

NUNAVUT IMPACT REVIEW BOARD

BACK RIVER ENERGY CENTRE PROJECT PROPOSAL

HEARING

VOLUME 3

Cambridge Bay, Nunavut

February 29, 2024

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1 Proceedings taken at Community Hall, Cambridge Bay,
2 Nunavut

3

4 February 29, 2024 Morning Session

5

6 NUNAVUT IMPACT REVIEW BOARD

7 A. Ehaloak Chair of Hearing

8 H. Ohokannoak Panel Member

9 P. Omingmakyok Panel Member

10 C. Emrick Panel Member

11 P. Kusugak Panel Member

12 G. Alikut Panel Member

13

14 NUNAVUT IMPACT REVIEW BOARD STAFF

15 T. Arko Director of Technical
16 Services

17 R. Sinclair Executive Director

18 K. Morrison Manager Impact Assessment

19 K. Gillard Senior Impact Assessment
20 Officer

21 L. Klaasen Technical Advisor II

22 E. Koide Technical Advisor III

23 T. Meadows Legal Counsel

24

25

26

1 PROPONENT

2

3 B2GOLD CORPORATION (REGISTERED SPEAKERS)

4 M. Keefe Manager, Environment

5 J. Kaiyogana Community Liaison Officer

6 D. Stansbury Senior Vice President,
7 Engineering and Project
8 Evaluations

9 C. Ferizovic Manager, Indigenous &
10 Northern Affairs

11 G. Sharam Consultant Wildlife
12 Biologist

13 B. Edwards Director of Development
14 at NextEra Energy

15 C. Kowbel Legal Counsel

16

17 INTERVENORS

18

19 NUNAVUT TUNNGAVIK INCORPORATED (REGISTERED SPEAKERS)

20 D. Fredlund Chief Operating Officer

21 G. Nirlungayuk Director of Wildlife and
22 Environment

23 H. Uniuqsaraq (Remote) Director of
24 Self-Determination

25 B. Dean (Remote) Assistant Director of
26 Wildlife and Environment

1	D. Lee (Remote)	Wildlife Biologist
2	P. Lavallee (Remote)	Wildlife and Environment
3		Consultant
4	N. Gonzalez (Remote)	Legal Counsel
5	A. Yuan (Remote)	Legal Counsel
6	R. Suluk (Remote)	Senior Advisor, Land Use
7		Planning and Regulatory
8		Review
9		
10	KITIKMEOT INUIT ASSOCIATION (REGISTERED SPEAKERS)	
11	J. Roesch	Senior Hope Bay Project
12		Officer
13	C. Chui	Consultant
14	J. Eetoolook	Vice President of Lands
15		Resources and Environment
16	J. Abouchar (Remote)	Legal Counsel
17	K. Morton (Remote)	Legal Counsel
18		
19		
20	GOVERNMENT OF NUNAVUT (REGISTERED SPEAKERS)	
21	J. Buller	Avatiliriniq Coordinator
22	J. Waldinger	Project Manager, Research
23		& Monitoring
24	S. Ataullahjan	Legal Counsel
25	J. Azonaha	Project Manager, Impact
26		Assessment

1	L. Leclerc (Remote)	Regional Biologist,
2		Kitikmeot Region
3	S. Symes (Remote)	Consultant
4	P. Fuentes (Remote)	Project Manager, Impact
5		Assessment
6		
7	CROWN-INDIGENOUS RELATIONS AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS CANADA	
8	(REGISTERED SPEAKERS)	
9	S. Dewar	Acting Regional Director
10		General
11	J. MacInnis	Acting Environmental
12		Assessment Coordinator
13	L. Gracia Zayas	Environmental Policy
14		Analyst
15	K. Pawley (Remote)	Director
16	J. Walsh (Remote)	Senior Environmental
17		Policy Analyst
18	M. Staniewski (Remote)	Environmental Policy
19		Analyst
20	A. Chaikine (Remote)	Acting Manager Impact
21		Assessment
22	R. Bingly (Remote)	Senior Environmental
23		Assessment Specialist
24	D. Abernathy (Remote)	Regional Socioeconomic
25		Analyst
26		

1 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE CANADA (REGISTERED
2 SPEAKERS)

3 S. Mallon (Remote) Acting Senior Environmental
4 Assessment Officer
5 R. Wykes (Remote) Senior Environmental
6 Assessment Officer

7

8 DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES AND OCEANS CANADA (REGISTERED
9 SPEAKERS)

10 T. Leclerc-Beaulieu (Remote) Fish and Habitat Protection
11 Program Biologist
12 A. LaFlamme (Remote) Biologist

13

14 HEALTH CANADA (REGISTERED SPEAKERS)

15 C. Dutchak Impact Assessment
16 Specialist
17 M. Goncalves Environmental Assessment
18 Coordination Specialist
19 D. Kitchen (Remote) Regional Manager
20 A. Thevenot (Remote) Senior Health In Impact
21 Assessment Specialist
22 P. Partridge (Remote) Impact Assessment
23 Specialist

24

25

26

1 NATURAL RESOURCES CANADA (REGISTERED SPEAKERS)
2 V. Narine (Remote) Senior Environmental
3 Assessment Officer
4
5 TRANSPORT CANADA (REGISTERED SPEAKERS)
6 S. Kidd Regional Environmental
7 Advisor
8
9 NORTHERN PROJECTS MANAGEMENT OFFICE (REGISTERED
10 SPEAKERS)
11 K. Bakker Project Manager
12 M. Friesen Project Manager
13
14 DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (REGISTERED SPEAKERS)
15 J. McHattie Legal Counsel
16
17 GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES (REGISTERED
18 SPEAKERS)
19 J. Hodson (Remote) Environmental
20 Assessment/Wildlife
21 Biologist
22 J. Adamczewski (Remote) Biologist
23 N. Njerere (Remote) Environmental Assessment
24 Analyst
25
26

1 INTERPRETERS/TRANSLATORS

2 J. Tuktoo Language Translator

3 C. Amautinuvar Language Translator

4

5 COURT REPORTERS

6 D. Lopez, CSR(A), RPR Official Court Reporter

7 A. Vidal, CSR(A), RPR, RMR Official Court Reporter

8

9 R. Dempster Sound Technician

10

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1 (PROCEEDINGS COMMENCED AT 9:00 AM)

2 Opening Remarks

3 THE CHAIR: Good morning, everyone.

4 Welcome back.

5 My name is Albert Ehaloak. I'm the vice chair of
6 the Nunavut Impact Review Board, and I will be chairing
7 this public hearing.

8 On behalf of the Board, I would like to welcome
9 you to Day 3 of the Nunavut Impact Review Board's
10 public hearing associated with the Nunavut Impact
11 Review Board's assessment of B2Gold Nunavut energy
12 centre proposal which is a modification of the existing
13 Back River gold mine project.

14 For those of you attending in Cambridge Bay,
15 welcome. And for those of you participating over the
16 audio-video link, thank you for your participation.
17 Just a quick reminder to turn off your cell phones or
18 put them on silent before we begin.

19 We are starting the meeting with an opening prayer
20 given by Joe Ashevak.

21 Joe.

22 Opening Prayer

23 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Joe, for the prayer
24 to start our day.

25 Today we are completing the community roundtable
26 portion of the Nunavut Impact Review Board's public

1 hearing with the closing statements from the community
2 representatives, the intervenors, and B2Gold.

3 For those of you in the hall, just a reminder that
4 we ask that you sign in at the table as you enter the
5 hall for each of the sessions today. This will help
6 the Board keep an accurate record of attendance.

7 A reminder for all parties. Please have patience
8 as we shift between speakers, and for the sake of our
9 interpreters, the sound tech, and the court reporters,
10 please wait until I call your name before you speak.
11 If you are participating by Zoom, when your name is
12 called, please click on the raise-your-hand button at
13 the bottom of the screen, and this will help the techs
14 identify you more quickly so that they can unmute your
15 line and turn on your camera.

16 Simultaneous interpretation of the proceedings is
17 being provided. In the Zoom feed, you can choose the
18 language feed you want to hear. But when you go to
19 speak, you may have to turn off their interpretation
20 feed to avoid feedback.

21 For the people here in Cambridge Bay, receivers
22 are available from the sign-in table, and the receivers
23 are set to -- Channel 0 is the floor, Channel 1 is
24 Inuktitut, Channel 2 is English.

25 If you're having trouble hearing the proceedings,
26 please see our tech support, Ryan Dempster from PIDO,

1 at the side of the room. If you're having issues with
2 the online feed, please email Kelli Gillard at
3 kgillard@NIRB.ca.

4 The Board reminds everyone participating in this
5 hearing that no one is allowed to record or rebroadcast
6 the images, video, or audio of these proceedings in any
7 form without the express consent of the Nunavut Impact
8 Review Board. Failing to follow these directions may
9 result in sanctions by the Board, including suspending
10 access to the live feed or being asked to leave the
11 hall.

12 The Nunavut Impact Review Board is generating a
13 transcript from these proceedings which will be
14 available following the hearing on the Nunavut Impact
15 Review Board's public registry.

16 On behalf of myself and my fellow Board members,
17 Guy Alikut, Catherine Emrick, Peter Kusugak,
18 Phillip Omingmakyok, Henry Ohokannoak, I'd like to
19 thank everyone for welcoming us to Cambridge Bay for
20 this public hearing.

21 As you know, during the public hearing, the Board
22 members have been supported by the Board staff and
23 legal counsel. In the interest of time, I'm not going
24 to reintroduce everyone, but if you need help from the
25 Board, our staff are wearing Nunavut Impact Review
26 Board's name tags and will be happy to assist you.

1 Before continuing with questions and closing
2 statements from the designated community
3 representatives, I will briefly review some of the
4 housekeeping items. Washrooms are located outside of
5 this room in the lobby area. Exits are located through
6 the main doors to the lobby and at the front of the
7 side of the room in the back corners.

8 Lastly, to ensure that everyone has a reasonable
9 opportunity to participate in these meetings, the Board
10 requests that everyone respect the following Board
11 directions: It is our tradition to give respect to our
12 Elders. Therefore we invite any Elders who are in
13 attendance to let our staff know that they wish to
14 speak so that we hear the comments provided. We do ask
15 that Elders wait until I say their name and our staff
16 can get the microphone in front of them before they
17 speak.

18 For all participants, please do not interrupt when
19 a person is speaking. Please do not begin speaking
20 until I say your name as I am ensuring the interpreters
21 are able to finish their work before we turn to another
22 speaker.

23 For the sake of our interpreters and all other
24 participants, when it is your turn to speak, please use
25 a microphone, state your name and your community or who
26 you represent, then speak clearly at a reasonable pace.

1 Also, please do not use abbreviations and acronyms
2 and be mindful that some terms may require our
3 interpreters to take time to explain in detail, so
4 please be aware of the interpreters and pause when it
5 appears they need extra time to explain what you're
6 saying.

7 We will now proceed with Agenda Item 1 for today,
8 final questions from the communities, and then we'll
9 move into closing remarks from these communities around
10 the table to summarize your comments and concerns and
11 to advise the Board as to whether your community
12 supports the Back River energy proposal. Please
13 discuss over the break so you are ready to give these
14 closing remarks. And we'll start with the questions.

15 THE CHAIR: Kugaaruk. I'll come back to
16 him.

17 Taloyoak.

18 J. ASHEVAK: I'm sorry. What was the
19 question?

20 THE CHAIR: If you have any final
21 questions you want to ask the proponent or intervenors.
22 Questions by Community Representatives for
23 Taloyoak (Roundtable)

24 J. ASHEVAK: Joe Ashevak, Taloyoak Hunters
25 and Trappers Organization. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

26 I guess this is a question to the -- B2Gold. I

1 know in -- in my hometown there's hardly any people
2 working at the B2Gold mine, although we have a few -- a
3 few that go to work there.

4 I wonder if the mining company could -- could do
5 more for my community, Taloyoak, to hire more people
6 who -- who are willing to work. We're not getting much
7 support in -- in my hometown at all. They're not sure
8 where to go for -- to apply for a job at the mine.
9 There's always these questions about, Where do I go?
10 Where do I apply? I think that information should be
11 more available to -- to our communities. I guess that
12 is the question I'm asking.

13 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

14 THE CHAIR: B2Gold.

15 M. KEEFE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

16 Merle Keefe, B2Gold.

17 Thank you, Joe. We would definitely like to work
18 with the hamlet, with your community of Taloyoak, to
19 hire more people and to help more people get jobs.
20 There are currently -- or at the end of 2023, we had
21 16 employees from Taloyoak, but we would like to
22 increase those numbers.

23 We are planning a community job fair in June, but
24 I heard -- we heard you yesterday in terms of picking
25 better times to come to your communities outside of
26 spring, and that's something that I will be taking back

1 to our team.

2 When we do come, we understand that some Inuit may
3 not have résumés, so we bring people to help create
4 résumés and to get them a job. We have a -- a -- all
5 available jobs are sent to the Kitikmeot Inuit
6 Association lands department and hamlet where they are
7 posted, and they are posted on our website as well, but
8 we recognize that may not be the most accessible. We
9 also post on social media, Facebook.

10 However, the community job fair is something that
11 happens every year. And, again, I heard you. I heard
12 your comments and not just your comments but other
13 comments about the timing and better times to come to
14 your communities, so that's definitely something that I
15 will bring back to the team.

16 Thank you, Joe. Quana.

17 THE CHAIR: Taloyoak.

18 J. ASHEVAK: I have no further questions.

19 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

20 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

21 Kugaaruk.

22 B. IMMINGARK: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

23 I have no further -- other questions.

24 Qujannamiik.

25 Questions by Community Representatives for

26 Kugaaruk (Roundtable)

1 C. NINGARK: Celine Ningark from Kugaaruk.
2 I have no further -- I just want to show my
3 appreciation because it's a good -- it's a good
4 learning process for us, and when we get full
5 clarification with developments and would like to, you
6 know, join the developments, and as long as the
7 community members understand because -- as long as they
8 understand the operation and, you know, it's good, and
9 I appreciate being -- you know, being in attendance.

10 Thank you.

11 THE CHAIR: Gjoa Haven.
12 Questions by Community Representatives for
13 Gjoa Haven (Roundtable)

14 P. AKKIKUNGNAK: Good morning. I just want to
15 thank you once again. And I want to -- but I don't
16 have any further questions to B2Gold.

17 But my colleagues and my community members -- here
18 in Cambridge Bay and Taloyoak, they have First Nations
19 Bank, but we have nothing. Perhaps the Government of
20 Nunavut -- perhaps the GN could consider this --
21 consider this -- if they could consider us, for Gjoa
22 Haven community members, to get a First Nation Bank,
23 because it could be very beneficial even for low
24 incomers, at least, to purchase, you know, equipment,
25 perhaps boat, snowmobile, ATVs. I guess they can, you
26 know, make, you know, payments and -- make payments

1 and -- people who -- Elderly people who receive, you
2 know, old age pension because it could be beneficial to
3 the Elderly people.

4 And everybody's in -- you know, it's -- it's
5 isolating, and when they're too isolated, they
6 become -- you know, they have mental illness from
7 there. It creates mental illness.

8 And perhaps even with no training or -- in the
9 presence of -- like, we -- members of the community,
10 Gjoa Haven, you know, to -- to, you know, get a
11 First Nation -- getting a First Nation Bank, perhaps --
12 perhaps the Government of Nunavut or maybe -- I don't
13 know -- the Government perhaps could answer my concern
14 if we can -- can -- can we get a First Nation Bank in
15 our community.

16 Thank you.

17 THE CHAIR: Government of Nunavut.

18 J. BULLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good
19 morning. Justin Buller from the Government of Nunavut.

20 I appreciate your concern. I know that that is
21 a -- a concern that is shared among many communities.
22 I don't represent the department of finance
23 specifically, but I can certainly bring your concern
24 about increasing the access to funding, to loans, other
25 sources of financing back to the department of finance.

26 There's no formal relationship between First

1 Nations Bank and the Government of Nunavut. We don't
2 control what the First Nations Bank does or which
3 branches they open. But there has been discussion at
4 the GN around making funding and financing available
5 outside of the banking system. I know that Inuit
6 associations are also interested in similar programs.
7 So thank you for concern, and I will bring that back to
8 the department of finance.

9 THE CHAIR: Gjoa Haven.

10 P. AKKIKUNGNAK: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

11 I have no other -- further comments to make.
12 Thank you.

13 THE CHAIR: Kugluktuk.

14 A. DUMOND: Amanda Dumond, Kugluktuk HTO.

15 I have nothing at this time. Thank you.

16 THE CHAIR: Cambridge Bay.

17 Closing Remarks by Community Representatives for
18 Cambridge Bay (Roundtable)

19 P. EVALIK: Thank you Mr. Chair.

20 Ekaluktutiak Hunters and Trappers Organization. I have
21 no further questions at this time.

22 But are we making closing remarks now? Or --
23 yeah. Okay. Well, thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd just
24 like to start by thanking the Nunavut Impact Review
25 Board for allowing us to be here today. Thank you to
26 B2Gold, the proponent, for, you know, providing all the

1 information and clarity, all the intervenors who -- who
2 could be here and, you know, provide us with some
3 information.

4 I think that -- I just want to say that -- from
5 our board at the Ekaluktutiak Hunters and Trappers
6 Organization, you -- you know, we feel -- it's a big
7 change for something such as this, you know, this new
8 infrastructure coming up. And we've never ever seen it
9 before. We don't know what kind of impacts it's going
10 to have on our wildlife, in our environment.

11 But I'm glad to see that -- you know, like, our
12 Board is, you know -- and our people. We -- we have to
13 accept that. You know, we adapt to the way that, you
14 know, new things happen. You know, the world needs to
15 evolve. We -- we -- we don't -- I -- I mean, we as
16 Inuit, we -- we still -- we respect and we maintain
17 what we do on the land, but we -- we can't live off the
18 land anymore, and -- and we need those opportunities
19 such as B2Gold that, you know, they could provide.

20 And I just want to commend, you know, all -- NIRB,
21 Nunavut Water Board, all the regulators, intervenors,
22 you know, that ensure that our land and resources, you
23 know, are -- are going to be there for generations to
24 come, and -- and I think B2Gold has shown that, you
25 know, they will respect the way of the Inuit life and
26 the Inuit way and -- and that, you know, our -- our

1 wildlife, land, resources, water will be maintained for
2 future generations to come. I -- and I thank you. I'd
3 just like to say, you know, from the -- not the
4 hamlet -- sorry -- the Ekaluktutiak Hunters and
5 Trappers Organization that we are in support of this
6 project.

7 Thank you.

8 A. GERBRANDT: Angela Gerbrandt from The
9 Municipality of Cambridge Bay.

10 We would support this project. I have been
11 honoured to listen and learn to this proceeding, and I
12 thank you very much for including us. Quana.

13 THE CHAIR: Omingmaktok.
14 Questions by Community Representatives for
15 Omingmaktok (Roundtable)

16 P. KAPOLAK: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
17 Peter Kapolak from Omingmaktok HTO.

18 Just one question for B2Gold. If your project is
19 approved -- and I've seen turbines on your slides that
20 are all white -- and, if so, if your project is
21 approved, will there be other colours that you will be
22 using on your turbines? Because they'll be hazardous
23 to the birds when it's whiteout. It's really hard --
24 everything's camouflaged when it's whiteout. Even --
25 is there any other colours that you'll be using in your
26 turbines? Thank you.

1 THE CHAIR: B2Gold.

2 M. KEEFE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

3 Merle Keefe with B2Gold.

4 And thank you, Peter, for your question. I want
5 to start by saying that we do have and are developing
6 comprehensive protection measures and -- and shutdown
7 measures for birds, and we've committed to having
8 discussions -- continuing discussions on what we can do
9 with -- with lighting and -- and shielding lighting to
10 avoid the attraction of birds.

11 In terms of the colour of the turbine, we can
12 certainly look into that. There are other places where
13 turbines have been constructed where they paint stripes
14 on the turbines, for example. So that is definitely
15 something that we can look into, Peter.

16 Thank you. Quana.

17 THE CHAIR: Omingmaktok.

18 P. KAPOLAK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't
19 have any other questions.

20 But I have a report to do for Burnside HTO on
21 behalf of Kingaok if it's okay with the Board. Thank
22 you. I have a copy for the NIRB too, or even
23 interpreters have a copy.

24 Report by Community Representatives for
25 Kingaok (Roundtable)

26 P. KAPOLAK: The Burnside HTO board members

1 are aware of the plans for the windmill farm in and
2 around Bathurst Inlet, although there are concerns like
3 other times we've had with the mine since the beginning
4 of process, as you're aware, of the bulldozer sinking
5 down the inlet, the Bombardier going into the lake at
6 Goose, and the efforts of the winter roads the company
7 has been trying to build for a few years.

8 With the plans to build a wind farm, there is
9 going to be concerns around land animals and vibration.
10 It has an effect on the land around the farm. Since
11 the animals are very sensitive to sounds and vibration
12 around them, it will likely move any migration routes
13 they follow.

14 We are finally seeing the caribou back in the
15 inlet after 30 years of decline. And our concern is
16 that the windmill farm will impact this return of the
17 tuktu. As Qingaunmiut we are limited to harvest the
18 caribou, so we rely on Ahiak or the Beverly herd when
19 they migrate through Bathurst Inlet throughout the
20 year.

21 Also, we have been hunting the moose these past
22 several years since we cannot hunt the barren-ground
23 caribou due to the tags allocation to other
24 communities. Our concern is that once the wind farm is
25 in place, the decline will happen with the moose as
26 well. In the last five years, we have been seeing the

1 increase -- the moose population come up. Like -- like
2 to caribou, they are finally coming back.

3 If the wind farm is approved by this Board, we
4 would like full communication with B2Gold at all times,
5 not through secondhand information we've had for a
6 couple years, but directly with our Burnside HTO chair
7 and the Burnside HTO manager when possible with any
8 incidents or concerns, questions or advices you are
9 looking for.

10 Qingauunmiut have lived in and around the inlet for
11 generations before us. The families know the country
12 very well since their families are originally from
13 Contoywto Lake and Kiluhiktuk Area. That's the western
14 area -- western river area. And their concerns are
15 always going to be the impact this mine will have for
16 years to come if we are not properly consulted.

17 Although this is the beginning of the planning
18 stages, we can -- we can only see what the next steps
19 are and share what we know of this area amongst anyone
20 else in this room because this is our home and has been
21 for generations and generations.

22 This report was done by Anthony Roche as the
23 manager.

24 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

25 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

26 Moving on to Agenda Item 2, questions from the

1 public. If we have any questions from the public,
2 raise your hand, and you can either come to the table,
3 or we can give you a microphone.

4 THE CHAIR: Kugaaruk.

5 Closing Remarks by Community Representatives for
6 Kugaaruk (Roundtable)

7 B. IMMINGARK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
8 Barnaby Immingark, Kugaaruk.

9 I want to -- as a HTO member from my community,
10 Kugaaruk, we're always concerned about our animals,
11 fish. Like, to support my community. Like, caribous
12 have no border lines or any animals, so they travel a
13 vast distance. So even the caribou from here are
14 coming our way on the east side -- correction -- on the
15 west side that goes up to Taloyoak. We still harvest
16 those caribous every year. And then on the south side
17 that comes in, goes on the east side of our bay, so
18 we've got two migrating caribous.

19 So it's -- like I said earlier, it's our way of
20 life, our food. From the time I was born, my parents
21 harvested, my grandparents harvested, and still today
22 we still join the harvest. So any change, sudden
23 changes, will do some changes to our migrating animals.
24 So -- like, it's -- it's our concern, and then it's
25 what they feed on.

26 Being -- said that, I'm not too -- how do you

1 say -- not quite supportive of windmills, but it's
2 something that we have to see in the future. This will
3 be a test to Nunavut territory. So, in a way, like, I
4 want to see how it goes, if it's -- if it's a go-ahead,
5 and possibly in the near future we will start using it
6 in our communities too as we'll be studying it for a
7 few years. And then I also would like to -- if it goes
8 ahead, I would like good communication with the B2Gold
9 mine, see what changes happens, see if it does any
10 changes in our animals, and see -- see how it goes.

11 And to my final remarks. In a short term, we got
12 a lot of information from B2 -- B2Gold mine and the
13 other people from here. Like, I learned a bit from --
14 how the turbines are working, and I had to do a bit of
15 studies too and also put some words in our term so
16 people can understand better how these things work.

17 So -- and I also learned a bit about some things
18 that we have to follow from the other members like NIRB
19 and KIA, Government of Nunavut, Government of NWT,
20 Canada Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs
21 Canada -- I mean "Crown". Sorry. Water board, health
22 department, and transportation.

23 I've still got a lot to learn, but in this short
24 term I had a lot of input, and it gave me some ideas to
25 think about in our future.

26 I would like to thank the Hamlet of Cambridge Bay,

1 NIRB Board, NIRB staff, Nunavut Tunngavik, Kitikmeot
2 Inuit Association, Government of Nunavut, Government of
3 NWT, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs
4 Canada, water board, health department, and
5 transportation.

6 I enjoyed my time here learning and the
7 hospitality of Cambridge Bay. Thank you.

8 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

9 Any other questions from the community members?
10 Cambridge Bay.

11 Gjoa Haven.

12 Closing Remarks by Community Representatives for
13 Gjoa Haven (Roundtable)

14 P. AKKIKUNGNAK: Thank you.

15 I would like to also say thank you to B2Gold
16 Nunavut and also to the Nunavut Impact Review Board for
17 inviting us to this project -- to listen to this
18 project proposal hearing. I would like to thank both
19 governments, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut and
20 also Crown and Indigenous and Northern Affairs
21 development Canada.

22 Irregardless of how -- how there may be -- may be
23 emergencies or malfunctions, we want to also hear --
24 also hear if there are any such occurrences at your
25 camp. There are some times that we may not be able to
26 help the company because of the -- because the -- they

1 will be far away from our communities. But with -- and
2 through partnership and with the help of traditional
3 knowledge coming from our Elders, we need to see more
4 economic growth appear.

5 We don't only eat and harvest one herd of caribou,
6 but our youth are becoming more accustomed to -- to
7 store-bought food. Their diet is very different from
8 ours. And the youth today are more -- more vocal than
9 we are. When I was a child, that was forbidden for us
10 to voice our -- our concerns to our Elders. There are
11 times that we do go through some problems with our
12 youth, but we have to go on.

13 We would like -- I would like to see the Nunavut
14 Impact Review Board approve this project proposal. As
15 Barnaby just said, there are more and more -- there's
16 more and more development happening up -- up north, but
17 we have to accept that as Elders as well.

18 I want to thank the community of Cambridge Bay and
19 the -- and the people here. Thank you.

20 THE CHAIR: Taloyoak.

21 Questions by Community Representatives for
22 Taloyoak (Roundtable)

23 J. ASHEVAK: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

24 In the past years (NO ENGLISH FEED) the
25 representatives from my hometown, but we're not getting
26 information back -- we're not getting information back

1 from meetings like this. So -- and because of that
2 communication between Kitikmeot Inuit Association,
3 B2Gold, which was Sabina at the time, communication was
4 very poor. And we're not getting information.
5 Information is not being relayed back to the community
6 for whatever reason. And, because of that, we -- we
7 suffer in Kitikmeot east 'cause the information is not
8 being passed on. Therefore I'm telling Kitikmeot Inuit
9 Association, B2Gold, we exist in the east. And you can
10 do better with communication and hire more people to
11 work from Kitikmeot east. And that's the message I
12 wanted to get across.

13 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

14 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

15 Now I'll get on to our final closing remarks from
16 our communities. We'll go to Kingaok.

17 Closing Remarks by Community Representatives for
18 Omingmaktok (Roundtable)

19 P. KAPOLAK: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

20 Peter Kapolak from Omingmaktok HTO, chair.

21 Thank you, B2Gold, for your presentations and all
22 the intervenors, NIRB board. Thanks for inviting us.
23 And Omingmaktok would like to approve the project.

24 THE CHAIR: Qujannamiik.

25 Cambridge Bay.

26 Closing Remarks by Community Representatives for

1 Cambridge Bay (Roundtable)

2 P. EVALIK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Peter
3 Evalik, Ekaluktutiak Hunters and Trappers Organization,
4 Cambridge Bay.

5 Yeah. I've said my comments earlier that I think
6 our board, our community would like to support this
7 project.

8 And we thank -- just thank everybody again, you
9 know, for -- for the time they took to -- to give us
10 more information about the project. And thank you.

11 A. GERBRANDT: Angela Gerbrandt from The
12 Municipality of Cambridge Bay. We would like to echo
13 the HTO comments just made.

14 Thank you very much for including us. We were
15 very impressed by the presentations, welcome the
16 communication and the amount of detail that you're
17 sharing with the communities.

18 Thank you so very much. Quana.

19 THE CHAIR: Kugluktuk.
20 Closing Remarks by Community Representatives for
21 Kugluktuk (Roundtable)

22 A. DUMOND: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
23 Amanda Dumond, Kugluktuk HTO.

24 Just a couple of comments here regarding seeing
25 people or wildlife around an area. Just because people
26 are not seeing them currently doesn't mean they won't

1 be back there or that they haven't been back there --
2 or they weren't there in the past. And it's the same
3 for wildlife, and we see that all the time in places
4 that we travel. And I know this as a hunter and a land
5 user myself. There's always signs of people and -- and
6 wildlife anywhere you go on the land.

7 Like all community representatives, we are
8 concerned for our wildlife, the habitat, the
9 ecosystems. There needs to be a balance. And I know
10 that being a hunters and trappers organization
11 representative can help achieve that at hearings and
12 forums like this. We are always on the land. We are
13 always talking with other people. And it is so amazing
14 to be present at -- at really important things like
15 this, and there needs to be more of it.

16 Regarding the energy centre, the endeavour can be
17 a gateway for green energy projects in Nunavut, and it
18 needs to be done right, because there will be future --
19 future projects like this, and this process can really
20 help ensure that, having everybody at the table, all
21 the intervenors, the proponent, all the land users, all
22 the affected parties. And that being said, Kugluktuk
23 supports it.

24 Thank you.

25 THE CHAIR: Gjoa Haven. Final comments.

26 P. AKKIKUNGNAK: Thank you.

1 I did my closing remarks already, so I don't have
2 any further comments. Thank you.

3 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

4 Taloyoak, final comments.

5 Closing Remarks by Community Representatives for
6 Taloyoak (Roundtable)

7 J. ASHEVAK: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

8 We, the Inuit, along with our animals, we grew up
9 with motorized energy. The noise, the smoke that's
10 coming out of the generator, we live with it since we
11 moved into communities. Even the animal are born with
12 it.

13 With the decline of caribou all over Nunavut,
14 although I support renewable energy, we have never used
15 a turbine in Nunavut, so therefore I'm kind of skeptic
16 about turbine energy because it's -- it's moving and
17 it's very high, and then there's vibration coming from
18 the turbine. It's going to be interesting how it's
19 going to work out in the long run.

20 I don't know if that's going to help the caribou
21 population in Nunavut. It would probably wipe out the
22 population. And if they're going to come back, we're
23 going to be waiting a long time for the caribou to come
24 back. Although I support renewable energy, I'm skeptic
25 about turbine energy. And that's the comment I wanted
26 to -- I wanted to make.

1 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

2 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

3 Final comments, Kugaaruk.

4 Questions by Community Representatives for
5 Kugaaruk (Roundtable)

6 B. IMMINGARK: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

7 Kugaaruk, Barnaby Immingark, HTO chair.

8 Have you guys checked into any other clean energy
9 system, or do you guys have any plans after -- if you
10 guys have the go-ahead for turbines, is there any other
11 energy source -- in the future?

12 And then I would like to thank B2Gold mine for
13 your presentation. It takes a lot of time, energy to
14 set up about the turbines, so ... It gave us an idea
15 on how it really works. So we'll see how it goes and
16 then find out how it's going to disturb any animals or
17 not. I hope to see that in the future 'cause you never
18 know who might -- who might start using in -- in the
19 future in our communities.

20 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

21 THE CHAIR: B2Gold.

22 M. KEEFE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

23 Merle Keefe, B2Gold.

24 And thank you, Barnaby. We are always looking
25 into green or renewable or alternative energy -- energy
26 sources. With the current technology and the

1 improvements, wind and solar are known and very
2 reliable. That's why we're proceeding -- or proposing
3 this project.

4 However, yes, we are always looking at other green
5 energy, you know, and if we find anything that we think
6 may work, we would come discuss that -- those with the
7 communities first. Hopefully that answers your
8 question, Barnaby.

9 Thank you. Quana.

10 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

11 We have one community member to ask a question,
12 Attima Hadlari.

13 Questions by Attima Hadlari (Roundtable)

14 A. HADLARI: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

15 Welcome, everyone, all the parties here to Cambridge
16 Bay. Great to see every one of you here.

17 I don't have any questions, Mr. Chair. However, I
18 just want to show my appreciation with all the parties
19 and the proponents being questioned regarding the
20 mining and developments. Therefore, with my knowledge,
21 my own knowledge, I want to elaborate.

22 They have staff -- if you want to get information
23 about any of the -- you know, the project, there's an
24 Inuk person -- there is Inuit person working from this
25 project. If you have any question or any -- or any
26 communities have questions regarding the project, they

1 can direct. And, as well, Kitikmeot Inuit -- as well,
2 the Kitikmeot Inuit Association will -- will be
3 supportive for your info regarding, you know -- they
4 like to work with people regarding, you know, animals
5 and -- so they're -- and -- yes. Don't be afraid to
6 approach them. They can -- you can -- you can approach
7 them to make -- you know, make comments.

8 But I want to show my appreciation with all the
9 parties and the -- and, as well, it's, like, a survival
10 from the school. Like, it -- and when -- now the --
11 the young people will have a good impression of --
12 because there's some, you know, employment resources
13 and -- in -- each community can do that with the --
14 with the proponents, and they are supportive with
15 funding, and -- and I show my appreciation for their,
16 you know, support.

17 And the -- the eight people who are training on
18 the job as of now and learning how to partner up and --
19 and learning about family members. And so there's a
20 good description -- and the -- it's been going for six
21 years now, this project, and from the time -- from the
22 time the project started, there are three -- there are
23 three Inuit who are working full-time now, and that's a
24 good -- and -- and because of their support, even an
25 Inuk person, whether it's a young person -- even one
26 person, young person, who is being supported is very

1 good.

2 But thank you. That's all I have. Thank you,
3 Mr. Chair.

4 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Attima.

5 And thank you to the community members for your
6 closing remarks.

7 Now we'll take a 15-minute break for the
8 intervenors to set up at the table for their final
9 remarks. 15 minutes.

10 (ADJOURNMENT)

11 THE CHAIR: Welcome back, everybody.

12 We have a final question from the Board.

13 Phillip.

14 Nunavut Impact Review Board Panel Questions B2Gold
15 Corporation

16 P. OMINGMAKYOK: Quana, Ihivautaq. Phillip
17 Kadlun, Nunavut Impact Review Board member.

18 I do have one question for the B2Gold. This is in
19 regards to the wind turbines, the wind farm. As we all
20 know, that we are experiencing climate change in terms
21 of extreme -- extreme heat and extremely high winds. I
22 have a question that relates to the turbines. I know
23 the -- that the turbines are very high and humongous.
24 I just have one question that -- to that.

25 Will the turbines be able to stand -- withstand
26 very high winds such as a hundred kilometres an hour,

1 which we are experiencing every summer -- mostly in
2 summer?

3 And with that, Ihivautaq, that is my only
4 question. Quana, Ihivautaq.

5 THE CHAIR: B2Gold.

6 M. KEEFE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Merle
7 Keefe, B2Gold.

8 And thank you for your question, Phillip. The
9 answer is, yes, the wind turbines are designed and
10 engineered to withstand the strongest of winds. In
11 addition, they will be designed specifically for arctic
12 conditions, so the very cold conditions that will be
13 experienced at the Goose project site.

14 Heating is provided to assure that the turbines
15 can function and start in cold conditions as well as
16 mitigate any ice or frost build-up on the blades, and
17 engineering on the foundation to make sure it is strong
18 will have to be completed in advance. So the answer
19 is, yes, these turbines will be designed to handle the
20 windy or cold conditions of the arctic.

21 Thank you. Quana.

22 THE CHAIR: Phillip.

23 P. OMINGMAKYOK: Quana, Ihivautaq.

24 That's all. Thank you.

25 THE CHAIR: Agenda Item Number 4. We will
26 turn to short closing remarks from the registered

1 intervenors starting with Nunavut Tunngavik
2 Incorporated.

3 Closing Remarks by Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated

4 D. FREDLUND: Quana, Ihivautaq.

5 Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated would like to thank
6 the Nunavut Impact Review Board for all of its efforts
7 in planning this technical session with the public on
8 the Back River energy centre project proposal. We'd
9 also like to thank our Elders, the hunters, the other
10 proponents, and the intervenors and the community of
11 Cambridge Bay for allowing us to come here and meet
12 with them.

13 NTI, Nunavut Tunngavik, has listened to the
14 presentations from the proponents and other intervenors
15 as well as the views of the representatives here at the
16 table and behind in the group. We're pleased to hear
17 that there's been constructive discussion to resolve
18 all major issues foreseen in the project.

19 We have also heard concerns from some of our
20 hunters and trappers organizations over the past couple
21 of days about the potential impacts on the wind farm,
22 on caribou, migratory birds, and other wildlife.
23 Clearly monitoring in addition to analysis and review
24 of all observations may play a critical role in
25 minimizing and mitigating any impacts of the project.

26 NTI would like to acknowledge and reiterate the

1 importance of including the expertise and experience of
2 Inuit organizations with respect to wildlife,
3 especially caribou as we've heard on all aspects of
4 this project, specifically the Kitikmeot Regional
5 Wildlife Board, hunters and trappers organizations, and
6 community representatives from the Kitikmeot.

7 Nunavut Tunngavik supports the Kitikmeot Inuit
8 Association in their role with the technical working
9 groups, but we also urge the Nunavut Impact Review
10 Board in taking a coordinating role with respect to
11 technical working groups that is consistent with other
12 regions.

13 As stated in our initial submission, Nunavut
14 Tunngavik stresses the importance of monitoring and
15 mitigation because of the cultural and social economic
16 importance of caribou on the Inuit of this region and
17 other Indigenous groups living on the ranges of the
18 Beverly, Ahiak, and Bathurst Inlet herds.

19 Nunavut Tunngavik supports and recognizes
20 Kitikmeot Inuit Association as the primary designated
21 Inuit organization, and as virtue of that designation,
22 it has the responsibility to manage the surface titles
23 in the Kitikmeot region. As such, NTI supports the
24 proposal with proper amendments and additions of the
25 terms and conditions in the project certificate that
26 reflects what we heard during this hearing, especially

1 from our communities.

2 We look forward to our continued involvement in
3 this important process, and we will continue to work
4 with the Kitikmeot Inuit Association; the RWOs, the
5 regional wildlife organizations, specifically the
6 Kitikmeot Regional Wildlife Board; and the hunters and
7 trappers organizations; as well as the proponent,
8 governments, and all parties' next steps.

9 Quana, Ihivautaq. That's all. Thank you.

10 THE CHAIR: Kitikmeot Inuit Association.

11 Closing Remarks by Kitikmeot Inuit Association

12 J. EETOOLOOK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. James
13 Eetoolook, Kitikmeot Inuit Association.

14 Before I say, I just wanted to -- the Kitikmeot
15 Inuit Association, what responsibilities they have.
16 Kitikmeot Inuit has -- has good offices in -- in five
17 communities. They have -- they have CLO office. They
18 have -- they have a CLO officer. And for every year
19 invitations, women's groups, the youth group, and
20 wildlife HTOs. They're always -- they're always
21 invited.

22 And through -- of course, we know the
23 communication -- communication has to be improvised,
24 and it was also mentioned for analysis, and because of
25 no response, it's hard -- you know, no feedback after
26 the meetings. That has to be improvised. Up to me.

1 But I want to show my appreciation to the Nunavut
2 Impact Review Board and from other government agencies,
3 and B2Gold as -- as well as appreciation with their --
4 what they're planning to do in -- especially with the
5 new project of the, you know, wind -- wind -- with the
6 wind turbines.

7 And it's -- and, of course, we have to find a
8 way -- we have to find a cleaner energy source, and,
9 however, you know, Inuit agencies as KIA or any
10 organization, government -- federal government, whether
11 it's GNWT's, they have to put a lot of effort in this
12 because -- to protect the wildlife as well.

13 And we are aware today that -- I can say that in
14 around 1920s to 1960s, the -- the population of the
15 caribou was, like -- and -- and it was always -- it was
16 always a cycle, and it's happening again, today's
17 cycle. So at times, caribou don't -- don't come back,
18 especially in the Kitikmeot region. In the Kitikmeot
19 east, for example, every year where they go out on,
20 and -- and caribou are declining rapidly. For example,
21 it's kind of, you know, scary because it's a source of
22 country food in that -- and around 1920s to 1960s.
23 It's starting to recycle again.

24 Any -- any agencies or organizations has to be
25 supportive to -- have to be supportive about this
26 project, you know, caribou's migration. And, you know,

1 we're not -- we're not -- we don't control the wildlife
2 animals, and we have -- we see them, and the industries
3 are -- are the obstacles that we are running into, and
4 they're obstacles in today, the -- the new project that
5 are being, you know, proposed.

6 But we -- the Kitikmeot Inuit Association, we
7 think it's good, and we also modified. You know, like,
8 just with the people from Kugluktuk, Bay Chimo, and
9 they have -- they have advisories. What are conditions
10 with the -- with the wildlife now? And -- and, of
11 course -- and, of course, it's their land, and
12 they're -- they're -- they're the land users as well,
13 and with the Inuit's knowledge here in this room, it
14 has to be included as well also because, of course,
15 Inuit knows the -- the timing and for -- for
16 generations. So my colleague will -- John Roesch will
17 also elaborate.

18 And I want to show my appreciation. And have
19 safe -- safe travels back home, and I'm also aware of
20 the -- that the Nunavut -- the Nunavut Impact Review
21 Board, that they'll have considered what -- what
22 they're going to approve, whether they're going to be
23 approving it. So -- so we will be hoping to hear the
24 results later.

25 John.

26 J. ROESCH: Just to add to James'

1 comments, the Kitikmeot Inuit Association appreciates
2 the NIRB for hosting this event and for B2Gold's
3 cooperation with the Kitikmeot Inuit Association as the
4 landowner, and we appreciate the comments made by all
5 community members.

6 In the past, when Hope Bay was up and running, the
7 KIA would go around and present in -- in each community
8 what the KIA is doing, and especially the -- the Inuit
9 Impact Benefits Agreement manager would speak about the
10 Impact Benefits Agreement and the job opportunities
11 that are available and that are posted at each
12 community liaison's office, and the community liaison
13 officers are in each community to help assist people in
14 applying for jobs and preparing resumes.

15 And we haven't done that since COVID hit, and this
16 project in particular, the Back River project, was five
17 years delayed in going into construction. So now it's
18 being built, and the KIA has to do what it did when the
19 Hope Bay project was going because Hope Bay went into
20 care and maintenance when COVID hit, and we anticipate
21 Agnico Eagle will come out of care and maintenance in
22 2027. So they will have to be presenting what changes
23 they want to make under their permits at Hope Bay.

24 So that's the next big thing that we anticipate to
25 be coming, that we'll have to go through NIRB again,
26 depending on the magnitude of your changes, and through

1 the Nunavut Water Board again if they make changes to
2 their mill or any other infrastructure.

3 So we are very, very fortunate that the -- the
4 Back River project has been purchased by B2Gold, and
5 they're a bigger mining company, and they're proceeding
6 to build it. It has a 15-year life span. And this
7 gives us an opportunity to promote employment through
8 the IIBA, the Inuit Impact Benefits Agreement,
9 implementation committee, to get Inuit employment up
10 from all communities because we emphasized that with
11 the proponent.

12 And when Hope Bay comes out of care and
13 maintenance in 2027, they'll -- the IIBA that we have
14 will be continued to be implemented. The II -- the
15 Inuit Impact Benefits Agreement implementation
16 committee will resume pushing for more employment at
17 Hope Bay. So there are opportunities coming, and it
18 takes a lot of work on KIA's part to keep promoting
19 this to all the communities and all the opportunities.

20 So not only is the proponent's jobs advertised at
21 the CLO's office, but there are a wide variety of jobs
22 from different companies, even jobs that are available
23 with companies established by the Kitikmeot
24 Corporation. So there are jobs. There's lots of jobs,
25 and I want to emphasize that to people.

26 Okay. And I thank you once again. For all the

1 participants, thank you.

2 THE CHAIR: Government of Nunavut.

3 Closing Remarks by Government of Nunavut

4 J. BULLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

5 Justin Buller for the Government of Nunavut.

6 We'd like to thank the proponent for bringing
7 forward a project which helps Nunavut move away from a
8 reliance on fossil fuels. We hear and understand the
9 complexity of supporting renewable energy production
10 while also protecting caribou and the irreplaceable
11 value of these animals and other wildlife have for the
12 day-to-day life and cultural continuity for the Inuit
13 and Dene that have co-existed with them for
14 generations.

15 The Government of Nunavut commends the work the
16 proponent has done to address the concerns raised by
17 the Board and the intervenors and their willingness to
18 engage with us and other groups to work toward
19 collaborative solutions. While there is uncertainty as
20 to the impact that the wind turbines could have on
21 wildlife in the region, we are satisfied with the
22 commitments made by the proponent to resolve the issues
23 the Government of Nunavut has related to the potential
24 impacts of the project on wildlife.

25 We are encouraged by B2Gold's support for the
26 caribou technical advisory group and the ability of

1 this group to assist the proponent in developing
2 appropriate and effective monitoring programs and
3 adaptive management strategies to address potential
4 impacts. We are confident that this group can work out
5 the remaining issues and details, and we look forward
6 to working with the proponent and our advisory group
7 partners to -- to refine these plans.

8 We hear the proponent's recognition of the value
9 of Inuit employment, and we see the potential for Inuit
10 employment losses resulting from the shift to a
11 cleaner, renewable, and more efficient source of power
12 for the project. We as a government would like to see
13 a clear path for repositioning and advancement of
14 Nunavummiut employees that may lose their roles. We'd
15 also like to see the opportunities for skills
16 advancement and contracting related to the construction
17 and operation of the energy centre becoming a reality.

18 We support the steps the proponent and the
19 Kitikmeot Inuit Association have made to promote Inuit
20 employment and opportunities and encourage both parties
21 to continue their work to improve socioeconomic
22 benefits for Inuit in the region.

23 We'd like to thank Ikaluktutmiut and the Hamlet of
24 Cambridge Bay for welcoming us to their community, to
25 the impact review board and its Chair, Alberta Ehaloak,
26 and the Board staff for a well-run and productive

1 hearing.

2 We'd like to thank the interpreters for their
3 skill and their patience and to the community
4 representatives, both residents of Cambridge Bay and
5 those invited here, for sharing your experience, your
6 perspectives, and your wisdom. Your words have value
7 and are appreciated.

8 Quana. Thank you.

9 THE CHAIR: Government of the Northwest
10 Territories, Nancy.

11 Closing Remarks by Government of Northwest Territories

12 N. NJERERE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

13 The Government of Northwest Territories would like
14 to thank the Nunavut Impact Review Board for organizing
15 and facilitating for the public hearing. We would also
16 like to thank B2Gold for the proposal and their
17 presentation. The Government of Northwest Territories
18 would like to thank the Elders, the communities, the
19 intervenors, and all participants for going through
20 this process. We are satisfied with the commitments
21 that have been made to meet the concerns and comments
22 that we raised during this process.

23 The Government of Northwest Territories will
24 continue to be involved in the process and will
25 continue to work with the proponent and all parties
26 involved to fulfill our obligations. We are looking

1 forward to the outcome.

2 Thank you.

3 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

4 Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs
5 Canada.

6 Closing Remarks by Crown-Indigenous Relations and
7 Northern Affairs Canada

8 S. DEWAR: Quana, Ihivautaq. Spencer
9 Dewar, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs
10 Canada.

11 Today I'll be sponding [phonetic] -- be responding
12 on behalf of the Government of Canada, those of us that
13 are here in person and those that are attending
14 virtually.

15 We'd like to start by thanking the Hamlet of
16 Cambridge Bay for their warm welcome. It's always
17 great to be in this community. The Government of
18 Canada would also like to thank the Nunavut Impact
19 Review Board, both Board and team, for leading this
20 process in this week's public hearing.

21 We'd like to thank B2Gold for their proposal and
22 working with all parties to answer questions and
23 resolve concerns. We'd also like to thank all of our
24 fellow intervenors, particularly the community
25 representatives and the hunters and trappers, for
26 providing valuable input and sharing their Inuit

1 Qaujimajatuqangit.

2 Lastly, we'd like to thank the interpreters and
3 the technical team for allowing us to communicate with
4 each other. And thank you to the Elders for leading us
5 in daily prayer.

6 During our time at this hearing, we've heard
7 clearly that the protection of the land is the most
8 important as it provides for wildlife, which is
9 essential for Inuit and the Inuit way of life.

10 We'd also like to recognize the importance of
11 bringing opportunities such as employment, contracts,
12 and training to the Kitikmeot region.

13 The Government of Canada supports the efforts to
14 bring renewable energy to the north with the goal to
15 reduce reliance on diesel and transition to clean
16 energy in a responsible manner. Each of the
17 departments have reviewed B2Gold's proposal and have
18 provided technical comments that have been resolved
19 fully or through commitments from B2Gold.

20 We are glad to hear all parties are committed to
21 ongoing collaboration. As we've heard many times this
22 week, that open and continued communication is the key
23 to success. The Government of Canada will continue to
24 work with all parties, particularly the designated
25 Inuit organizations and the Athabasca Denesuline Ne Ne
26 Land Corporation, in the ministerial decision phase

1 once the Board's reconsideration report and
2 recommendation has been released.

3 Quana.

4 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

5 Closing remarks from the proponent, B2Gold.

6 Closing Remarks by B2Gold Corporation

7 M. KEEFE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Merle
8 Keefe, B2Gold.

9 Thank you once again to the Nunavut Impact Review
10 Board and staff for organizing this hearing and for the
11 care and attention you have given our application since
12 it was submitted in August of 2022.

13 Thank you to the community of Cambridge Bay for
14 being generous hosts once again, and a special thanks
15 to the interpreters for helping us understand each
16 other. We know your job is not easy, and I hope you
17 get to take a few days to rest.

18 We appreciate the thoughtful and constructive
19 comments that have been shared in these public
20 hearings. I want to emphasize to the board members
21 that the Elders, community members, and intervenors
22 have all spent countless hours with us in advance of
23 these hearings sharing their knowledge and their
24 concerns and working together to come up with solutions
25 to address those concerns, and -- and the level of
26 consensus you have heard throughout this week is

1 resolved of that significant amount of work, and I want
2 to acknowledge that, and I appreciate that.

3 This application has helped us form stronger
4 relationships and a solid foundation to continue
5 working together. We see the Back River project energy
6 centre as an important opportunity for us and
7 Nunavummiut. Installing green power at site allows us
8 to become less reliant on winter ice roads and allows
9 us to move forward in our mine planning with confidence
10 that we have a stable energy source. Noisy diesel
11 generators will be replaced with quieter wind turbines.
12 It's a meaningful step for our project to help address
13 climate change, which is being experienced by Inuit at
14 a higher rate than anywhere else in the world.

15 As you have also heard, we have worked on very
16 stringent caribou and wildlife protection measures
17 which can be adjusted further in future in
18 collaboration with the Kitikmeot Inuit Association,
19 Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, hunters and trappers
20 organizations, and community members as well as
21 government.

22 The energy centre will reduce traffic on the road.
23 We see fewer caribou in the area where we have proposed
24 the wind farm and the winter road. However, we are
25 ready with protective measures if caribou appear in the
26 wind farm area in greater numbers. And I want to

1 emphasize that our protection measures are established
2 for all wildlife, not just caribou.

3 This is an opportunity to experience a wind
4 project in Nunavut with training opportunities to
5 Nunavummiut to bring to their own communities. I want
6 to emphasize that no Inuit workers will lose the
7 opportunity to work at the Back River project as a
8 result of this energy centre, and we are committed to
9 working on that.

10 We are committed to full communication with the
11 communities about the wind farm and our mine,
12 especially directly with the hunters and trappers
13 organizations. We will have a formal plan in place to
14 ensure that, that communication to the hunters and
15 trappers organizations's chairs and managers, and we
16 will report that to the Board in those meetings. We
17 respect Inuit expertise on the land and your generosity
18 in meeting with us. We have heard that renewable
19 energy must move forward with great caution, with care
20 and respect, and with Inuit knowledge at the centre.

21 With that, we humbly ask that the Board recommend
22 that the Minister approve the energy centre project
23 proposal.

24 Thank you again very much to everyone, and safe
25 travels home to those who are travelling. Quana.
26 Thank you very much.

1 Closing Remarks by the Chair

2 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

3 On behalf of the Nunavut Impact Review Board, I
4 would like to thank the proponent and all the
5 registered intervenors for their participation in
6 leading up to this public hearing and their
7 presentations, comments, and questions provided to us
8 during this week and, last, here in Cambridge Bay.

9 The Board is grateful for your participation,
10 sharing your knowledge, offering your advice, and
11 answering questions. The Board recognizes that we may
12 have different mandates and perspectives, but we will
13 have the -- a collective responsibility to listen to
14 each other, share our views, and work together.

15 We thank everyone for your participation and in
16 particular the Elders for entrusting us with their
17 knowledge and showing us how to live well together, to
18 inuqatigiitsiaq and piliriqatigiitsiaq.

19 The Board would also like to recognize the
20 significant sacrifice of the community representatives
21 who gave up their time to travel here to Cambridge Bay
22 to help make the community roundtable a success.

23 Thank you to the members of the public who have
24 spoken during the hearing and shared your heartfelt
25 views and important information to us. Everyone here
26 has made significant contributions to the Board's

1 consideration of the energy centre proposal.

2 The Board would also like to thank the community
3 of Cambridge Bay for hosting us this week. I would
4 like to turn the microphone over to Robbin Sinclair,
5 the board's executive director, for some specific
6 thank-yous on the Board's behalf.

7 Robbin.

8 R. SINCLAIRE: Thank you very much,
9 Mr. Chair. Robbin Sinclair, Nunavut Impact Review
10 Board.

11 As we conclude these three days of hearings after
12 months of working together to discuss the proposal, I
13 would like to acknowledge the commitment from many
14 people required to plan and complete these hearings and
15 to make them go as smoothly as they have.

16 On behalf of the staff of the Nunavut Impact
17 Review Board, we would like to offer our thanks to the
18 following individuals and groups from Cambridge Bay:
19 First, to the community in general and the hamlet staff
20 for being so welcoming, keeping the hall in good order,
21 and making sure we had water every day; we'd like to
22 thank the hotels here in town and their staff as well
23 as the residents of Cambridge Bay who opened their
24 homes to billet out-of-town visitors, your hospitality
25 is sincerely appreciated; to the caterers for ensuring
26 we have coffee, tea, and good food during the sessions.

1 We'd like to thank our audio-visual support,
2 Ryan Dempster, from PIDO productions for supporting the
3 online portion of the meeting; our court reporters,
4 Andres and Derek; and, of course, our interpreters,
5 Josie and Christopher, who helped ensure that everyone
6 who spoke could be heard, could be understood, and
7 their words said into the public record for all to see.

8 Thanks to all the government departments, Inuit
9 organizations, and other groups who have participated
10 throughout this assessment and in this hearing. We've
11 seen a tremendous amount of effort undertaken by all
12 participants in this assessment. Your submissions,
13 comments, and advice have been greatly appreciated by
14 the Board throughout.

15 The impact -- the Nunavut Impact Review Board
16 appreciates that many of the experts and knowledge
17 holders have travelled great distances from home in
18 order to join these hearings and those who are not able
19 to secure accommodations and supported online.

20 (UnREPORTABLE SOUND)

21 R. SINCLAIRE: Excuse that.

22 Throughout these meetings, we have heard the deep
23 personal investment in the comments, knowledge, and
24 experiences shared here to inform the Board as they
25 make their decision.

26 Thank you to B2Gold for their respectful and

1 professional attitude throughout this assessment and
2 their efforts to answer questions and provide
3 information. The B2Gold representatives have done well
4 to respect the Board's process, need for transparency,
5 meaningful public engagement, and provide responses to
6 questions of the Nunavut Impact Review Board, the
7 intervenors, and the public.

8 As executive director for the Nunavut Impact
9 Review Board, I'd like to offer special thanks to the
10 Board's legal counsel and staff both at the hall and in
11 the office for their dedicated work during the long
12 hours and days spent both preparing for the hearing and
13 ensuring that it went smoothly throughout and being
14 inclusive of those online.

15 For events like this, it is often easy to overlook
16 the little things, how the coffee and catering arrive,
17 how the room is kept clean between sessions, the
18 efforts to keep us comfortable throughout the meetings
19 and able to focus on the task at hand.

20 I would like to thank the Board members for their
21 patience and direction. As staff, we truly appreciate
22 the example you set, your patience and dedication as
23 well as your continued professionalism on this and all
24 the NIRB assessments.

25 I would also like to extend a personal thank you
26 for everyone present and those online and particularly

1 the community members of Cambridge Bay for welcoming me
2 in my first month as executive director of the Nunavut
3 Impact Review Board. I look forward to working with
4 all of you on this important work for Nunavummiut.

5 Quana. Thank you.

6 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

7 As this is the closing of the public hearing, I
8 will conclude my remarks by letting everyone know what
9 happens next. Firstly, the public hearing record for
10 the Nunavut Impact Review Board's assessment of
11 B2Gold's Nunavut's energy centre proposal, NIRB
12 File Number 12MN036, is now closed.

13 What this means is that no additional information
14 or evidence about the proposal will be considered by
15 the Board, and the file will now be remitted to the
16 Board for decision-making.

17 Within 45 days from today, the Board will prepare
18 and provide its reconsideration report and
19 recommendations to the Federal Minister of Northern
20 Affairs for his review and consideration. If the Board
21 needs to vary from this 45-day time frame,
22 notifications will be provided to all parties with the
23 updated report and submission date to the Board.

24 The Board will also provide a copy of the Board's
25 report and recommendations to the other responsible
26 ministers as well as the agencies that could have a

1 role in subsequently authorizing various project
2 components.

3 When the Board releases the report and
4 recommendations to the Minister and interested parties,
5 it will also be posted publicly on the Board's online
6 registry. If the Board decides that the energy centre
7 proposal should be allowed to proceed, the Board's
8 report will also include the recommendations regarding
9 changes or additions to the terms and conditions of the
10 existing Nunavut Impact Review Board's project
11 certificate for the Back River gold mine project that
12 the Board has decided are necessary to manage,
13 mitigate, or monitor the potential for the
14 project-related effects. The Board's report will also
15 provide an update about the transfer of ownership and
16 responsibilities for the Back River project under the
17 project certificate from Sabina Gold & Silver to B2Gold
18 Nunavut.

19 This public hearing is now adjourned. I would
20 like to end our time here with you the same as it
21 began, with a prayer. I ask Joe Ashevak to provide us
22 with a closing prayer.

23 Joe.

24 Closing Prayer

25 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Joe.

26 As you leave the hall, please remember to turn off

1 your headsets, put them on the table by the hall door
2 as you leave, and clean up your seating area.

3 Now time for some final door prizes. The last
4 three numbers: 756, 737, 752. Thank you, everyone.
5 Have a safe trip home.

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7 PROCEEDINGS CONCLUDED

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1 CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIPT:

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3 We, Andres Vidal and Derek Lopez, certify that the
4 foregoing pages are a complete and accurate transcript
5 of the proceedings taken down by us in shorthand and
6 transcribed from our shorthand notes to the best of our
7 skill and ability.

8 Dated at the City of Calgary, Province of Alberta,
9 this 10th day of March 2024.

10

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Andres Vidal, CSR(A), RPR, RMR

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Official Court Reporter

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Derek Lopez, CSR(A), RPR

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Official Court Reporter

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