



Department of Primary Industries

FE20/905

C21/91

18 February 2021

Mandana Mazaheri

Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

RE: McPhillamys Gold Project (SSD-9505) Response to Government Agency Advice on Amendment Report and Submissions Report – DPI Fisheries Feedback

DPI Fisheries are responsible for ensuring that fish stocks are conserved and that there is “no net loss” of *key fish habitat* upon which they depend. To achieve this, the Department ensures that developments comply with the requirements of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994* (namely the aquatic habitat protection and threatened species conservation provisions in Parts 7 and 7A of the Act respectively) and the associated *Policy and Guidelines for Fish Habitat Conservation and Management (Update 2013)*.

Aquatic Ecology Offset Package

DPI Fisheries have reviewed the McPhillamys' Gold Project response to Government Agency Advice on Amendment Report and Submissions Report. Regis has identified extensive areas of Key Fish Habitats with appropriate riparian buffer zones downstream of the disturbance footprint but within the mine development project area that includes offset options within the Belubula River, Tributary A and Tributary B that can accommodate the required 80,762 m² area of aquatic offsets. Given the extensive areas available for offsetting and rehabilitation, DPI Fisheries preference is for aquatic ecology offsets to be targeted within the Belubula River and tributaries that contain the highest conservation values and will result in in-perpetuity offsets.

Regis will need to assess which options will provide the highest conservation priorities and will result in in-perpetuity offsets in consultation with DPI Fisheries, to help redress both direct and indirect impacts of development on key fish habitats. A plan of management will need to be prepared by the proponents that includes the Aquatic Ecological Offset Strategy and outlines details of the long-term monitoring and maintenance program to monitor the success of the Aquatic Ecological Offset Strategy in meeting its targets and key performance indicators.

Should you require further clarification on the above issues, please contact me on 6763 1255 or 0429 908 856.

D. Ward

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Fisheries Manager (Tamworth)

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