

October 23, 2020

Email Only

Impact Assessment Agency of Canada

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MHSTCI File : 58EA026
IAAC File : 54755
Proponent : Generation PMG Inc.
Subject : Joint Review Panel – Amended Agreement and Terms of Reference
Project: Marathon Palladium Project
Location : Approximately 10 km north of the Town of Marathon,

Thank you for advising the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries (MHSTCI) that the Draft Amended Agreement to Re-Establish a Joint Review Panel for the Marathon Palladium Project is available for review and comment. MHSTCI's interest in this project relates to its mandate of conserving Ontario's cultural heritage.

Project Summary and Context

Generation PMG Inc. proposes to construct and operate a platinum group metals and copper mine located approximately 10 km north of the Town of Marathon.

The project began in 2011 as Marathon Platinum Groups Metals and Copper Mine Project by Stillwater Canada Inc (SCI). It was determined that the project would follow both the federal *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act 2012* (CEAA) process and the provincial *Environmental Assessment Act* (EAA) process, under a Joint Review Panel. The project was paused in October 2014 and the Joint Review Panel was disbanded.

Generation PMG is re-initiating the project, calling it the Marathon Palladium Project. The project will proceed under the CEAA 2012 process and the JRP is to be re-established.

In 2011, the original proponent entered a voluntary agreement with the then-Ministry of the Environment (Ontario) to make the entire project subject to the EAA.

The project was also subject to a federal environmental assessment and the federal government determined that, to avoid duplication, this project would benefit from being reviewed by a Joint Review Panel (JRP). With Ontario's accord, the JRP was established in 2011. The JRP's mandate was developed through an agreement between Canada and Ontario and instituted within a terms of reference. The overall goal was to ensure that the requirements for environmental assessment under the CEAA, the EAA and the regulatory reviews were met.

Through public hearings, the JRP process provides all interested parties with an opportunity to understand a project and its impact on the environment. These hearings also allow interested parties to present their comments and concerns.

A joint notice was issued on October 9, 2020 by the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada and the Government of Ontario proposing amendments to the previous JRP agreement and associated terms of reference. These amendments aim to re-establish the JRP, its mandate, its composition and its procedures for the EA process.

Observations

MHSTCI has reviewed the above-noted document and offers the following observations. Cultural heritage resources are considered part of the environment and the proponent must indicate whether the project will negatively impact cultural heritage resources and how impacts will be avoided or mitigated.

The following technical cultural heritage studies have been submitted to MHSTCI:

- *Stage I and II Archaeological Assessment of the Marathon PGM Property, North of Marathon, Ontario* (Woodland Heritage Services Limited, March 28, 2008, CIF-P065-66-2007)
- *An Assessment of Non-Aboriginal Cultural Heritage/ Built Environment/ Cultural Landscape Values for the Marathon PGM-CU Project Environmental Assessment* (Ross Archaeological Research and Hamilton Archaeological Consulting, August 2013)

Since the project's suspension in 2014, new information may have arisen with respect to cultural heritage resources. In its August 2020 workshop, Generation PMG Inc. committed to reviewing past technical cultural heritage studies and, in consultation with MHSTCI, determining if the intervening years warrant new reports.

Should new reports be required, information ought to be gathered in as timely a fashion as possible, particularly regarding archaeological assessments as fieldwork is season-dependent. These reports will form part of the public record which the JRP is to consider in its review of the project.

The JRP should note that the proponent is to follow these documents:

federal – *Technical Guidance for Assessing Physical and Cultural Heritage or any Structure, Site or Thing that is of Historical, Archeological, Paleontological or Architectural Significance under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012*

provincial – *Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Provincial Heritage Properties, 2010.*

Final Remarks

Thank you for the opportunity to review the draft amended agreement and terms of reference . We look forward to working with all the parties on this project.

If you require further assistance or any clarification, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Sincerely,

Katherine Kirzati
Heritage Planner
Heritage Planning Unit

<email address removed>

It is the sole responsibility of proponents to ensure that any information and documentation submitted as part of their EA report or file is accurate. MHSTCI makes no representation or warranty as to the completeness, accuracy or quality of any checklists, reports or supporting documentation submitted as part of the EA process and in no way shall MHSTCI be liable for any harm, damages, costs, expenses, losses, claims or actions that may result if any checklists, reports or supporting documents are discovered to be inaccurate, incomplete, misleading or fraudulent.

Please notify MHSTCI if archaeological resources are impacted by EA project work. All activities impacting archaeological resources must cease immediately and a licensed archaeologist is required to carry out an archaeological assessment in accordance with the *Ontario Heritage Act* and the *Standards and Guidelines for Consultant Archaeologists*.

If human remains are encountered, all activities must cease immediately and the local police as well as the Registrar, Burials of the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services (416.326.8800) must be contacted. In situations where human remains are associated with archaeological resources, MHSTCI should also be notified to ensure that the site is not subject to unlicensed alterations which would be a contravention of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.