



October 6, 2023

Chief Theresa Chemaganish
Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach
P.O. Box 5111,
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**Subject: Opportunity to comment on the potential impact assessment of
the Strange Lake Rare Earth Mining Project**

Chief Chemaganish:

On June 12, 2023, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (the Agency) provided an early notification to Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach about the proposed Strange Lake Rare Earth Mining Project (the Project).

On October 5, 2023, the Agency accepted an Initial Project Description (IPD) for the Project from Torngat Metals Ltd. (the proponent) that meets the information requirements of the *Information and Time Management Regulations* under the *Impact Assessment Act*. The document has also been registered with the Department of Environment and Climate Change of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, in accordance with the *Environmental Protection Act, SNL 2002, cE-14.2* and *Environmental Assessment Regulations 2003*, and with the Department of Environment of the Nunatsiavut Government in accordance with the *Nunatsiavut Environmental Protection Act*.

The Agency, the Nunatsiavut Government and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador are collaborating for the purpose of the impact assessment of this project.

The purpose of this letter is to:

1. invite your Nation to identify any key issues and initial concerns your community may have regarding the project;
2. Outline opportunities for a dialogue on the consultation process and the Project;
3. Provide you with information about accessing the Agency's participant funding program.

The Proposed Project

Torngat Metals Ltd. is proposing the construction, operation and closure of an open-pit rare earth mine, located approximately 235 kilometers northeast of Schefferville, in Quebec. The mine would have a production capacity of up to 55,000 tonnes per day and a lifespan of 30 years. As proposed, the project would include at the mine site a 1,500 meters airstrip, a new metal mill with an ore input capacity of 17,000 tonnes per day, waste rock and tailings piles, and associated buildings. The proponent plans to build a seasonal road of approximately 160 kilometers between the mine site and the port of Voisey's Bay, on Labrador's coast. The rare earth concentrate would be transported by road and then by sea to a high purity separation plant in Sept-Îles.

The IPD (registration document) is available on the Agency's website (the Registry): <https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/proj/85969?culture=en-CA> and on the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's project web page at <https://www.gov.nl.ca/ecc/env-assessment/projects-list/>. A summary of IPD/registration document and map are provided with this letter (Enclosures 1 and 2).

Your Participation

The Agency, the Nunatsiavut Government and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador are initiating consultation activities with Indigenous Nations, the public and other participants. A public comment period on the summary of the IPD/registration document is taking place from **October 6, 2023, to December 4, 2023**. The objective at this stage is to identify key issues or initial concerns your Nation may have regarding the Project, including potential positive or negative impacts on the environment, human health, social and economic conditions, and your Nation's interests including cultural considerations and the exercise of your rights. A list of guiding questions is provided with this letter for your consideration (Enclosure 3).

Comments on the Project can be provided to the project mailbox (strangelake@iaac-aeic.gc.ca) or through the "Submit a Comment" function available on the project page of the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry (reference number 85969): <https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/proj/85969?culture=en-CA>. Users of this function must agree to the Terms of Use for online submissions, available at: <https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/participation/conditions?culture=en-CA>. Documents provided by your Nation can also be uploaded using this feature. If you have any please contact the Agency at strangelake@iaac-aeic.gc.ca for assistance.

For the purpose of the impact assessment of this project, comments received during this comment period will be shared between the Agency, the Nunatsiavut Government and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. Please indicate in any written submission if you DO NOT wish to have your comments made available to the proponent.

Important Note

In accordance with the *Impact Assessment Act*, comments and other documents received by the Agency during this public comment period will be added to the Project file and posted on the Registry Internet site. For submissions that are not submitted directly to the Registry (such as comments and documents provided by e-mail), the Agency will remove certain information, such as home address, telephone number, e-mail address and signature, before posting them to the Registry. If you wish to provide comments or documents containing confidential or sensitive information that you believe should not be disclosed to the public, please contact the Agency before submitting them. All comments will be shared with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and with the Nunatsiavut Government.

Participation in the Planning Phase of the Federal Impact Assessment Process

Comments received by **December 4, 2023**, will be considered in the Summary of Issues to be prepared by the Agency. The Agency will provide the Summary of Issues to the proponent and post a copy on the Registry. The proponent will be required to submit a Detailed Project Description to the Agency that outlines how it plans to address the issues raised. The proponent's documents and input from Indigenous Nations and other participants will then be considered by the Agency in its decision on whether to require a federal impact assessment for the Project

Please also be aware that the Agency will hold virtual public consultation sessions on the summary of the initial project description:

- Monday, October 30, 2023, at 1:30 PM (EDT), via Zoom (French);
- **Monday, October 30, 2023, at 6:30 PM (EDT), via Zoom (English);**
- **Thursday, November 2, 2023, at 1:30 PM (EDT), via Zoom (English);**
- Thursday, November 2, 2023, at 7:00 PM (EDT), via Zoom (French).

If you are interested in participating in one of those sessions, please contact Aude Therrien by email (aude.therrien@iaac-aeic.gc.ca) to receive the links and details of the session.

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's Environmental Assessment Process

The Strange Lake Rare Earth Minerals project was registered with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador on October 5, 2023. As noted above, the project is proposing a mine site, a 1,500-meter airstrip, a new metal mill, waste rock and tailings piles, and associated buildings to be constructed in the province of Quebec. The proponent plans to build a 160-kilometer seasonal road between the mine site and the port of Voisey's Bay, on Labrador's coast. Approximately 140 kilometers of the proposed access road would be constructed in northern Labrador. A lay-down area for rare earth concentrate is planned at the port of Voisey's Bay and the concentrate would be transported from the port by sea to a high purity separation plant in Sept-Îles, Quebec. .../4

The Minister of Environment and Climate Change (the Minister) and the proponent have agreed to extend the timeline for consultation to align with the consultation periods for the Agency and the Nunatsiavut environmental assessment processes, Comments received before December 4, 2023 will be considered prior to the Minister's decision, and the Minister's decision is due within 10 days of the end of the consultation period, by December 14, 2023.

A guidance document entitled 'A Guide to the Process' is available at https://www.gov.nl.ca/ecc/files/GUIDE-TO-THE-PROCESS_Jan-2023.pdf, for your information.

The Agency's Participant Funding Program

As indicated in the Agency's early notification letter of June 12, 2023, the Agency is able to offer a two-part grant to support your participation in the planning phase of the federal impact assessment process:

- an initial grant of \$5,000.00 is available now, as the Agency has accepted an initial project description submitted by the proponent and your Nation is invited to comment;
- a second grant of \$5,000.00 will be available to support your Nation's participation in the development of detailed planning documents (including the Indigenous Partnership and Engagement Plan, individualized guidelines, etc.), if a federal impact assessment is required for the project.

Please confirm your interest in receiving this funding by contacting Monica Losier at monica.losier@iaac-aeic.gc.ca. An overview of eligible activities and expenses is attached (Enclosure 4).

If a federal impact assessment is required, the Agency will offer additional funding to support the continued participation of your nation throughout subsequent phases of the process. More information on the Agency's funding programs and the federal impact assessment process can be accessed at canada.ca/en/impact-assessment-agency.html.

Contacting the Agency

Aude Therrien will be coordinating Crown consultations for the project on behalf of the Agency and will be following up with you over the next two weeks to confirm that you have received this letter and to discuss any questions you may have about the impact assessment process, as well as to continue a dialogue about the project through the consultation process. You may also contact Aude directly at 343-572-4312 or by email at aude.therrien@iaac-aeic.gc.ca.

Contacting the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

If you have any questions concerning the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's environmental assessment process or your involvement, please contact Brenda Rowe, at 709-729-2822 or email browe@gov.nl.ca.

Yours sincerely,

<Signature removed>

Elisabeth Gill

Acting Regional Director, Quebec Regional Office
Impact Assessment Agency of Canada

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Joanne Sweeney, Director

Environmental Assessment Division
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

Attachments:

- No. 1 – Initial Project Description Summary
- No. 2 – Map of Project Location
- No. 3 – Comment Form – Guiding Questions
- No. 4 - Overview of Eligible Expenditures and Activities

- c. c.: Martine Mainguy, Team Lead, Impact Assessment Agency of Canada
- Monica Losier, Senior Fundraising Officer, Impact Assessment Agency of Canada
- Stella Pien, Director General, Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach
- Jeremy Einish, Councilor, Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach
- David Swappie, Councilor, Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach
- Michel Bacon, Mining Liaison Officer, Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach
- Nathalie D'Astous, Biologist, Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach
- Billy Shecanapish, Environment Officer, Naskapi Nation of Kawawachikamach
- Lindsay Richardson, Project Coordinator, Atmacinta

Attachment 4 - Overview of Eligible Expenses and Activities

The Agency's financial assistance program can help you pay for eligible costs associated with your Nation's participation in the federal impact assessment process and related consultation process. Grants are available during the preparatory phase of a potential federal impact assessment. These grants can be used to pay for the following activities:

- review of correspondence, attendance at meetings, travel and related work
- reviewing, commenting on or contributing to preparatory phase documents.

Eligible expenses for the activities listed above include professional fees, reporting costs (such as staff salaries and administrative costs), travel expenses, honoraria and costs associated with ceremonies.

If you would like to use this funding for an activity or expense not listed above, please contact Monica Losier **prior** to incurring the expense for that activity at monica.losier@iaac-aeic-gc.ca.