



**NIRB File No.: 03MN107**

**DFO File No.: 03-HCAA-CA7-00191; 14HCAA-01046**

October 6, 2015

To: Meadowbank Distribution List

*Sent via email*

**Re: Commencement of Technical Assessment for AEM's Addendum to the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Vault Pit Expansion Amendment Proposal for the Meadowbank Gold Mine Project**

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Dear Parties:

On July 30, 2015 the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) initiated the public technical review period for Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd.'s (AEM or Proponent) Addendum to the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) submission for the Vault Pit Expansion proposal (NIRB File No. 03MN107). During the initial 30 day period the NIRB invited interested parties to submit Information Requests (IR) to the Board on or before August 28, 2015 to facilitate their technical review of the Vault Pit Expansion proposal. On September 4, 2015, the NIRB requested that the Proponent review the submissions and supply the Board with an indication of an anticipated date for submission of its IR Response Package by September 17, 2015. The NIRB received the IR Response Package from AEM on October 1, 2015.

The NIRB has conducted a preliminary completeness check to ensure that adequate information has been provided by the Proponent in order to commence the 60 day technical review period. Although unable to fully assess the technical quality of the responses and to determine whether they will meet with reviewers' requirements, the NIRB is of the opinion that adequate information has been provided to commence the technical review of the Addendum and to facilitate the next steps in the process including the preparation of technical review comments and the scheduling of a Technical Meeting.

The completed Addendum, IR submissions and response package as received by the NIRB are available from the NIRB's online registry at the following link:

<http://ftp.nirb.ca/03-MONITORING/03MN107-MEADOWBANK%20GOLD%20MINE/01-PROJECT%20CERTIFICATE/05-AMENDMENTS/02-VAULT%20EXPANSION-CONDITION%2048/>.

## CALL FOR TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMENTS

The technical review period is meant to provide for a detailed review of the Vault Pit Expansion proposal to analyze the adequacy and assess the quality of the information presented by the Proponent in its submission. This step in the NIRB's assessment of the Vault Pit Expansion proposal involves parties' development of technical review comments which outline whether they agree with the Proponent's conclusions regarding the potential ecosystemic and socio-economic impacts of the proposed activities, the adequacy of proposed mitigation and monitoring measures and ultimately whether parties support the approval of the Vault Pit Expansion as currently proposed. The NIRB is requesting that responsible authorities, interested parties and those with specialist advice provide their technical review comments to the NIRB by the conclusion of the technical commenting period, at **12:00 pm MST, December 4, 2015**. Technical review comments should include the following:

- Determination of whether Parties agree/disagree with the conclusions in the Addendum regarding the alternatives assessment, environmental impacts, proposed mitigation, significance of impacts, and monitoring measures – and reasons to support the determination;
- Determination of whether or not conclusions in the Addendum are supported by the analysis – and reasons to support the determination;
- Determination of whether appropriate methodology was utilized in the Addendum to develop conclusions – and reasons to support the determination, along with any proposed alternative methodologies which may be more appropriate (if applicable);
- Assessment of the quality and presentation of the information in the Addendum; and
- Any comments regarding additional information which would be useful in assessing impacts – and reasons to support any comments made.

Please note that parties are encouraged to review Appendix A which provides the NIRB's suggested format and template for the submission of technical review comments.

## NEXT STEPS

The next steps in the NIRB's NLCA Section 12.8.2 reconsideration of the terms and conditions of Project Certificate No. 004 for the Meadowbank Gold Mine Project are outlined as follows for the information of parties:

- Two day technical meeting (*via teleconference*) to be prior to end of technical review period, to start on **December 1, 2015**. The objective of the Technical Meeting would be to clarify and resolve technical issues in the Addendum.
- Submission of Technical Review Comments directly to the NIRB by interested parties on or before **12:00 pm MST, Friday, December 4, 2015** (60 days).
- Proponent submits responses to technical review comments on or before **December 23, 2015**.
- Final Written Submissions received from all parties on **February 12, 2016**. After conducting a review of the technical comments, the NIRB will be in a position to provide notice of the Public Hearing and call for Intervenor Applications.
- Tentative Public Hearing to be held the week of **February 29, 2016**.

Please refer to the enclosed process map and anticipated timeline for the NIRB's assessment of the Vault Pit Expansion proposal for parties' information.

Once again, the NIRB requests that all interested parties submit their Technical Review Comments to the NIRB by email at [info@nirb.ca](mailto:info@nirb.ca) or by fax to (867) 983-2594 on or before **12:00 pm MST, Friday, December 4, 2015**.

Should you have any questions or require further clarification regarding the next steps in the Board's assessment of the Vault Pit Expansion proposal, please contact the undersigned at (867) 857-2052 or [sgranchinho@nirb.ca](mailto:sgranchinho@nirb.ca).

Sincerely,



Sophia Granchinho, M.Sc. EP  
Senior Technical Advisor  
Nunavut Impact Review Board

cc: Stéphane Robert, Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd  
Ryan Vanengen, Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd.  
Luis Manzo, Kivalliq Inuit Association  
Phyllis Beaulieu, Nunavut Water Board  
Tanika Simmons, Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency

Attachment: Appendix A – Format for Parties' Technical Review Comments

Enclosure: Process Map and Timelines NIRB File No.: 03MN107—Reconsideration of Project Certificate No. 004 for the Proposed Vault Pit Expansion (*October 6, 2015*)

For each issue raised, parties are asked to include a clear reference to the volume, document, section, and/or page number in the Addendum where the relevant information may be found. Parties may find efficiencies in structuring submissions by issue, and are asked, where possible, to align their submission in accordance with the ordering of materials as presented within the Addendum. A tabular presentation as provided below is requested as a means of systematically organizing comment submissions and to assist with the compilation of submissions for the next steps of the Board’s review process.

***Format & File Size***

Parties are requested to provide information request submissions in a fully functional, electronically searchable Word or PDF file. Noting the current constraints with respect to internet bandwidth and speed, the NIRB requests that all submissions be submitted as individual files no larger than 5 MB.

***Technical review comment submissions must contain the following:***

**1. Executive summary**

Submissions must contain a non-technical executive summary of the major issues identified during the review of the Addendum. The summary should not exceed two pages.

**2. Table of contents**

Submissions must contain a table of contents with sections that relate to the main headings of the Addendum for the Meadowbank Gold Mine project and also which identify the major issues under those headings the party intends to bring forward for discussion at the Technical Meeting. Submissions may also address any other matter that the party considers relevant to the NIRB’s review of the Addendum and Vault Pit Expansion proposal as have been outlined above.

**3. Introduction**

Submissions should contain a statement of the party’s mandate and relationship to the project, and for parties with regulatory jurisdiction over the Vault Pit Expansion project and the Meadowbank Gold Mine project, a description of the jurisdiction of that party and list of the legislation, regulations, policies and guidelines administered by the party that are applicable to the Vault Pit Expansion project.

**4. Specific comments**

For each issue included in the submissions, parties should provide the following:

- a. A detailed description of the issue and, where appropriate, a reference to where within the Addendum (volume/document, section and page number) that issue is discussed;
- b. If provided by the Proponent within the Addendum, identify the Proponent’s conclusion(s) related to the issue;

- c. A statement regarding the conclusion(s) of the commenting party related to the issue, including reference to the justification/data/rationale supporting that conclusion;
- d. A brief discussion assessing the issue's importance to the impact assessment process; and
- e. Any recommendation(s) to the Board with respect to the disposition of the issue.

<b>Review Comment Number</b>	
<b>Subject/Topic</b>	
<b>References</b> to NIRB EIS Guidelines (if applicable) and Addendum (i.e. volume/document, Section/sub-section, page number, etc.)	
<b>Summary</b> (include AEM's conclusion if relevant and conclusions of commenting party)	
<b>Importance of issue to impact assessment</b>	
<b>Detailed Review Comment</b>	<b>1. Gap/Issue</b> <b>2. Disagreement with Addendum conclusion</b> <b>3. Reasons for disagreement with Addendum conclusion</b>
<b>Recommendation/Request</b>	

## 5. Summary of recommendations

Finally, comment submissions must contain a *summary* of the recommendations to the Board with respect to:

- Whether Parties agree/disagree with the conclusions presented in the Addendum regarding the alternatives assessment, environmental impacts, proposed mitigation, significance of impacts, and monitoring measures – and all evidence supporting the parties' position;
- Whether or not conclusions presented in the Addendum are supported by the analysis – and all evidence supporting the parties' position;
- Whether appropriate methodology was utilized in the Addendum to develop conclusions – and all evidence supporting the parties' position along with any proposed alternative methodologies which may be more appropriate if applicable;
- An assessment of the quality and the presentation of the information presented in the Addendum; and
- Any comments regarding additional information which would be useful in assessing impacts – and reasons to support any comments made.

## **6. Translation/interpretation requirements**

The NIRB requires executive summaries be provided in English and be translated into **Inuktitut**.

Please note that parties are responsible for sourcing this translation.

## **7. Deadline for filing technical review comments**

The NIRB reminds parties that the deadline for technical review comments is **12:00 p.m., Friday, December 4, 2015**.