



NIRB File No.: 11MN034

November 17, 2023

The Honourable Dan Vandal, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Northern Affairs, Prairies Economic Development Canada and the Canadian
Northern Economic Development Agency
Government of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Sent via email and courier: dan.vandal@parl.gc.ca

Re: Reconsideration Report and Recommendations of the Nunavut Impact Review Board Related to the “Meliadine Extension” Project Proposal, a Modification of the Meliadine Gold Mine Project as Proposed by Agnico Eagle Mines Limited

Dear Honourable Dan Vandal:

As set out in the Nunavut Impact Review Board’s (NIRB or Board) Notice of Reconsideration sent to the relevant Minister(s) on June 22, 2022, in support of the Board’s reconsideration of the Terms and Conditions of existing Project Certificate No. 006 under Article 12, Section 12.8.2 of the *Agreement between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada (Nunavut Agreement)* and s. 112 of the *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act*, S.C. 2013, c. 14, s. 2 (*NuPPAA*), the NIRB has undertaken an assessment of the “Meliadine Extension” Project Proposal (Extension Proposal or Proposal) submitted by Agnico Eagle Mines Limited (Agnico Eagle or Proponent). As required by Article 12, Section 12.8.3 of the *Nunavut Agreement* and s. 112(5) of *NuPPAA*, the NIRB is providing this Reconsideration Report and Recommendations to the responsible Minister(s) for your consideration.

The enclosed Reconsideration Report and Recommendations summarizes the NIRB’s assessment of the potential ecosystemic and socio-economic effects of the Extension Proposal, a proposed modification to the previously approved Meliadine Gold Mine Project. The Board carried out the reconsideration, commencing in August 2022 and concluding with a Public Hearing held in-person in Rankin Inlet, Nunavut on September 12-20, 2023. During the Board’s assessment of the Extension Proposal, Agnico Eagle modified the scope of the Proposal by removing the construction, operation and reclamation of an airstrip at the mine following the November 2022 Pre-Hearing Conference. The second modification to the scope of the Extension Proposal as

assessed was proposed by Agnico Eagle in their closing remarks at the Public Hearing on September 20, 2023. Agnico Eagle indicated that due to the concerns of parties and members of the public to the location of the windfarm near the mine site (assessed and identified in Agnico Eagle's Final Environmental Impact Statement Addendum as the lone preferred alternative), Agnico Eagle would be willing to move the windfarm to an undetermined location to be chosen in future in consultation with the Kivalliq Inuit Association (the relocated windfarm). On October 3, 2023, the Board issued its direction¹ indicating that because the Board had not been provided with sufficient information regarding the relocated windfarm to enable the Board to assess the potential ecosystemic and socio-economic effects of the relocated windfarm, the Board was excluding the relocated windfarm from the scope of the Board's assessment of the Extension Proposal. However, having determined that the Board had been provided with sufficient information with respect to the works, activities and undertakings included in the Extension Proposal that were unrelated to the relocated windfarm component as proposed on September 20, 2023 the Board closed the Public Hearing Record in respect of the Extension Proposal, and proceeded to decision-making in respect of the Proposal.

After due consideration of all written and oral submissions received by the Board, and applying the precautionary principle to the potential for effects on caribou, the Board has found that there is considerable uncertainty about the potential for the Proposal to have significant negative effects on caribou, and cumulative effects on air quality, fish, freshwater quality and marine water quality. The Board has determined that if these ecosystemic impacts occur, the Proposal could also have adverse socio-economic effects on health, livelihood, culture and traditional land use for Inuit, Dene and Denesuline who rely on the health, abundance and access to the Qamanirjuaq caribou herd. The Board has also concluded that due to a high level of uncertainty regarding the efficacy and adaptability of measures designed to mitigate these potential effects, the Board is not confident that if negative ecosystemic and related socio-economic effects occur, these impacts could be effectively mitigated over the life of the Meliadine Gold Mine Project with the intensified mining activities, 11-year extension to the original life of the mine, and construction and operation of the proposed windfarm as assessed in the Extension Proposal. Consequently, the Board has concluded that on the basis of the potential for significant adverse ecosystemic and socio-economic effects that, in the Board's view, cannot be adequately managed and mitigated, the Extension Proposal should not be allowed to proceed at this time.

However, the Board recognizes that, in future, regional and project monitoring efforts may reduce the uncertainty regarding effects predictions and mitigation measures and the Proponent may then choose to resubmit some or all of the components of Extension Proposal for consideration. Consequently, the Board has included, where appropriate, guidance in the form of recommendations regarding activities and information submissions which may assist the Board in the assessment of any future proposal.

¹ Public Registry ID.: 347323

Translated versions of the Reconsideration Report and Recommendations are being prepared in Inuktitut and French and will be available as soon as possible.

Should you have questions or require clarification regarding this matter, please contact the NIRB's *Interim* Executive Director, Ryan Barry at rbarry@nirb.ca.

Sincerely,



Kaviq Kaluraq
Chairperson
Nunavut Impact Review Board

cc: The Honourable Steven Guilbeault, P.C., Minister of Environment and Climate Change
The Honourable Diane Lebovitch, P.C., Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard
The Honourable Pablo Rodriguez, P.C., Minister of Transport
The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources
The Honourable Lori Idlout, MP for Nunavut
The Honourable P.J. Akeeagok, Premier of Nunavut
Aluki Kotierk, President, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
Kono Tattuineq, President, Kivalliq Inuit Association
Lootie Toomasie, Chairperson, Nunavut Water Board
Jamie Quesnel, Agnico Eagle Mines Limited
Manon Turmel, Agnico Eagle Mines Limited
Meliadine Distribution List