



Water Resources Division  
Resource Management Directorate  
Nunavut Regional Office  
918 Nunavut Drive  
Iqaluit, NU, X0A 3H0

Your file - Votre référence  
2AM-WTP1830  
Our file - Notre référence  
GCDocs# 135298657

January 28<sup>th</sup> , 2026

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

**Re: Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada's Review of the Whale Tail ARD-ML Sampling plan Update – Version 8 for Whale Tail Mine, Type A Water Licence No. 2AM-WTP1830**

Dear Richard Dwyer,

Thank you for the 19 December 2025 invitation to review the ARD-ML Sampling plan Update – Version 8 application, submitted by Agnico Eagle Mines, for Type A Water Licence No. 2AM-WTP1830.

Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) examined the application pursuant to its mandated responsibilities under the *Nunavut Waters and Nunavut Surface Rights Tribunal Act* and the *Department of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Act*. Please find CIRNAC comments and recommendations in the attached Technical Memorandum.

The applicant shall provide confirmation from the Nunavut Water Board that all outstanding water license fees have been paid in full prior to approval of this application.

If there are any questions or concerns, please contact William Quere at [william.quere@rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca](mailto:william.quere@rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca) Or Andrew Keim at (867) 975-4550 or [Andrew.keim@rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca](mailto:Andrew.keim@rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca)

Sincerely,

William Quere, BSc  
Municipal Coordinator



## Technical Review Memorandum

**Date:** 28 January 2026

**To:** Richard Dwyer – Manager of Licensing, Nunavut Water Board

**From:** William Quere – Municipal Coordinator, CIRNAC

**Subject:** **Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada's Review of the Whale Tail ARD-ML Sampling plan Update – Version 8 for Whale Tail Mine, Type A Water Licence No. 2AM-WTP1830**

**Region:**  Kitikmeot  Kivalliq  Qikiqtani

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### **A. BACKGROUND**

In 2016, Agnico Eagle proposed to develop the Whale Tail Pit Project to continue mine operations and milling at the Meadowbank mine. Agnico Eagle initially requested that the Whale Tail Pit Project be regulated as an amendment to the Meadowbank Gold Mine Project. However, the Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) determined that the proposed Whale Tail Pit Project proposal had not been assessed as part of the original Meadowbank Gold Mine Project and, due to its location outside of the original Meadowbank Gold Mine Project footprint, it would require a separate screening assessment. Upon completing the screening assessment, the NIRB determined that the Whale Tail Pit Project required further assessment, best facilitated through a full environmental review. The environmental review concluded on March 15, 2018, with Project Certificate No. 008 issuance.

Additional infrastructure to support the Whale Tail Pit Project was built at the Amaruq site (truck shop/warehouse, fuel storage and an additional camp facility), and the Amaruq satellite deposit was mined as an open pit with commercial production beginning in September 2019. Amaruq ore is transported using long-haul off-road type trucks to the mill at the Meadowbank site for processing. All tailings generated from Amaruq ore are also deposited at the Meadowbank site.

The Amaruq Phase 2 expansion started in October 2018 with an application to the Nunavut Planning Commission (NPC). Following public hearings on the proposed expansion in August 2019, the NIRB concluded that the proposed Whale Tail Pit Project amendment could proceed to the Type A Water License amendment phase with the Nunavut Water Board (NWB). The Minister of Northern Affairs approved the amended Project Certificate Report from the NIRB on January 20, 2020, completing the NIRB process. NIRB issued the Project Certificate 008 amendment No. 1 on February 19, 2020 to reflect significant modifications to the Whale Tail Pit Project as proposed in the Whale Tail Pit Expansion Project (i.e., revisions to Terms and Conditions #1, 27, 28, 30, 46 and 51; new Terms and Conditions #65 to 68).



As existing gold processing and accommodations infrastructure at the Meadowbank Gold Mine site are required to support mining operations at the Whale Tail Pit, NIRB identified existing terms and conditions in the amended Project Certificate No. 004 that will continue to apply to the Whale Tail Pit project infrastructure associated with the Meadowbank Gold Mine site, even after the closure and reclamation of the developed pits at the Meadowbank Gold Mine site. The NWB Water License amendment process for the Whale Tail Pit Expansion Project was completed on May 12, 2020, and the Water License Amendment No. 2AM-WTP1830 was issued. Commercial production under the Whale Tail Pit Expansion Project was achieved on 31 December 2020.

In 2021, Agnico Eagle proposed a modification to the Whale Tail Pit Project, specifically, the IVR Pushback and Whale Tail Pushback. On April 20, 2021, the NPC determined that the proposed Modification was exempt from screening by the NIRB, as the Whale Tail and IVR Pushbacks did not change the general scope or previously amended activities. The NWB approved the Whale Tail and IVR Pushbacks modification on August 3, 2021, indicating the proposed modification is consistent with the scope of activities considered under Type A Water Licence 2AM-WTP1830.

On April 04, 2024, a proposal was submitted to the NPC for a Modification requesting a pushback of the IVR Pit, continuation of the Whale Tail underground, and expansion of the approved Whale Tail Ore Stockpile No. 3 (collectively referred to as the 2024 Modification). The NPC concluded on April 19, 2024, that the proposed changes were exempt from NIRB screening, and the NWB approved the Modification on August 06, 2024.

In December 2025, Agnico Eagle submitted an ARD-ML Sampling plan Update for the Whale Tail Mine. This modification includes the changing of sampling frequencies in the Whale Tail and the IVR 2 pits. The goal of the change is to lessen sampling in well defined areas.



**Table 1: Summary of Recommendations**

Recommendation Number	Subject
R-01	Sampling frequency in Whale Tail Pit south.

## **B. DOCUMENTS REVIEWED AND REFERENCED**

The following table (Table 2) provides a list of the documents reviewed under the submission and reference during the review.

**Table 2: Documents Reviewed and Referenced**

Document Title	Author, File No., Rev., Date
Operational ARD-ML Sampling and Testing Plan – Whale Tail Mine	Agnico Eagle DECEMBER 2025 VERSION 8.0
5-E: Addendum Evaluation of the Geochemical Properties of Waste Rock, Ore, Tailings, Overburden, and Sediment	Golder Associates Ltd, November 2018
200327 2AM-WTP1830 Amended Licence-OAKE	NUNAVUT WATER BOARD AMENDED WATER LICENCE NO: 2AM- WTP1830, MAY 29, 2018
Operational ARD-ML Sampling and Testing Plan – Whale Tail Mine	Agnico Eagle February 2023 Version 7.1



## C. RESULTS OF REVIEW

### 1. Sampling frequency in Whale Tail Pit south.

#### **Comment:**

In 3.1, the proponent states:

“• The central and northern parts (north domain) of the Whale Tail Pit systematically return values either with an NPR below 1 or an Arsenic content above 75 ppm. The rock is classified as PAG/ML.

The southern part (south domain) of the Whale Tail Pit is returning NPAG with a few standalone occurrences of PAG/ML material.

• Assay results show NPAG/PAG boundary is consistently controlled by the presence of a lithological contact separating these two domains.

Based on the above observations, the Geology Superintendent recommends:

• Decreasing the 1/4 sampling ratio south of the lithological contact (the only area of the Pit with potential for NPAG/NML material) to a ratio of 1/8”.

The concern is that it is unclear how the PAG/ML material will be located in full and separated with equal precision given a lower sampling frequency. In Appendix C, Figure 15 seems to show the PAG/ML areas of the south domain much less defined by sampling.

#### **Recommendation:**

(R-01) CIRNAC recommends that the proponent provide their plan or process that will be followed during mining operations that will ensure the material in the south domain of Whale Tail Pit will remain defined and segregated with less sampling.