



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Nunavut Impact Review Board Issues Final Hearing Report Following Review of Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd. Meliadine Gold Project**

CAMBRIDGE BAY, NU – October 10, 2014 – The Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or the Board) has completed its review of Agnico Eagle Mines Limited's Meliadine Gold Project (the Meliadine Gold Project or Project) and submitted its Final Hearing Report, including recommendations, to the federal Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada for his review and decision. After a thorough review of the potential ecosystemic and socio-economic impacts of the proposed Project, the Board has concluded that the Meliadine Gold Project may proceed, in accordance with the terms and conditions recommended in the NIRB's Final Hearing Report.

The Meliadine Gold Project involves the construction, operation and eventual closure and reclamation of five (5) open pit mines and one underground mine northwest of Rankin Inlet. The Project also involves the development of associated infrastructure including expansion of an existing 24 kilometre all-weather access road between Rankin Inlet and the mine site at Tiriganiaq, utilization of the existing Rankin Inlet airport for air transportation, use of a spud barge and development of a tank farm and laydown area at Itivia Bay for Project shipping and air transportation of gold south for final refinement and sale.

An assessment of the Project was initiated by the NIRB following release of a positive conformity determination by the Nunavut Planning Commission on June 8, 2011. Since that time, the Project has progressed through the NIRB's Screening and Review processes under Article 12 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA), with numerous community visits, technical meetings and opportunities for the public and interested parties to participate and provide their input to the Board, leading to a Final Hearing in Rankin Inlet on August 21-27, 2014.

The Board heard from Elders, youth and other representatives from the affected Kivalliq communities that there is optimism that the Project will bring employment opportunities and leave a positive legacy if developed correctly. The Board also heard that the Project must be developed in a way that balances these economic opportunities with environmental protection and preserving the cultural and overall wellbeing of community residents, Nunavummiut and Canadians in general.

In completing the Board's review of the Project, the NIRB considered the information contained within the Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statements filed by Agnico Eagle Mines Limited, as well as the substantial written comments, information requests and final written submissions filed by federal, territorial and local governments, designated Inuit organizations and members of the public throughout the course of the Review. The NIRB also carefully considered comments, evidence and advice from community representatives, members of the public and formal intervenors throughout the Review, including hearing from over 75 people who appeared on the record during the NIRB's Final Hearing.

The Final Hearing Report, which includes an executive summary, is available from the NIRB public registry at the following location:

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

A translated version of the Report will be prepared in Inuktitut and will be posted on the online public registry as soon as it becomes available.

Reflecting the Board's primary objectives under the NLCA of protecting and promoting the current and future well-being of all Nunavummiut and Canadians, and protecting the ecosystemic integrity of the Nunavut Settlement Area, key recommendations in the Report include the following:

- Requiring Agnico Eagle Mines Limited to conduct further analysis supporting the design phase, consideration of environmental effects and a monitoring program to ensure that facilities managing mine tailings and waste rock remain stable and do not result in contamination of nearby water bodies;
- Requiring Agnico Eagle Mines Limited to develop and implement monitoring and mitigation strategies that reflect the precautionary approach and adaptive management principles to monitor and limit potential for effects, including cumulative effects, on caribou and marine mammals;
- Requiring that working groups with membership including Agnico Eagle Mines Limited, the Kivalliq Inuit Association, participants from local communities and government representatives be established to address issues in relation to terrestrial wildlife, including caribou, and the aquatic environment, including fish and fish habitat;
- Requiring that Agnico Eagle Mines Limited, in consultation with local and government representatives, develop and communicate "rules of the road" to ensure the safe use of the expanded all-weather access road by mine and public traffic; and

- Proposing that a Project-specific Socio-economic Monitoring Program be developed, supported by a working group of key participants including Agnico Eagle Mines Limited, the Kivalliq Inuit Association, the Kivalliq communities affected by the Project, and relevant government departments, and recognizing that the information from this program may be an important contribution to existing regional and territorial socio-economic monitoring programs.

During the Board's assessment of the Project, the Board benefitted enormously from all those participants who shared their experiences, knowledge and Inuit Qaujimaningit with the Board. The NIRB is grateful to all who contributed over the last three and a half years to the Board's Review, and the Final Hearing Report and associated recommendations reflect these vital contributions to our process. However, the Board notes that participants throughout this Review identified that strains on the capacity of local participants, including the Hamlet, the Hunters and Trappers Organizations and community representatives, as well as regulatory agencies, limited their ability to participate fully in the NIRB's review and may limit their future contributions to on-going monitoring. Recognizing the critical on-going role these participants have to play in support of the effective implementation and monitoring of many of the Board's recommended terms and conditions, the NIRB urges those responsible for supporting this capacity to address these capacity challenges throughout the life cycle of the Meliadine Gold Project.

If the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada accepts the NIRB's report and agrees with the Board's conclusion that the Meliadine Gold Project can proceed, the NIRB looks forward to continuing to work with all parties to establish a monitoring program for the life of the Meliadine Gold Project that will provide oversight and ensure the Project complies with the specific terms and conditions of the Board's Project Certificate.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Copland  
Chairperson  
Nunavut Impact Review Board

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