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NUNAVUT WATER BOARD  
NUNAVUT IMALIRIYIN KATIMAYINGI  
OFFICE DES EAUX DU NUNAVUT

**File: 2AM-WTP1826/TR/B15 and I5**

November 9, 2018

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**Subject: Mercury Monitoring Plan for Whale Tail South Area;  
Type “A” Water Licence 2AM-WTP1826, Whale Tail Pit Project, Agnico Eagle  
Mines Limited**

Dear Ms. Turmel and Mr. Quesnel:

On July 13, 2018, the Nunavut Water Board (“NWB”) received from Agnico Eagle Mines Limited (Agnico Eagle or Licensee) the CREMP Addendum – Mercury Monitoring Plan for Whale Tail South Area (MMP or Plan) for Board approval as required under Part B, Item 15 and Part I, Item 5 of the Water Licence 2AM-WTP1826 (Licence) that was approved by the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC or former INAC) on July 11, 2018.

The diversion of Whale Tail Lake during construction and operation of Whale Tail Pit will cause flooding of Whale Tail Lake south basin sub-watershed lakes, potentially resulting in increased concentrations of mercury in water and biota, largely due to the decomposition of newly flooded vegetation. Agnico Eagle indicates that the *objectives of this plan are to describe supplemental sampling methods that will be implemented as part of the Core Receiving Environment Monitoring Program (CREMP) to track concentrations of mercury in the aquatic environment, and identify how these results will be interpreted.*

The Plan was distributed for a thirty (30) day public review and comments on July 13, 2018, with a deadline set at August 13, 2018. On August 13, 2018, comments were received from Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC).

In its comments, ECCC raised a few questions and made recommendations regarding:

1. Mid-field locations be added to the Mercury Monitoring Plan in order to allow for the collection of additional monitoring data, in the event that near-field monitoring results exceed predictions and/or near-field levels increase more rapidly than anticipated.
2. Clarifications provided if and how any small-bodied fishes will be sampled and analyzed under this plan.

3. Ensuring that supporting water quality data is collected concurrently with mercury monitoring, in order to support the interpretation of mercury monitoring results.
4. Using sediment core sampling as it would be better suited to the purpose of the Mercury Monitoring Plan.
5. Rationale to be provided for collecting surface water grabs only rather than at a 3 m depth using a pump and tubing, which is the protocol for regular CREMP samples.

On August 15, 2018, the Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC or former INAC) indicated that they do not have concerns with the Plan.

On October 17, 2018, Agnico Eagle provided its responses to ECCC comments, stating also that *Agnico Eagle will review the 2018 Hg monitoring results with our consultants and academic partner at University of Waterloo (UofW) and consider this recommendation for future sampling of water.* On October 24, 2018, ECCC indicated that ECCC is satisfied with the responses provided by Agnico Eagle to recommendations #2 and 3. ECCC also acknowledged that *AEM has indicated that recommendations #1, 4 and 5 will be considered following review of the monitoring plan, the 2018 monitoring results, and discussions with consultants and partners,* and recommended that Agnico Eagle provide full responses to recommendations #1, 4 and 5 in the 2018 annual report.

The Board finds that the MMP is generally functional at this stage, and by copy of this letter has approved the Mercury Monitoring Plan through the Board Motion No. 2018-A1-020, dated November 09, 2018, as required by Part B, Item 15 and Part I, Item 5 of Licence. However, the Licensee is requested to submit an updated Plan for Board review within the 2018 Annual Report to take into account the 2018 monitoring results and ECCC recommendations.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact the undersigned at (867) 360-6338 (ext. 35) or [karen.kharatyan@nwb-oen.ca](mailto:karen.kharatyan@nwb-oen.ca).

Regards,

Karén Kharatyan  
Director of Technical Services

cc: Distribution List – Whale Tail Pit