



## BAKER LAKE HUNTERS AND TRAPPERS ORGANIZATION

### **REVISED FINAL HEAR PRESENTATION FOR 'WHALE TAIL PIT' PROPOSAL**

The Baker Lake Hunters and Trappers Organization (BLHTO) supports the Whale Tail project.

We believe the project will have net benefits for our community and region. In particular, we believe that the employment opportunities the project will provide to our community will be a substantial benefit. We also believe that, with the right environmental controls, negative impacts can be kept to acceptable levels.

That said, the BLHTO has several outstanding issues with the Whale Tail project. These include:

- 1) The need for an independent dust monitoring study, based on Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit
- 2) Need for independent wildlife monitoring
- 3) Need for community participation in monitoring/mitigation decisions
- 4) Need to remodel Meadowbank and Amaruq roads
- 5) Need for stronger caribou protection measures
- 6) The need for government to address barriers to employment



## **Dust monitoring study**

The dust from the Meadowbank road has upset many hunters and elders in our community. Baker Lake residents have repeatedly complained about dust levels at meetings held by the Baker Lake HTO, the NIRB, Agnico-Eagle, and other parties.

In written comments, the BLHTO suggested AEM provide funding for an independent dust-fall monitoring study, which emphasises Baker Lake resident's perspectives on dust. Further, the BLHTO suggests that the results of this study be used to determine whether or not dust suppressant is required.

In its response, AEM agreed with our suggestion to hire an independent consultant to assess the impacts of road dust. However, AEM did not explicitly agree that the study should focus on Baker Lake residents' perspectives on dust.

The BLHTO reiterates that this study should be focused on Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit, with emphasis on Baker Lake residents' perspectives on dust.

The BLHTO proposes the following term/condition for the Whale Tail project certificate:

*AEM shall contract a researcher to conduct an independent dust monitoring study. The focus of the study will be the Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit of dust, with an emphasis on people's perspectives of dust issues. The researcher and study design must be agreed upon by both the Baker Lake HTO and Agnico Eagle.*



### **Independent wildlife monitoring**

The BLHTO is concerned that most project monitoring is being carried out by Agnico-Eagle employees.

In written comments, the BLHTO suggested AEM provide funding to the HTO to hire independent wildlife monitors, that are not directly employed by AEM. In its response, AEM agreed to hire an HTO representative to assist with road monitoring during migration seasons.

The BLHTO proposes the following term/condition for the Whale Tail project certificate:

*AEM shall provide the Baker lake HTO with funding for one additional staff person, to aid in the monitoring work for Whale Tail and other projects in the area. AEM and the Baker Lake HTO shall negotiate a funding agreement.*

### **Community participation in mitigation decisions**

The BLHTO also believes that the community of Baker Lake needs to have a greater say in whether or not mitigation measures (dust suppressant, road shut-downs, etc.) are required. These vital decisions cannot be left in the hands of mining company employees.

In written comments, the BLHTO suggested creating a monitoring committee that includes representatives from local councils and organizations (i.e. Hamlet Council and HTO) to oversee monitoring and make decisions about mitigation.

In its response, AEM suggested that its Terrestrial Advisory Group already fills this role.

The BLHTO is uncertain that AEM's Terrestrial Advisory Group meets our needs, because it is only an advisory body. The final decisions still remain with AEM. As such, the BLHTO recommends the TAG be given greater powers to direct AEM's monitoring and mitigation.

The BLHTO proposes the following term/condition for the Whale Tail project certificate:

*AEM shall revise the Terrestrial Ecosystem Management Plan based on the advice of the Terrestrial Advisory Group. For greater clarity, AEM will comply with the recommendations provided by the majority of Terrestrial Advisory Group representatives.*







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seem to imply that addressing barriers to employment is solely the responsibility of the mining industry and (through IIBAs) Inuit organizations.

This is an oversight. Both the Government of Nunavut and Government of Canada have an important role to play in addressing barriers to employment, by providing adequate social services to facilitate people's participation in the workforce.

A lack of necessary government services – especially mental health & healing services – might be a substantial barrier to employment for some Kivalliq Inuit at this time.

The Government of Nunavut, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, and many other groups have recognized that social trauma is the root of many of the challenges that Nunavut faces today, including high suicide rates, poor educational attainment, addictions, and conflicts with the criminal justice system (Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, 2014; Government of Nunavut *et al*, 2010; Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, 2016). There has been a recognition, especially by the Nunavut Court of Justice, that there is currently a lack of necessary healing and mental health services to address this legacy of trauma (*R v O.P.*, NUCJ, 2012: para. 20-21; *R v Kinak*, NUCJ, 2011, Transcript at 61, lines 9-14).

The BLHTO recommends the NIRB report include recommendations to federal and territorial governments to increase funding for healing initiatives, mental health services, and other social services, to help address barriers to employment at the Whale Tail project.

