



**BINCHE WHUT'EN**

**Binche Keyoh Society**

**Date:** April 21, 2026  
**To:** Impact Assessment Agency of Canada & BC Environmental Assessment Office  
**From:** Binche Whut'en & Binche Keyoh Bu Society  
**Re:** Federal impact assessment and Provincial assessment processes for the Lawyer-Ranch Project proposed by Thesis Gold Inc.

On behalf of Binche Whut'en ("**Binche**") and the Binche Keyoh Bu Society, we are writing in response to Letter Reference **418934**, dated January 8, 2026, regarding Binche's views on the Initial Project Description ("**IPD**") for the Lawyer-Ranch Project (the "**Project**"), as well as the Province of British Columbia ("**BC**")'s request for substitution pursuant to the *Impact Assessment Act*.

Thesis Gold Inc is proposing the construction, operation, and closure of a combined underground/open-pit gold and silver mine, within Binche Territory. The IPD for the Project has been accepted by the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada ("**IAAC**") and the BC Environmental Assessment Office ("**EAO**").

The Planning / Early Engagement Phase of the impact/environmental assessment process (the "**Assessment Process**") forms an important part of the regulatory and consultation process. Binche's expectation is that both the Government of Canada ("Canada") and BC will ensure that the Assessment Process for the Project (i) provides for meaningful dialogue and consultation, (ii) is used to identify potential impacts to Binche's constitutionally protected title, rights and interests ("**Binche Rights**") so that appropriate accommodations are put in place, and (iii) respects Binche's inherent decision-making authority, including respecting its decision on whether to grant its free, prior, and informed consent to the Project.

In this letter, we address the following matters:

1. Preliminary issues regarding assessment scope (Joint summary of issues and engagement)
2. Declaration of participation
3. Comments on the need for an impact assessment
4. Comments on the proposed substitution
5. Comments on the IPD; and
6. Comments on the Detailed Project Description

Binche reserves the right to raise additional issues as further information becomes available and as the

environmental impacts, emanates from our people, culture, and land, which is recognized and affirmed by sec. 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. The comments contained herein do not in any way indicate support or approval for the Project by Binche.

## COMMENTS:

### 1. Preliminary issues regarding assessment scope (Joint summary of issues and engagement)

*Note:* The information provided in this section is preliminary and non-exhaustive. Binche reserves the right to provide additional information as further studies and community engagement continue.

#### (a) What relationship does Binche have to the Project area?

The Project area is located within Binche Whut'en Territory, over which Binche holds Rights. Binche has longstanding cultural, spiritual, economic, and governance relationships to the lands, waters, and wildlife within our Territory, which continue to be exercised by our members today.

#### (b) Are there certain rights, practices, and/or interests that are of importance to Binche in the Project area?

Binche exercises and continues to rely upon our Binche Rights in and around the Project area, including but not limited to hunting, fishing, trapping, gathering, cultural practices, and the transmission of traditional knowledge. These Binche Rights are interconnected with our Binche stewardship and governance Rights, which we exercise throughout our lands and waters.

#### (c) Are there certain animals, plants, habitat, watercourses, or other things present in the Project area that need to be considered?

The Project area contains wildlife, fish, plant species, wetlands, water courses, and ecological systems that are culturally, spiritually, and economically important to Binche. Of particular importance are species relied upon for food security and cultural continuity, including but not limited to moose, fish species, and plant medicines. Habitat integrity, cumulative disturbance, and long-term ecological sustainability are central concerns.

#### (d) Are there specific sites or areas of importance to Binche that may be affected by the Project?

There are numerous sites and areas of cultural, spiritual, historical, and land use importance to Binche within and surrounding the Project area. Due to the sensitive nature of such information, details will be shared through appropriate confidential processes at different times throughout the Assessment Process and as they become available. The identification and protection of these areas are expected to form an integral part of the Assessment Process, including through culturally appropriate information-sharing and protection mechanisms, and in a manner consistent with Binche constitutionally protected laws and customs (part of Binche governance Rights).

- (f) Are there potential direct or indirect effects to community health, including physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual effects from the Project?

Yes. The Project may give rise to direct and indirect effects on community health, including physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being. Potential pathways include changes to land and water quality, impacts on country foods and food security, cumulative ecological degradation, changes in access to culturally significant areas, and socio-economic pressures associated with large-scale industrial development. The Project will also give rise to cumulative adverse effects on our people and our Binche Rights.

## **2. Declaration of participation**

Binche confirms our intention to participate in the Assessment Process for the Project, including as a “participating Indigenous nation” pursuant to the *Environmental Assessment Act* (British Columbia). Take note that such participation does not constitute consent to the Project, nor does it limit Binche’s inherent rights of self-government, our ability to conduct our own assessments, or our authority to regulate activities within our Territory in accordance with our own governance structures and rights.

## **3. Comments on the need for an impact assessment**

Binche is of the view that the Project warrants a full impact assessment under the *Impact Assessment Act*. The Project is proposed within Binche Territory and has the potential to affect lands, waters, wildlife, and cultural values central to the exercise of our Binche Rights. Given the scale and complexity of the proposed mining activities, the potential for cumulative effects, and the likelihood of adverse effects within areas of federal jurisdiction (including fisheries and species at risk), a comprehensive assessment is required.

## **4. Comments on substitution**

The following comments are intended to ensure that any substituted process maintains full protection of Binche’s Rights.

Binche is open to the assessment of the Project occurring through a coordinated and efficient process as between BC’s EAO and the IAAC. However, such efficiencies cannot come at the cost of appropriate federal oversight, nor should they diminish opportunities for our government to build relationships, trust, and key institutional knowledge with Canada through regulatory oversight of projects. Most importantly, the federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change (“**Federal Minister**”) must ensure that a substituted assessment process does not in any manner diminish federal responsibilities to uphold the honor of the Crown and discharge the duty to consult and accommodate, which is owed by both the provincial and federal governments to Binche.

To this end, Binche requests confirmation that IAAC and other federal Crown representatives will be made available to Binche over the course of the Project's assessment to address matters under federal jurisdiction. Please confirm the names and contact information for such federal representatives so that Binche can establish clear lines of communication moving forward.

Binche further requests clarification regarding the mechanism by which matters under federal jurisdiction may be brought to the attention of the IAAC during the assessment, including any opportunity for federal technical input prior to the preparation of materials for the Federal Minister's decision under the *Impact Assessment Act*.

Binche also requests confirmation that the Federal Minister will engage in a meaningful and substantive decision-making process following a substituted assessment, and that Binche will have a meaningful opportunity to engage with the Federal Minister regarding those proposed statutory decisions.

In addition to the above assurances, if substitution is approved, we request that the Federal Minister include the following conditions of substitution:

- Assurance of federal participation in the Technical Advisory Committee for the Project to address all matters under federal jurisdiction;
- Explicit integration of cumulative effects assessment, including all potential adverse effects under both federal and provincial jurisdiction, within the substituted Assessment process, with particular emphasis on related impacts to Indigenous rights and interests;
- Explicit integration of federal species at risk and fisheries related factors within the substituted assessment process, with particular emphasis on related impacts to Indigenous rights and interests;
- Enforceable disclosure obligations on the Project proponent if information gaps persist, particularly in response to information requests from Binche; and
- BC EAO's use of an issue tracking table, accessible to Binche, that shows how concerns regarding potential adverse effects to Binche Rights are being addressed, including timelines for responses and opportunities to revisit issues if new information arises (e.g., traditional knowledge, as it is provided).

##### **5. Comments on the Initial Project Description**

Binche anticipates requesting access to baseline data and supporting technical materials from the proponent to inform our independent technical review. Timely access to this information will support meaningful participation in the Assessment Process. Binche reserves the right to supplement its comments as further information becomes available.

during the Pre-planning and Early Engagement phases will be documented and considered prior to that determination. Where feasible, Binche requests an opportunity to review and verify the accuracy of how our submissions have been reflected in the IAAC's issues summary before a final determination is made.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments and feedback on the forthcoming Assessment Process over the Project. We look forward to working with you as this process advances. Moving forward, please direct all communications regarding the Assessment Process to Dwayne Martin – Natural Resource Director, Dave Birdi – CEO Binche, and to Shauna Norman – Indigenous Relationships Manager, Shas-Ti Environmental.

Sincerely,

<Original signed by>

Dwayne Martin  
Director,  
Binche Keyoh Society

CC: Dave Birdi, CEO, Binche