

NIRB File No.: 11MN034

May 7, 2013

To: Meliadine Distribution List

Sent via email

RE: Conformity Determination for Agnico-Eagle Mines Ltd.'s *Draft* Environmental Impact Statement Submission for the Meliadine Gold Project and Commencement of the NIRB's Technical Review Period

Dear Parties:

On January 25, 2013 the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) acknowledged receipt of Agnico-Eagle Mines Ltd.'s (AEM or Proponent) *Draft* Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) submission for the Meliadine Gold Project (NIRB File No. 11MN034). The Board initiated an internal review of the DEIS to determine whether or not it conformed to the EIS Guidelines issued to AEM on February 20, 2012. On February 11, 2013 the NIRB issued correspondence to AEM which indicated that the DEIS did not conform to the NIRB's EIS Guidelines and requested that AEM address the deficiencies identified during the Board's conformity review. On April 18, 2013 the NIRB received AEM's DEIS resubmission for the Meliadine Gold Project and commenced an internal review of the DEIS resubmission to determine whether it conformed to the NIRB's EIS Guidelines and the outstanding requirements as identified the Board's February 11, 2013 correspondence and March 6, 2013 supplemental information request.

The NIRB hereby accepts AEM's submission as a DEIS and commences the technical review period. AEM's Meliadine Project DEIS submission can be accessed from the NIRB's online public registry at the following location:

http://ftp.nirb.ca/02-REVIEWS/ACTIVE% 20REVIEWS/11MN034-AEM% 20MELIADINE/2-REVIEW/06-DRAFT% 20EIS% 20% 26% 20CONFORMITY% 20REVIEW/03-DEIS% 20APRIL% 202013/.

The Technical Review Process

The technical review is meant to provide a detailed review of the DEIS, with the intent of analyzing the completeness and quality of the information presented by the Proponent in its DEIS. This next step in the NIRB's Review of the Meliadine project and Parties' review of the

DEIS submission consists of the development of technical review comments which should include the following:

- Determination of whether Parties agree/disagree with the conclusions in the DEIS 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 DEIS are supported by the analysis and reasons to support the determination;
- Determination of whether appropriate methodology was utilized in the DEIS 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 DEIS; and
- Any comments regarding additional information which would be useful in assessing impacts and reasons to support any comments made.

The development of technical review comments may involve Parties' formulation of Information Requests (IRs) that are based upon their review of the DEIS and the subsequent identification of any gaps or areas of uncertainty which must be addressed.

Call for Information Requests

To facilitate the development of technical review comments by parties, the NIRB invites interested parties to provide the NIRB with Information Requests (IRs) directed to the Proponent and/or other parties regarding the Meliadine DEIS. It should be noted that IRs are not meant to serve as technical review comments, but rather should identify information gaps within the DEIS that need to be addressed so that parties can develop their respective technical review comments. Please note that parties are encouraged to review Appendix A which provides the NIRB's suggested format for the submission of IRs and additional clarification regarding the information that must be included within submissions as follows:

- A clear reference to the volume, document, section, and/or page number in the DEIS where relevant information may be found, if applicable
- To whom the IR is directed;
- Identification of the issue:
- The concern associated with the issue; and
- A clear rationale of the issue's importance to the impact assessment of the proposed project.

The next steps in the NIRB's Review of the proposed Meliadine Project have been outlined as follows for the information of parties:

 Submission of Information Requests (IRs) directly to the NIRB by interested parties on or before 5:00 pm MST, Thursday June 6, 2013.

- After considering all IRs and making decisions regarding their suitability, the NIRB will
 forward all appropriate requests to the Proponent (and other parties if applicable) by
 Wednesday June 12, 2013.
- Upon forwarding IRs for a response, the NIRB may set a timeframe for the Proponent (and other parties if applicable) to respond with an IR response package.
- Upon receipt of the IR response package(s), all parties will be given **60 days** for submission of technical review comments.

Once again, the NIRB requests that all interested parties submit their Information Requests to the NIRB at <u>info@nirb.ca</u> or by fax to (867) 983-2594 on or before **5:00 pm MST**, **Thursday June 6, 2013.**

If you have any questions or require further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact Kelli Gillard, Technical Advisor, at (867) 983-4619 or via email at kgillard@nirb.ca.

Sincerely,

Amanda Hanson

Director, Technical Services

Nunavut Impact Review Board

cc: Stéphane Robert, Agnico-Eagle Mines Ltd.

Attached: Appendix A – Suggested Format for Information Requests

APPENDIX A: SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR INFORMATION REQUESTS

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.

Information Requests

The purpose of information requests is to identify information gaps or areas of uncertainty within the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that need to be addressed so that parties can develop their respective technical review comments. Information requests can originate from, and be directed at, any of the parties involved in the assessment. Submissions must outline why the information required is necessary to facilitate the party's technical analysis of the EIS and the potential impacts of the proposal. After considering all Information Requests submitted and making decisions regarding their suitability, the NIRB will forward all appropriate requests to the Proponent and other parties as applicable. The NIRB will assess suitability in terms of what requirements at the initial phase of the review process, and must balance these requirements with information that may be requested as part of technical review comments or at a more advanced stage of the Review.

Parties are asked to ensure that Information Requests address the points set out below:

IR Source: The overall submission should clearly identify the

organization/department/intervener proposing the request(s).

IR Number: Each specific Information Request must be numbered in order to enable

effective cross-referencing of the submission.

To: Clearly identify to which organizations/departments/agencies the IR is

directed (e.g., the Proponent and/or specific organization(s) of whom

the information is requested).

Subject: Identify the issue; list the general subject or topic associated with the

request (e.g., monitoring of sediment quality).

Reference: A clear reference to any applicable volume, document, section, and/or

page number in the EIS where information relevant to the request may

be found.

Issue/Concern: Provide background information and justification for the request. The

issue/concern should identify any shortcomings of available information, concerns associated with the issue and how the requested information is relevant to the technical analysis of information within the EIS. A clear rationale of the issue's importance to the impact

assessment of the proposed project is required.

Information Request:	Specifically state the question and/or outline the specific information being requested to the organization. Separate items requested should be appropriately numbered in order to track the provision of responses.