



NIRB File No.: 11MN034
NWB File No.: 2AM-MEL----
AANDC File No.: 5510-5-28
DFO File No.: NU-11-0014
EC File No.: 4703 001 014

September 24, 2013

Meliadine Gold Distribution List

Sent via email

Re: Commencement of Technical Review Period for the NIRB's Review of Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd.'s Meliadine Gold project

Dear Parties:

On May 7, 2013 the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) initiated the public technical review period for the *Draft* Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) submitted by Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd. (AEM or Proponent) for the Meliadine Gold project (the Project) (NIRB File No. 11MN034). The NIRB invited interested parties to submit Information Requests (IR) to the Board for consideration by June 6, 2012 in order to facilitate the technical review of the DEIS. The NIRB requested that the Proponent review the submissions and supply the Board with an indication of an anticipated date for submission of an IR Response Package by June 27, 2013, later extended to September 16, 2013. The NIRB received the IR response packages from AEM on September 20, 2013.

The NIRB has conducted a preliminary completeness check to ensure all IRs relevant to the current stage of the review had been addressed 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 sufficient information has been provided to commence the technical review of the Meliadine Gold project proposal and to facilitate the next steps in the process including the preparation of technical review comments and the scheduling of a Technical Meeting and Pre-Hearing Conference (PHC).

The complete DEIS, IRs and response packages, as received by the Board, can be accessed online at the NIRB's public registry using the following link:

<http://ftp.nirb.ca/02-REVIEWS/ACTIVE%20REVIEWS/11MN034-AEM%20MELIADINE/2-REVIEW/>.

Call for Technical Review Comments

The public technical review period will serve as a detailed review of the DEIS with the intent of analyzing the completeness and quality of the information presented by the Proponent in support of this project proposal. The NIRB is requesting that responsible authorities, interested parties and those with specialist advice provide their technical review comments to the NIRB prior to the conclusion of the public comment period, at **12:00 pm MT, November 22, 2013**. Technical review comments 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.

Technical Meeting, Pre-Hearing Conference and Community Roundtable

The NIRB intends to schedule a meeting of technical experts (i.e., a Technical Meeting) in Rankin Inlet, to facilitate discussions on technical matters related to the review of the DEIS. The Technical Meeting brings technical reviewers together in an effort to address/resolve technical issues prior to the PHC. The meeting is facilitated by the NIRB staff, with participation by the Proponent, responsible authorities and other interested parties. Break-out sessions are often used and each break out group (e.g., may be related to engineering, wildlife or socioeconomic issues) is facilitated by the NIRB staff. During the Technical Meeting, the NIRB staff will compile a list of commitments made by the Proponent when addressing planned clarifications, edits or additions for the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). The list of commitments is then carried forward to the PHC and may be incorporated into the Board's PHC decision.

Following the technical meeting, the NIRB will hold a PHC to discuss such matters as: timelines for submissions and the Final Hearing, future meetings, evidence, document exchange, Final Hearing venue(s), Final Hearing format and any other matters related to the logistics of the Final Hearing. The PHC provides an opportunity for parties to present to the Board on the issues that were resolved during the technical meeting, and those issues which remain outstanding. It is also an opportunity for the Board to hear from the public regarding the information contained in the DEIS. While the technical meeting is a structured but largely informal opportunity for technical experts to resolve outstanding issues, participation in the PHC is somewhat more restricted and formalized and may be chaired by the NIRB's Chairperson.

The Board will facilitate a Community Roundtable session in conjunction with the PHC and with representation from communities identified as potentially impacted by the proposed Project in order to provide further opportunity for meaningful participation in the Board's Review. Following the PHC, the Board will issue a PHC decision which will provide direction to the

Proponent for its preparation of a FEIS and which outlines the procedures for the review of the FEIS and the Final Hearing.

Summary of Next Steps

The next steps in the NIRB's Review of the Meliadine proposal can be summarized as follows:

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| September 24, 2013: | Commencement of the technical review period. Parties are asked to provide their technical review comments on a number of specific points, outlined above. |
| October 4, 2013: | NIRB to confirm dates for the Technical Meeting and the PHC. |
| November 22, 2013: | Submission of technical review comments to the NIRB by 12:00 pm MT . |
| November 27, 2013: | Circulation of <i>draft</i> agenda for the NIRB Technical Meeting. |
| November 29, 2013: | AEM to provide response to technical review comments. |
| December 3-5, 2013: | Technical Meeting in Rankin Inlet (<i>tentative</i>). The objective of the Technical Meeting would be to clarify and resolve technical issues in the DEIS. |
| December 10-12, 2013: | Community Roundtable and PHC in Rankin Inlet (<i>tentative</i>). |
| January 16, 2014: | NIRB to issue its PHC decision for the Meliadine Gold Project (<i>tentative</i>). |

Please refer to the enclosed process map and anticipated timeline for the NIRB's Review of the Meliadine Gold project for parties' information.

Deadline for submission of technical review comments

Once again, the Board requests that all interested parties submit their technical review comments directly to the NIRB at info@nirb.ca or by fax to (867) 983-2594 on or before **12:00 pm MT, November 22, 2013**.

If you have any questions or require further clarification related to the NIRB's Review process, please contact Kelli Gillard, Technical Advisor, at (867) 983-4619 or kgillard@nirb.ca.

Sincerely,



Sophia Granchinho
A/Director, Technical Services
Nunavut Impact Review Board

cc: Stéphane Robert, Agnico Eagles Mines Ltd.
Larry Connell, Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd.

Enclosure: NIRB's Review Process Map and Anticipated Timeline for the NIRB's Review of the Meliadine Gold Project (*September 24, 2013*)