Submission on the Strange Lake Rare Earth Mining Project
Draft Joint Impact Statement Guidelines

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. My concerns are related to:

1. Inadequate study of the pristine caribou calving ground environment of the proposed roadway through Labrador, and its potential to be returned to 'calving ground condition' after 30 years of road use.
2. Instead of a road, use of an 'suspended monorail' for shipping product to the designated location, plus accommodation other shipping needs, all run by hydroelectricity.
3. Reconsideration of shipping route, instead, through Quebec to Schefferville using 'suspended monorail', and continued onwards to Sept-Iles.

1.

The area of the proposed road is known locally for its pristine condition, and its natural aspects are important to the Labrador culture, as seen in responses already posted. Its value is not currently internationally recognized, but it is an example of an area that needs protection rather than being ruined with construction of a road. Could it really be returned to 'caribou calving ground condition, after thirty years of road use? What do caribou need – moss that may take 10 years to regenerate? In the meantime, hunting from the road, even though 'private' could affect the natural balance of animal habitat? But will this proposed road/development suppress, if not eliminate, any prospect of the George River Caribou ever recovering to the extent that it once was?

2.

Although transport by air (a blimp) has been considered, a 'suspended monorail' has not.

A Suspended Monorail system is suspended from an enclosed track up to 10 metres above the ground. Researched and manufactured in Quebec, a suspended monorail system appears more economical, has low maintenance, is suitable for long cold distances, and is more adaptable to rough terrain. It is suspended from pylons in 50 metre intervals, powered by hydro-electricity and most suitable for northern Quebec. A suspended monorail, which is above ground, makes bridging waterways possible and seemingly requires just a tote road during construction.

A road, initially, may appear less expensive, but northern terrain is challenging. Aside from requiring sources of gravel from the environment, a road requires bridges, but continued maintenance, including winter plowing. Environmentally, a road introduces hunting along its length, plus use of gas and diesel fuels.

A railway is environmentally disruptive and expensive. A suspended monorail can better adapt to challenging terrain, overcoming the need for culvert and bridge construction, and the pristine environment left relatively intact. A suspended monorail would be powered by hydroelectricity, with the protected overhead suspension providing operating protection during severe weather.

Currently, half of the world's suspended monorails are designed to be powered by electricity. A suspended monorail transport costs are low (a completed suspended monorail for person transport was in 2018 an estimated 2 Kwh/km, or $00.0655/km at current rate from Labrador.)
Federal government initiatives are shifting to low carbon initiatives, of which wouldn't electric suspended monorail would be one?
All parts are manufactured in Quebec, with the securing of the pylons in concrete done on the sites. Monorail cars can be adapted to carry minerals/freight, up to 30 tonnes per unit, and can travel at a frequency of every 15 minutes.
Existing and newer technologies adapting to colder conditions have been around for three or more generations.
It should be noted that the suspended monorail system of Wuppertal, Germany was first developed and used in the early 1900's, and continues service today!
Co-op MGV in Quebec currently enthusiastically promotes the 'suspended overhead monorail' systems.
3.
If suspended monorail is to be considered, then a reconsideration of the routing also needs to be re-evaluated. Shipping the minerals to Schefferville rather than across Labrador to Voisey's Bay is admittedly further, but is not an 'opening of the north to traffic and hunting. At Schefferville, Quebec, there is the start of the Quebec North Shore Railway going to Sept Iles. The railway might enable continuation of the monorail, parallel to the railway, to Sept Iles. This option would then have the minerals processed in Sept-Iles (or Shefferville?) ready for shipping on the St. Lawrence River (and illuminate the need for shipping from Voisey's Bay, as discussed previously.)
Another mining company, MetalQuest Mining are considering a transport corridor for their iron ore from NW of Schefferville, Quebec, namely Lac Otelnuk, to Schefferville and onwards, to Sept Iles. They consider that they have 100 years' worth of iron ore to ship. Is there a possibility of working together on transport issues?
It has been noted, from initial Labrador coastal people response, that 'keeping the mining and its transport in Quebec' is preferred.
And how interested is the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador in a mine and company that does not belong to the province?
The Province of Quebec has seemingly consistently welcomed mining. Canada has ensured that other parts of Canada's north were served by rail, despite small populations. Examples include:

- Mackenzie Northern Railway, 963 km long, goes from Alberta north to Hay River on Great Slave Lake (serving Yellowknife), owned by CN, started 1964, upgraded 2006.
- Churchill, Manitoba from Winnipeg 400 km track, built in 1920's, renovated in 2018, now operated by Via Rail
- Polar Bear Express(railroad), North Bay to Moosonee in Ontario 300 km, operating since 1964.

In other words, northern rail to northern areas with small population remains current in the rest of Canada. A suspended monorail to northern Quebec seemingly would be less expensive to run, requiring minimal maintenance while concurrently serving as reliable product (and person) transport, plus serving as a world accomplishment.
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