



NIRB File No. 11MN034

September 16, 2011

John Witteman  
Environment and Regulatory Consultant  
Agnico-Eagle Mines Ltd.  
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Val d'Or, QC J0P 0E9

Via email: [john.witteman@agnico-eagle.com](mailto:john.witteman@agnico-eagle.com)

**Re: Information Requested for the NIRB's Review of AEM's "Meliadine Gold Mine" project proposal**

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Dear John Witteman:

In a July 8, 2011 screening decision report to the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development (the Minister), the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) indicated that additional project-specific information could be required to facilitate community scoping sessions for the NIRB's review of Agnico-Eagle Mine Ltd.'s (AEM) Meliadine Gold Mine project proposal (the Project). Prior to commencing with key stages in the review process, the Board is requesting that AEM submit a revised project description for the Project which addresses the following points:

1. Updated conceptual site layouts of planned project-related infrastructure at the Meliadine site and within the community of Rankin Inlet;
2. Maps illustrating the positioning of potential mine site infrastructure relative to recreational use areas (i.e., cabins and traditional hunting/harvesting areas), at appropriate scales;
3. Description of planned mode of transport of gold product from site to market;
4. Description of proposed source of fuel and materials that would be barged to Rankin Inlet for resupply purposes; and,
5. Updated information pertaining to anticipated production rates, tailings disposal, routing of spur roads, power generation, and any other additional information that AEM feels may assist the NIRB in its review of the Project.

The proposed construction and operation of an all-weather road from Rankin Inlet to the Meliadine site was previously screened by the NIRB as NIRB File No. 11RN017. On July 4, 2011 the NIRB issued its screening decision report to the Minister indicating that, pursuant to Section 12.4.4(c) of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA), the proposal should be returned to the proponent for clarification and resubmission. It was then further recommended

that the construction of the all-weather road would more appropriately be considered within the context of the Meliadine Gold Mine project proposal (NIRB File No. 11MN034) and, should a review of the mine proposal be required, consideration could be given to the approval of a modified all-weather road proposal as an exception to the review pursuant to NLCA Section 12.10.2(b).

In accepting the NIRB's screening recommendations for AEM's all-weather road proposal (NIRB File No. 11RN017) and Meliadine Gold Mine proposal (NIRB File No. 11MN034), the Minister further encouraged AEM and the Board to explore possible process efficiencies that could be gained by a consolidation of the two proposals. The Minister also noted that, should AEM choose to re-apply for approval to construct the all-weather road prior to completion of the NIRB's review process, it would be essential that the mine proposal be updated to reflect this new approach.

It is the NIRB's understanding that AEM is currently intending to modify its all-weather road proposal into a two phased approach. AEM would submit a standalone application for construction of an all-weather road from Rankin Inlet to the Meliadine site with restricted public access solely for the purpose of resupplying its ongoing exploration and bulk sampling programs with fuel and materials. This modified proposal would be submitted to the NIRB by AEM for consideration as an allowable exception to the review of the Meliadine Gold Mine project, pursuant to NLCA 12.10.2(b).

The project description for the mine proposal would also be revised to include information related to the second phase of the all-weather road development, with proposed enhancement, construction and operation of the all-weather road to allow for permanent servicing of the proposed mine with unrestricted public access. These proposed activities would be considered throughout the course of the NIRB's review process, with a decision made following a Final Hearing. At a minimum, the revised project description for the Meliadine Gold Mine should also include the following information related to the all-weather road development:

6. An updated implementation schedule for each planned phase of the all-weather road;
7. The proposed routing of the all-weather road relative to traditional travel routes in the area, as well as views of the road alignment showing the footprint of the road and all associated infrastructure such as quarries and borrow sites at an appropriate scale;
8. Updated plans for the protection of archaeological and cultural features; and,
9. Updated plans for the enhancement or protection of, or compensation for, fish habitat along the proposed road routing.

Please note that AEM's revised project description should also be accompanied by a document outlining the revisions relative to the original project description submitted to the NIRB for screening on May 4, 2011. Following receipt of a revised project description, the NIRB will commence with its review of the Project, releasing a draft scope of the assessment for a period of public comment. Given that AEM has previously requested that the NIRB and NWB coordinate in the review of the Project and the consideration of the Type A Water Licence Application for the Project, the NIRB anticipates providing additional updates to all parties regarding these coordination efforts as they progress.

The NIRB respectfully requests that AEM supply the Board with an anticipated date of submission for its revised project description and its Phase 1 all-weather road application package. Upon receipt of these planned submission dates, the NIRB will distribute an anticipated timeline for this review to all parties, with direction on next steps. Please be advised that all submissions can be directed to the attention of the NIRB's environmental administration via email at [info@nirb.ca](mailto:info@nirb.ca) or via fax at (867) 983-2594.

If you have any questions or require additional clarification, please contact me directly at (867) 983-4619 or [kgillard@nirb.ca](mailto:kgillard@nirb.ca).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kelli Gillard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kelli" and last name "Gillard" clearly legible.

Kelli Gillard  
Technical Advisor

cc: Meliadine Distribution List