



NEWS RELEASE

NIRB File No. 16MN056

Nunavut Impact Review Board issues Final Hearing Report following Review of Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd.'s "Whale Tail Pit" Project Proposal

CAMBRIDGE BAY, NU – November 6, 2017: The Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or the Board) has completed its assessment of Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd.'s Whale Tail Pit Project Proposal and has submitted its Final Hearing Report, including recommendations, to the federal Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs for her review and decision.

After due consideration of all information provided to the NIRB in respect of the Project, and in accordance with the objectives and requirements of the *Nunavut Agreement* and the *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act*, the NIRB has determined that with appropriate mitigation, management and monitoring measures (as set out in detail in the Final Hearing Report), the Project can be conducted in a manner that protects and promotes the existing and future well-being of the residents and communities of the Nunavut Settlement Area while also adequately protecting the ecosystemic integrity of the Nunavut Settlement Area. On this basis, it is the NIRB's recommendation that the Project should now be allowed to proceed to the regulatory stage.

The proposed Whale Tail Pit Project (the Project) is located at the Amaruq property, approximately 150 kilometres (km) north of the Hamlet of Baker Lake and approximately 50 km northwest of the Meadowbank Gold Mine project, within the Kivalliq region of Nunavut. Along with additional infrastructure specific to the development and operation of the Whale Tail Pit, the proposed project would also utilize existing infrastructure associated with the Meadowbank Gold Mine. The proponent for the Whale Tail Pit Project is Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd.

During the Community Roundtable Sessions at both the Pre-Hearing Conference and at the Final Hearing the NIRB heard that many Kivalliq residents, and especially the Elders, feel the Project, as with all mining projects in the area, requires communities to choose between the training, educational and economic opportunities associated with a new mine on one hand versus potentially damaging impacts on caribou and other wildlife, fish, freshwater and the marine environment on the other hand. Consequently, several Elders stated that while they supported the Project because it represents economic opportunities for the youth in their communities, they also felt they were sacrificing their want for the land to remain undisturbed and had deep concern that the impacts on caribou could result in lasting damage to already threatened populations. Both the youth and Elders spoke to the Board about the importance of caribou to all Inuit in the Kivalliq Region and noted that adverse impacts on caribou could have devastating consequences for the individuals and communities who continue to rely on caribou as they have for generations.

Recognizing the critical importance of caribou to all Inuit in the Region, the Board has recommended that the Project only be allowed to proceed to the regulatory stage if governed by very protective terms

and conditions. In total, 64 terms and conditions have been recommended for the Project which put into practice a high standard of the precautionary principle and emphasize that where data gaps exist, monitoring and potential mitigation and management plans must be adaptive, based on the best available data and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, and must be continuously improved.

Throughout the review the Board was encouraged by Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd.'s willingness to collaborate and make commitments to ensure the potential for project-induced effects is minimized. However, the Board highlights to all parties that the ultimate success of monitoring, mitigation and management measures remains dependent on everyone's continued commitment to finding a better path forward that ensures that mines are only developed when care for the wildlife, air, land and water is built into every stage of project development. The Board expects the proponent and all relevant regulators to take measures to ensure the Kivalliq communities have better access to Project-related information and follow up as this Project progresses.

The Final Hearing Report and the complete record of reviewer comments, extensive written submissions and evidence presented at the Final Hearing in respect of the Board's review are available online from the Board's public registry at www.nirb.ca by using any of the following search criteria:

- Project Name: Whale Tail Pit Project
- NIRB File No.: 16MN056
- Application No.: 124683

The NIRB is very grateful to all who actively participated in this assessment, and who worked in a collaborative and productive manner during the review process. Specifically, the Board thanks Agnico Eagle Mines Ltd., various federal, territorial, and local government representatives, the Kivalliq Inuit Association, Elders, community representatives, and members of the public who gave of their time, shared their experiences and expertise, and supported the Board's efforts to complete a thorough and timely assessment of the proposed project in coordination with the Nunavut Water Board.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Copland
Chairperson
Nunavut Impact Review Board

For more information, the media may contact:

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