



Water Resources Division  
Resource Management Directorate  
Nunavut Regional Office  
P.O. Box 100  
Iqaluit, NU, X0A 0H0

Your file - Votre référence  
2AM-MEA1530 & 2AM-WTP1830  
Our file - Notre référence  
GCDocs#101820721

March 22, 2022

Richard Dwyer  
Manager of Licensing  
Nunavut Water Board  
P.O. Box 119  
Gjoa Haven, NU, X0B 1J0  
E-mail: licensing@nwb-oen.ca

**Re: Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada's (CIRNAC) Reply to Agnico Eagle Mines' (AEM's) Response on Meadowbank and Whale Tail Projects Core Receiving Environment Monitoring Program (CREMP) 2021 Plan Update for water licences 2AM-MEA1530 and 2AM-WTP1830**

Dear Mr. Dwyer,

Thank you for your March 15 2022, invitation to reply to Agnico Eagle Mines' (AEM's) response to CIRNAC's comments on the Meadowbank and Whale Tail Projects Core Receiving Environment Monitoring Program (CREMP) 2021 Plan Update for water licences 2AM-MEA1530 and 2AM-WTP1830.

On page 5 of AEM's response document, AEM maintains that *"The CREMP is an adaptive program. The 2005 AEMP (pre-cursor to the CREMP Plan) stated explicitly that monitoring results would be used to make informed decisions about how to improve the program without compromising early detection of changes in the environment"*.

From a regulatory standpoint, the NWB Water Licence 2AM-MEA1530 defines an Adaptive Management as:

*"a management approach that describes a way of managing risks associated with uncertainty and provides a flexible framework for mitigation, monitoring and management measures to be implemented and actions to be taken when specified thresholds are exceeded"*

Based on the Water Licence definition of Adaptive Management, CIRNAC notes that AEM's understanding of the term "Adaptive Management" is in contrast with the NWB Water Licence definition when AEM maintains that the reason(s) they want to stop winter water quality monitoring at TPN, TPE, and WAL under the CREMP is that dissolved



oxygen (DO) in TPN, TPE, and WAL in the post-discharge phase (closure) is like baseline and reference conditions.

Under CREMP, CIRNAC interprets adaptive management to mean “*monitoring and management measures to be implemented and actions to be taken when specified thresholds are exceeded*” as per the definition in the NWB Water Licence 2AM-MEA1530.

As confirmed by AEM, the Limnological data from TPN, TPE and WAL under CREMP has not exceeded specified thresholds during winter and therefore are not subject, (according to the NWB Water Licence definition); to any modifications in their monitoring plans under adaptive management measures.

CIRNAC sees continuous winter water quality monitoring at TPN, TPE, and WAL under the CREMP as one of the methods that would reveal when specified thresholds are exceeded while AEM continues mining activities within the vicinity of the Meadowbank and Whale Tail project footprints.

CIRNAC stands by its initial recommendations:

**Recommendation 1:** CIRNAC recommends that AEM continue Winter water sampling (and Limnology profiling) at Third Portage Lake North Basin (TPN) and East Basin (TPE) and Wally Lake (WAL) as long as mining activities continue to take place within the vicinity of Meadowbank and Whale Tail project footprints.

**Recommendation 2:** CIRNAC recommends that the benthic invertebrates monitoring frequency for all sampling stations at Meadowbank (i.e., SP, TPE, TPN and WAL) be uniformly performed annually as long as mining activities continue to take place within the Meadowbank and Whale Tail project's footprints; (i.e. irrespective of whether or not there had been a halt to direct discharge operations into the monitoring stations).

CIRNAC understands that the decision on whether to grant AEM's request rests solely with the Nunavut Water Board (NWB).

CIRNAC appreciates the opportunity to participate in this review. If there are any questions, please contact John Onita at [john.onita@rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca](mailto:john.onita@rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca); or (867) 975-3876 or Andrew Keim at (867) 975-4550 or [andrew.keim@rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca](mailto:andrew.keim@rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca)

Sincerely;

John Onita  
Regional Water Coordinator