

The Honourable Patty Hajdu
Minister of Indigenous Services
and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development
Agency for Northern Ontario

October 21, 2022

The Honourable Marc Miller
Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations

Subject: Agnico Eagle, Upper Beaver Gold Project, IAAC Review.

Dear Ministers Hajdu and Miller;

My name is Doug Desjardins, I am a member of the Metis Nation of Ontario and a resident of Beaverhouse Lake Ontario. I am writing you with my concerns regarding the proposed Agnico Eagle Upper Beaver Gold Project northwest of Larder Lake Ontario. This project is presently under review by the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC), under the Department of Environment and Climate Change. On December 16, 2021 Agnico Eagle submitted a Detailed Project Description to the IAAC.

I am retired and have substantial experience dealing with mine projects during my time working in the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (DIAND) in the Northwest Territories. I developed the departments system of review under the Environmental Assessment and Review Process EARP. Our review was to determine if a proposed project had significant impacts and if so would be referred to the Federal Environmental Assessment and Review Office (FEARO) with the Department of Environment in Ottawa.

On page 67 of the Upper Beaver Gold Project, Detailed Project Description the Proponent Agnico Eagle stated:

F.3 Potential Effects to Indigenous Peoples – Heritage, Traditional Lands and Other

“Section B.2 provides a brief summary of concerns raised by Indigenous Peoples during ongoing engagement activities to date, including through their review of a Draft Initial Project Description.

“The Upper Beaver Gold Project may result in effects to Indigenous Nations and Peoples and diverse population groups, culture, Treaty rights, and Traditional and current uses, such as through potential changes to land access, loss of traditional lands and ability to hunt, fish, gather and/or trap as well as the ability to practice their culture. These potential effects will be investigated through the environmental approvals process for the mine and ongoing engagement activities.”

In this era of Reconciliation, where the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Departments and Agencies of the Federal and Provincial governments work to counter past practices that for generations lead to the Cultural Genocide of the Indigenous Peoples of this land. Counter to those efforts, Agnico Eagle’s submission to the IAAC openly continues this practice. The breadth of issues and potential negative consequences of **the Upper Beaver Gold Project** on the local indigenous peoples and culture is discouraging and quite shocking.

The suggestion by Agnico Eagle that *“These potential effects will be investigated through the environmental approvals process for the mine and ongoing engagement activities.”* is limited in scope and comprehension. The issues faced by the Indigenous Peoples of today have been built on the mistakes of the past.

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October 18, 2022

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In the past 4 years the proponent has been uncooperative in their consultations with me regarding my questions about the environment and indigenous peoples. They would only discuss the exploration phase of this project and the buyout of shareholders property. They refused to answer my questions.

It is my hope that your department will take an active and meaningful role in the IAAC review process in the attempt to minimize the impacts to the local residents that fall under your responsibility. The Beaverhouse area has had and still is a significant territory for the Beaverhouse Band. There are traditional trails and waterways, Sacred land and a residential community on Misema Lake and several archaeological sites and petroglyphs which predate the Europeans.

I am imploring you to actively participate in the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada's review process of this proposed project. It may be time for your department to develop your own review process to deal with those issues listed above in Section B.2. and not leave it to the Department of Environment and Climate Change Canada. This project will have far reaching impacts on the indigenous peoples and their traditional uses of these lands and water.

Sincerely

Doug Desjardins

Doug Desjardins
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Cc:
PMO

Hon. Steven Guilbeault
Hon. Joyce Murray
Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson
Hon. David Piccini
Beaverhouse First Nation
Wahgoshig First Nation
Matachewan First Nation
Métis Nation of Ontario
Métis National Council
Assembly of First Nations (AFN) National Chief
Taykwa Tagamou Nation
Keepers of the Circle
Long Point First Nation
Temagami First Nation
Kebaowek First Nation

