In reviewing the alternatives assessment for the location of the TMF, several discrepancies in scoring have been noted, as detailed in IR MOE-NR-GW-05. In particular, it has been identified that the alternatives assessment does not consider the implications of local hydrogeological conditions, and consequently some of the scores that have been provided are questioned. Furthermore, although there is scoring based on the proximity to Marmion Reservoir, there has been no scoring to reflect the location of Lizard Lake.

Implications of hydrogeological conditions were considered to the extent possible. At TMA-3, there has been some characterization of the detailed hydrogeological conditions; however, this type of detailed information is not available for the other alternative locations. The foundation conditions at each of the TMF alternatives have been considered to determine if construction of an effective TMF seepage collection system is feasible, which will mitigate any potential impacts to the hydrogeological environment.

With respect to the "Distance from Marmion Reservoir" indicator (under the visual impacts sub-account), this evaluation included consideration of proximity to Lizard Lake because it is used for recreational purposes. It is acknowledged that the indicator should have been identified as 'Distance from Recreational Water Bodies'.

The revised scoring system of Version 2 of the Alternatives Assessment considers groundwater impacts from the perspectives of length of tailings ditches, requirements for tailings ponds, and indirectly for the potential to impact surface water features. With the commitment for groundwater collection at any of the alternative sites, this assessment is a reasonable approach to address the lack of site specific hydrogeological information for each of the alternate sites. No further response is necessary.

Acknowledged.