

September 19, 2025

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Re: Follow-up Report Spill #2025-343 – Release of unknown amount of sediment at the Meliadine Gold Project

On August 21st, 2025, the Nunavut Spill Line was notified by Agnico Eagle personnel via email (spills@gov.nt.ca) of a release of an unknown amount of sediment into Melvin Bay at the Meliadine Gold Project site (spill location coordinates: 62°47'54.90"N, 92° 6'14.33"W). This follow-up report provides supplemental information based on the results of the incident assessment and is being provided in accordance with:

- Nunavut Water Board 2AM-MEL1631 Water Licence (the Licence), Part H, Item 8c.
- *Fisheries Act* Subsection 36 (3).

Description of Incident

On August 20th, 2025, at approximately 2:30 PM, during the horizontal directional drilling (HDD) at Itivia Harbour a sediment plume was observed in Melvin Bay (Figure 1). As the drill penetrated the seabed, it exited the bedrock into an area of seabed debris. The compressed air used to stabilize the borehole escaped into the surrounding water, disturbing the fine sediments on the seabed. The release of energy caused particulates to become suspended in the water column, creating a plume that spread outward from the drilling site.



Figure 1: Location of the spill in Melvin Bay.

Response and Remediation

When the subcontractor ForAction discovered the sediment release during the HDD operation, the drilling was immediately stopped. Upon the Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP) and the Environment Department guidance, the operation was shut down until sediment control measures could be installed at the work site. Representatives of CIRNAC and DFO were reached by telephone and notified of the spill. Turbidity curtains were installed around the source of the sediment release and along the planned path of the underwater HDD. With the turbidity curtains in place, ForAction resumed drilling. During subsequent HDD operation, the QEP took turbidity measurements inside and outside the turbidity curtain to confirm the success of the mitigation measures (Table 1).

Table 1. Mean turbidity readings following the release of sediments

Date	Time*	Prior to Installation of Turbidity Curtain	Inside Turbidity Curtain	Outside Turbidity Curtain	Reference Location	Comments
8/21/2025	11:30	6.9				The day after the sediment release
8/21/2025	14:30	4.6				The day after the sediment release
8/23/2025	10:30		1000+	48.3		Drilling was halted
8/23/2025	14:00		1000+	18	5.4	Active drilling
8/24/2025	8:35		306.3	147.7		Drilling was halted
8/24/2025	10:50		56.5	10		Drilling resumed
8/24/2025	12:30			32.5		Active drilling
8/24/2025	14:55		465.7	22.7		Drilling was halted
8/25/2025	7:45		8.4		3.8	No drilling
8/26/2025	8:35		3.3	2.7		No drilling
8/27/2025						No drilling
8/28/2025						No drilling
8/29/2025						No drilling
8/30/2025						No drilling, new turbidity curtain installed
8/31/2025						No drilling
9/1/2025						No drilling
9/2/2025	Mean of 21 samples		1000+	3.3	1.6	Drilling resumed
9/3/2025	Mean of 12 samples			3.9		Drilling completed, very windy

* Times are first recorded turbidity reading of the series. In general, readings in a series were completed withing 10 minutes of the first reading in the series.

The comparison of the turbidity data collected inside and outside of the turbidity curtain indicated that containment of the sediments by the sediment control measures was unsatisfactory. Attempts were made to adjust the turbidity curtain with similar results. The HDD operation was shut down on August 26. A heavier turbidity curtain was purchased and installed on August 30. The drill crew was mobilized back to the site and drilling resumed on September 2. Drilling was completed on September 3 without incident.

Root Cause and Corrective Measures

An assessment was conducted soon after the incident to determine the root cause and contributing factors. The assessment concluded with the following:






- Drilling was expected to be through solid bedrock with all material anticipated to remain within the drilled hole and associated HDD pad.
- The HDD drill unexpectedly exited the bedrock and entered an area of unconsolidated seabed debris.

The following corrective and preventative actions have been implemented to address the root cause and to reduce the likelihood of recurrence:

- As an immediate corrective measure, drilling was stopped.
- Turbidity curtains were installed around the source of the sediment release and along the planned HDD path to contain suspended sediments.
- Prior to any future underwater HDD work, silt curtains or booms will be deployed around the work area before drilling begins.

Should you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.



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Appendix A – Photos



Photo 1: Location of sediment release in Melvin Bay.



Photo 2: Turbidity curtains installed before resuming the drilling operation.