



Stéphane Robert
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Re: The NIRB's Pre-Hearing Conference Decision for Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd.'s Meliadine Gold project proposal

From December 10 to 12, 2013 the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) held a Pre-Hearing Conference (PHC) in Rankin Inlet, Nunavut to hear discussion by parties and Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd. (AEM or the Proponent) on seven issues to be considered within the next steps of the NIRB's Review of the Meliadine Gold Project, including information to be included within the Proponent's submission of a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and further preparations for a Final Hearing.

1. Anticipated date for submission of the Final Environmental Impact Statement
2. Date, time and location of the Final Hearing
3. Timetable for the exchange of documents and information requests prior to the hearing
4. Formulation of issues for the hearing
5. Procedures to be followed in the hearing
6. Equipment, language, interpretation, translation and transcript requirements
7. Other matters that may aid in the simplification of the hearing

The Board has enclosed its *Pre-Hearing Conference Decision Concerning the Meliadine Project* (the PHC Decision), which outlines the Board's findings on each of the seven issues listed above and further, includes direction to the Proponent for information it is required to include within its future FEIS submission. The following are highlights from the enclosed PHC Decision:

The Final Hearing

The dates for the Final Hearing will be set following the successful conclusion of the NIRB's compliance review of AEM's FEIS submission against the requirements outlined in the enclosed PHC Decision. The venue for the Final Hearing will be the community of Rankin Inlet, Nunavut where technical presentations will be organized by specific technical topics, followed by a community roundtable session. The Board is committed to taking steps to ensure the attendance and participation of a broad range of representatives from potentially affected communities at both technical and community roundtable sessions.

Once accepted by the NIRB, the FEIS will be subject to a minimum 60 day technical review period. The NIRB may schedule another meeting of technical experts (i.e. a technical meeting) and/or pre-hearing conference if determined to be necessary. Following the technical review of the FEIS, the Board will formulate the issues for the Final Hearing.

The Final Hearing will proceed in accordance with the NIRB Rules of Procedure (September 3, 2009). The Board has decided to vary Rule 18.2 to require notice of a meeting of technical experts, should one be required, to the Proponent and project distribution list at least 30 days before the technical meeting. The Board has also decided to vary Rule 20.1(b) to require notice of another PHC, should one be scheduled, to the Proponent and project distribution list at least 30 days before the PHC.

Commitments from AEM, Additional Issues and Specific Direction

The Board believes that AEM will address the majority of the parties' outstanding concerns by complying with the specific direction and implied intention of the NIRB's EIS Guidelines and by fully satisfying its commitments as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 of the PHC Decision. In addition to the commitments put forward by AEM, the Board has provided specific direction to the Proponent for its preparation of an FEIS submission, summarized as follows:

- Provide updates to the baseline data and analysis presented for Meliadine Lake and for terrestrial species;
- Include updated information on relevant regulatory items and authorizations;
- Provide monitoring and mitigation plans, including specifically a Dust Monitoring and Mitigation Plan, Roads Management Plan, and Wildlife Mitigation and Monitoring Plan;
- Provide visual aids to facilitate an understanding of the scale of the proposed project;
- Address increased marine traffic associated with the Project;
- Updates to cumulative effects assessment as it relates to other projects in the region, includes consideration of caribou herds, and impacts from marine shipping;
- Include more discussion of impacts to Rankin Inlet and other Kivalliq communities;

- Provide updated labour force analysis to address employment targets and levels of people available in the Kivalliq region and Nunavut; and
- Provide non-confidential information regarding the draft IIBA.

AEM is expected to address each of these specific issues within the FEIS and is further encouraged to respond directly to all of the issues that have arisen over the course of the Technical Meeting and the PHC. Additionally, the Board reiterates the need for the Proponent to ensure that all information and assessment details provided within the FEIS meet the requirements as set out in the EIS Guidelines issued by the NIRB on February 20, 2012.

Within the enclosed PHC Decision the Board has also recommended that AEM hold community information sessions in all potentially affected communities once the FEIS has been submitted and prior to the Final Hearing to address the questions raised during the Community Roundtable sessions of the PHC, provide an overview of how the key conclusions in the FEIS were reached, and also directly address how Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit values were incorporated into various aspects of the FEIS. The Board also encouraged all government agencies to provide community members (including those with limited or no internet access) with greater and easier access to such information using a variety of mechanisms (such as communication via radio, social media, conducting local visits, etc.) in an effort to ensure that all participants have access to the relevant information required to form a complete understanding of the Project, the FEIS, the conclusions contained in the FEIS and issues or concerns with the FEIS as may be raised by the submissions of other parties.

Further, on the basis of the request of community representatives and as established in Rule 27.1 of its Rules of Procedure, the Board has determined that scheduling a site visit to coincide with the Final Hearing would be beneficial. The NIRB will provide further details regarding the schedule and logistics for the visit once the timing of the Final Hearing has been confirmed by the Board, but in the interim, it confirms that when scheduling a site visit, community members and parties to the Review will have an opportunity to visit the same parts of the site as the Board and staff, and that the agenda, activities and views while at the site are all agreed to in advance with the Proponent, parties and the Board.

The Board asks that, within 30 days of receipt of the enclosed PHC Decision, AEM confirm its intended FEIS submission date to the NIRB. The NIRB thanks AEM and all parties for the cooperative and open dialogue to date which has allowed the NIRB's Review process to unfold in an efficient and effective manner. The Board looks forward to receiving AEM's FEIS submission and proceeding through the remaining steps of the Review process for the Meliadine Gold Project.

If you have any questions or require clarification regarding the enclosed PHC Decision or the NIRB's Review of the Meliadine Gold Project, please contact Kelli Gillard, Technical Advisor at (867) 983-4619 or via email at kgillard@nirb.ca.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ryan Barry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Ryan Barry
Executive Director
Nunavut Impact Review Board

cc: Larry Connell, Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd.
Meliadine Gold Distribution List

Enclosed: Nunavut Impact Review Board Pre-Hearing Conference Decision Concerning the Meliadine Gold Project (*January 16, 2014*)