0.02
Nutrients		
Ammonia, Total (as N)	mg/L	0.0050
Nitrate (as N)	mg/L	0.044
Nitrite (as N)	mg/L	0.033
Orthophosphate-Dissolved (as P)	mg/L	0.0010
Phosphorus (P)-Total	mg/L	0.0020
Silicate (as SiO ₂)	mg/L	0.050
Organic / Inorganic Carbon		
Total Organic Carbon	mg/L	0.50
Total and Dissolved Metals		
Aluminum (Al)	mg/L	0.0030
Antimony (Sb)	mg/L	0.00050
Arsenic (As)	mg/L	0.0001
Barium (Ba)	mg/L	0.0010
Beryllium (Be)	mg/L	0.00010
Bismuth (Bi)	mg/L	0.001
Boron (B)	mg/L	0.05
Cadmium (Cd)	mg/L	0.000010
Chromium (Cr)	mg/L	0.00010
Cobalt (Co)	mg/L	0.0002
Copper (Cu)	mg/L	0.0005 (total)
Iron (Fe)	mg/L	0.01 (total)
Lead (Pb)	mg/L	0.00020
Lithium (Li)	mg/L	0.002
Manganese (Mn)	mg/L	0.001
Mercury (Hg)	mg/L	0.0000019
Molybdenum (Mo)	mg/L	0.0010

Parameter	Units	Detection Limits
Total and Dissolved Metals (<i>cont'd</i>)		
Nickel (Ni)	mg/L	0.0010
Selenium (Se)	mg/L	0.0001
Silver (Ag)	mg/L	0.00002
Strontium (Sr)	mg/L	0.001
Thallium (Tl)	mg/L	0.000010
Tin (Sn)	mg/L	0.0050
Uranium (U)	mg/L	0.0001
Vanadium (V)	mg/L	0.0050
Zinc (Zn)	mg/L	0.0050
Hydrocarbons		
F1 (C6-C10)	mg/L	0.10
F2 (C10-C16)	mg/L	0.10
F3 (C16-C34)	mg/L	0.10
F4 (C34-C50)	mg/L	0.20
BTEX	mg/L	0.10

4.2.1 DATA ANALYSIS

Potential Mine-related effects on water quality will be assessed by screening for exceedances of CCME water quality guidelines or other acceptable guidelines (where such guidelines exist). Results will be interpreted graphically or with reference to summary statistics such as mean and standard deviation. For parameters that have concentrations below the reported detection limit (RDL), half of the value of the RDL will be used for summary statistics. Data will be compared to relevant CCME MAL guidelines (CCME, 2025) and will be compared to reference and/or historical conditions if any exceedances are observed.

4.3 SEDIMENT QUALITY

Sediment samples will be collected once every three years. At the time of writing, sediment samples were last collected in 2024.

Surficial sediment samples will be collected with an appropriate surface grab sampler (e.g. petite Ponar) after collection of supporting field profiles and water quality samples. At each station, three grabs will be collected and the upper 1-2 cm of sediment combined and homogenized to form a composite sample of sufficient quantity for analysis. Three replicate samples will be collected in this manner from each sampling location with each replicate sample collected at least 10 m from the others. Sampling coordinates will be recorded for each replicate.

Samples will be collected in containers provided by an accredited analytical laboratory. The suite of parameters to be analyzed and anticipated method detection limits are listed in Table 4.3-1. Sediment quality samples will be analyzed by an accredited laboratory.

Table 4.3-1 Sediment Quality Parameters

Parameter	Units	Detection Limits
Physical Tests		
Moisture	%	0.25
pH	pH	0.1
Particle Size		
% Gravel (>2 mm)	%	1
% Sand (2.0 mm - 0.063 mm)	%	1
% Silt (0.063 mm – 0.004 mm)	%	1
% Clay (<0.004 mm)	%	1
Texture	-	-
Anions and Nutrients		
Total Nitrogen by LECO	%	0.02
Organic / Inorganic Carbon		
Total Organic Carbon	%	0.05
Metals		
Aluminum (Al)	mg/kg	50
Antimony (Sb)	mg/kg	0.1
Arsenic (As)	mg/kg	0.1
Barium (Ba)	mg/kg	0.5
Beryllium (Be)	mg/kg	0.1
Bismuth (Bi)	mg/kg	0.2
Boron (B)	mg/kg	5
Cadmium (Cd)	mg/kg	0.02
Calcium (Ca)	mg/kg	50
Chromium (Cr)	mg/kg	0.5
Cobalt (Co)	mg/kg	0.1
Copper (Cu)	mg/kg	0.5

Parameter	Units	Detection Limits
Metals (cont'd)		
Iron (Fe)	mg/kg	50
Lead (Pb)	mg/kg	0.5
Lithium (Li)	mg/kg	0.5
Magnesium (Mg)	mg/kg	20
Manganese (Mn)	mg/kg	1
Mercury (Hg)	mg/kg	0.005
Molybdenum (Mo)	mg/kg	0.1
Nickel (Ni)	mg/kg	0.5
Phosphorus	mg/kg	50
Potassium (K)	mg/kg	50
Selenium (Se)	mg/kg	0.2
Silver (Ag)	mg/kg	0.1
Sodium (Na)	mg/kg	100
Strontium (Sr)	mg/kg	0.5
Sulfur	mg/kg	1000
Thallium (Tl)	mg/kg	0.05
Tin (Sn)	mg/kg	2
Titanium (Ti)	mg/kg	1
Tungsten	mg/kg	0.5
Uranium (U)	mg/kg	0.05
Vanadium (V)	mg/kg	0.2
Zinc (Zn)	mg/kg	2
Zirconium (Zr)	mg/kg	1
Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs)		
1-Methylnaphthalene	mg/kg	0.005
2-Methylnaphthalene	mg/kg	0.01
1+2-Methylnaphthalene	mg/kg	0.015
Acenaphthene	mg/kg	0.005
Acenaphthylene	mg/kg	0.005

Parameter	Units	Detection Limits
Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs; <i>cont'd</i>)		
Acridine	mg/kg	0.01
Anthracene	mg/kg	0.004
Benzo(a)anthracene	mg/kg	0.01
Benzo(a)pyrene	mg/kg	0.01
Benzo(b&j)fluoranthene	mg/kg	0.01
Benzo(b+j+k)fluoranthene	mg/kg	0.015
Benzo(g,h,i)perylene	mg/kg	0.01
Benzo(k)fluoranthene	mg/kg	0.01
Chrysene	mg/kg	0.01
Dibenz(a,h)anthracene	mg/kg	0.005
Fluoranthene	mg/kg	0.01
Fluorene	mg/kg	0.01
Indeno(1,2,3-cd)pyrene	mg/kg	0.01
Naphthalene	mg/kg	0.01
Phenanthrene	mg/kg	0.01
Pyrene	mg/kg	0.01
Quinoline	mg/kg	0.01

4.3.1 DATA ANALYSIS

Potential Mine-related effects on sediment quality will be assessed by screening for exceedances of CCME sediment quality guidelines or other acceptable guidelines (where such guidelines exist). Results will be interpreted graphically or with reference to summary statistics such as mean and standard deviation. For parameters that have concentrations below the reportable detection limit (RDL), half of the value of the RDL will be used for summary statistics. Data will be compared to relevant CCME MAL guidelines (CCME 2025) and will be compared to reference and/or historical conditions if any exceedances are observed.

4.4 PHYTOPLANKTON

Phytoplankton biomass as chlorophyll *a* (chl *a*) will be collected at each sampling location annually, during April and August. Chl *a* samples will be collected in triplicate from one meter below the water surface (1 m below the bottom of the ice in winter) using a discrete water sampler (e.g., Niskin). Samples will be 1 L in volume, with each replicate sample collected from a separate cast of the water sampling device and kept cool and dark until filtered. On the day of collection, samples will be filtered onto 0.45 µm filters, the volume filtered recorded, and the filter kept frozen and sent to an accredited analytical laboratory for analysis.

4.4.1 DATA ANALYSIS

Potential Mine-related effects on phytoplankton will be assessed by graphical analysis and comparison of chl *a* concentrations to results from previous years. Sample means and standard error will be graphed with supporting data and laboratory results presented in appendices.

4.5 BENTHIC INVERTEBRATES

Benthic invertebrate samples will be collected once every three years, concurrent with sediment sampling in August. Three replicate samples will be collected at each sampling location using a sediment sampling device (e.g., petite Ponar). Samples will be sieved to 500 µm and preserved with a buffered formalin solution to a final concentration of approximately 10% buffered formalin. Samples will be sent to a taxonomist for identification and enumeration.

4.5.1 DATA ANALYSIS

Potential Mine-related effects on benthic invertebrates will be assessed graphically comparing total density (organisms/m²), taxa richness at family level, community composition and Simpson's Evenness Index. Laboratory results from the taxonomic lab will be presented in appendices.

The effects threshold for significance will be exceeded if community metric levels in the exposure area are shown to exceed two standard deviations of reference area levels.

4.6 QUALITY ASSURANCE AND QUALITY CONTROL

Samples will be collected following standard sampling protocol (e.g., see the Quality Assurance and Quality Control Plan) by qualified personnel using suitable sampling equipment. Water samples for laboratory analysis will be filtered and preserved (as required), and water and sediment samples for laboratory analysis will be stored in a cool environment before shipping to the laboratory. Chl *a* samples will be kept cold and dark until filtered, after which time they will be kept dark and frozen until analyzed. Benthic invertebrate samples will be preserved with buffered formalin. Taxonomic identification will include verification of sorting efficiency. Field duplicate samples will be collected at a quantity of 10% of all water samples collected and field blanks and trip blanks will be collected at a quantity of 5% of all water samples collected.

4.7 REPORTING

Results sampling completed under the Marine Monitoring Plan in any given year will be included as an appendix to the annual report submitted to the NIRB. Detailed internal reporting will be conducted upon the completion of all field assessments.

5. ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

Best management practices and environmental design criteria are expected to prevent or minimize adverse effects on the receiving environment. Ongoing monitoring will provide data to evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies. If any unforeseen adverse effects are identified during the life of the Mine, additional investigation may be undertaken and/or additional mitigation measures applied. Such measures will be dependent on the nature and magnitude of the changes observed and proposed response actions will be outlined in the annual report. Adaptive management is an iterative approach based on a learning process gained from monitoring, and it improves long-term management outcomes. More details on the adaptive management approach for the Mine are provided in the Environmental Management and Protection Plan.

6. REFERENCES

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