

Welcoming Remarks

Good morning:

Chairperson of the Nunavut Impact Review Board and staff
Nunavut Water Board Executive Director and staff
Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
Kivalliq Inuit Association
Government of Nunavut
Environment and Climate Change Canada
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada
Natural Resources Canada, Transport Canada
Distinguished guests
Delegates
Speakers
And fellow Baker Lakemiut.

My name is Charlie Tautuaqjuk, Deputy Mayor of Baker Lake.
We are here today for the final pre-hearing conference of the Whale Tail Pit Project.

To make this hearing productive and relevant, it is our hope that the delegates will engage in open and honest debate. I ask that the delegates and residents be open to all discussions that will be shared. Let's all keep in mind that Baker Lake has gone through significant changes from the start of the construction phase all the way to the production phase of the Meadowbank Mine. The people of Baker Lake can attest to the changes.

Agnico Eagle Mining Ltd has been in partnership with the Hamlet of Baker Lake by supporting select community initiative funds. For example - investments that totaled \$144,000.00 in 2016. From 2007 to 2016, over 500 million dollars has been spent with Baker Lake businesses alone. Since the start, AEM has hired over 300 Inuit, half of which are Baker Lake residents. It should be noted, that none of this would have been achieved, without the consent and approval from the residents of Baker Lake.

We would like to share with you a fact that this mining company has yet to build a long lasting legacy here in Baker Lake. Agnico Eagle has been in our back yard since its ownership in Meadowbank in 2007, when it acquired Cumberland Resources. First gold pour was in February 2010. Anticipation is growing stronger and stronger – year by year by year. And it is our hope that a long standing and well established legacy from this company will be provided to this hamlet in the very near future.

Baker Lake has benefited little in ways of infrastructure – infrastructure that affect our everyday life - areas such as airport terminal, daycare space, arena and community hall building, utilidor, the sewage and landfill sites. There is a shortage in infrastructure assistance that is of necessity in our everyday life.

The dust created from the port to the all-weather road to Meadowbank and within our community, creates great health concerns not only for our elders and people with respiratory illnesses but for the entire community – residents, the environment, traditional grounds, drinking water, fish habitat. Dust control is a very real issue here and it is our hope that the dust control projects and research continue to benefit everyone and this should be on the top of their priority.

The impacts on caribou herd ranges throughout Kivalliq and the calving grounds around Baker Lake are of concern and must be monitored and protected. The harvesting of caribou is strongly linked to our identity, it is the cultural and social and economic well-being of our residents, as well as the surrounding communities. Any human disturbance may have cumulative implications. Efforts to monitor and report these impacts are vital to the protection of the caribou and other wildlife. Sustainable development comes to mind when we talk about protection of wildlife and environment, which could include crop rotation, sustainable construction practices, solar energy, wind energy and efficient water fixtures. The common element among sustainable development practices is that they don't deplete the resources in use.

With the planning of the construction to production phases of the Amaruq Project, increased traffic will also come. We need to ensure that we are prepared for any potential dangers. We do not want to be and cannot be in a same situation where a spill has a negative impact of the land, waters and our people. Although in comparison the mine may be smaller in scale but the land mass, wildlife and traditional hunting grounds is of a much larger scale with such a spill in Argentina.

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Over a million litres of a cyanide solution leaked from the Veladero gold mine in Argentina's western San Juan province into nearby rivers in the Jáchal basin, following a pipe valve failure on 12 September 2015. This is a real example that a comprehensive downstream water monitoring program is required. As an only inland community in Nunavut, we heavily rely on our drinking water for our use as well as all animals within our region. With this in mind, Baker Lake should be included on training should an unlikely event of a spill occur on our lakes and environment and not limited to cyanide training and protective equipment. We as a community has to be included on emergency preparedness as our people can definitely benefit from this from either a personal or a business perspective.

The discussion today of the whale tail project will continue to have an impact on the very community that has supported the mining company from the very beginning - impacts of beneficial value and impacts of concern.

As a representative of this Hamlet, I would encourage the attention on employment continue, not only for all Baker Lake-miut, but most especially for the Inuit of Baker Lake.

We seek your resolution and protection for the residents and the environment. This Hamlet will continue to strive for a successful future in development while requesting respect and consideration for the residents of and the land of Baker Lake.

On behalf of the Hamlet of Baker Lake, I welcome you today.
May we all have purpose, respect and a productive gathering.

Thank you.
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