



Canadian Environmental
Assessment Agency

Agence canadienne
d'évaluation environnementale

Suite 200 Bureau 200
1801 Hollis Street 1801 rue Hollis
Halifax NS B3J 3N4 Halifax, NE B3J 3N4

June 12, 2019

Sent by E-mail

James Millard
Manager Environment and Permitting
Atlantic Gold Corporation
jmillard@atlanticgoldcorporation.com

Dear Mr. Millard:

SUBJECT: Beaver Dam Mine Project – Round 2, Part 2 Information Requirements

In August 2017, the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency sent Information Requirements (IRs) to Atlantic Gold Corporation following a technical review of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) of the Beaver Dam Mine Project by the Agency, other federal government experts, Indigenous groups, and the public. Atlantic Gold's responses to the IRs were received on February 28, 2019 in the form of a revised EIS.

On May 8, 2019, the Agency completed its technical review of the revised EIS for the proposed Project and determined that additional information is required, as per IR Round 2, Part 1. The Agency has subsequently received comments from all participating Indigenous groups and today, June 12, 2019, is submitting additional IRs (Round 2, Part 2).

As outlined in the Agency's letter of May 8, 2019, with the issuance of these IRs, the federal timeline within which the Minister of Environment and Climate Change's decision must be made is paused as of May 8, 2019. The Agency requires acceptable responses to the IRs to complete its review and proceed with the preparation of its Environmental Assessment Report. Once you have submitted responses to all IRs, the Agency will take a period of up to 15 days without the timeline resuming to evaluate if the information provided is complete. If the Agency determines the responses to be complete, it will commence a technical review of the additional information and the timeline for the environmental assessment will resume the following day. If the responses are determined to be incomplete, you will be notified at that time. If the Agency has not come to a conclusion after 15 days, the timelines will resume the next day. For further information, please consult the Agency document [Information Requests and Timelines](#).



The responses to IRs may be in a format of your choice; however, the format must be such that the responses to individual IRs can be easily identified. You may wish to discuss certain IRs with the Agency, Indigenous groups or other government experts, as necessary, to obtain clarification or additional information, prior to submission of the responses as this can help to ensure that IRs are responded to adequately.

The IRs and your responses will be made public on the Canadian Environmental Assessment Registry's Beaver Dam Mine Project Internet Site:

<https://www.ceaa-acee.gc.ca/050/evaluations/proj/80111?culture=en-CA>

Please confirm receipt of this message and contact me if you require further information.

Sincerely,

Nicole Scotney
Project Manager
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency

Attachment (1) – Beaver Dam Mine Project – Round II Information Requirements

Cc: Susanne Wade, Environment and Climate Change Canada
Michael Hingston, Environment and Climate Change Canada
Allison Denning, Health Canada
Chris Burbidge, Fisheries and Oceans
Shelley Ball, Natural Resources Canada
Bridget Tutty, Nova Scotia Environment

Attachment 1
Beaver Dam Mine Project
Round 2, Part 2 Information Requirements from Environmental Impact Statement Review
June 12, 2019

INTRODUCTION

In August 2017 the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (the Agency) sent 51 information requirements (IRs) to Atlantic Gold Corporation (the proponent) based on the technical review of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and associated EIS Summary for the proposed Beaver Dam Mine Project. The proponent submitted responses to the IRs in the form of a revised EIS on February 28, 2019. The Agency, other federal government experts and Indigenous groups reviewed the IR responses, and the Agency prepared additional IRs, as elaborated in this document. Round 2, Part 1 was issued on May 8, 2019.

ACRONYMS AND SHORT FORMS

Agency	Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency
EA	Environmental Assessment
EEMP	Environmental Effects Monitoring Plan
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
HHRA	human health risk assessment
km	kilometre
KMKNO	Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn Negotiation Office
LAA	Local Assessment Area
m	metre
VC	valued component

Beaver Dam Mine Project - Technical Review Information Requirements, Round II, Part 2, May 2019

Reference IR#	Expert Dept.	EIS Guideline Reference	EIS Reference	Context and Rationale	The Proponent is Required to ...
Current Use					
CEAA-2-48	CEAA, Indigenous groups	6.1.4 Indigenous Peoples	Sections 4.3.2, 5.0, 6.3.4	<p>The EIS Guidelines (Sections 4.3.2, 5.0, 6.3.4) require the proponent to include measures to mitigate the effects of changes to the environment caused by the Project on current use of lands for traditional purposes and Aboriginal potential or established rights. The EIS must clearly describe how the proponent intends to implement those mitigation measures.</p> <p>In the revised EIS, Figure 6.14-1 shows that current Mi'kmaq land and resource uses overlap with the Project LAA, including in the vicinity of the mine site. The EIS does not describe how the proponent intends to implement measures to mitigate potential impacts to the Mi'kmaq's ability to continue to access preferred current land and use sites (such as preferred harvest areas) and to exercise their harvesting right. Rather, the proponent states it will "Engage in in-depth access management planning ... with Millbrook to ensure continued access to preferred harvest and occupancy areas, where possible."</p>	<p>Provide specific mitigation measures and describe how the proponent intends to implement those measures to mitigate potential effects on the experience and the current use of land and resources for traditional purposes and on the ability of the Mi'kmaq to continue to exercise their harvesting rights.</p> <p>Where access to preferred areas by the Mi'kmaq cannot be maintained, provide information on specific mitigation, including measures to minimize disruption within the project area and to ensure that traditional practices can continue in other areas of similar value during Project operations.</p>
CEAA 2-49	CEAA, Indigenous groups	6.1.4 Indigenous Peoples	Section 6.1.4	<p>Section 6.1.4 of the revised EIS indicates that Millbrook First Nation <i>significantly</i> uses the Beaver Dam Mine site and its vicinity, and that there will be a loss of access to current-use lands for up to eight years. The revised EIS states that "local residents of the Beaver Dam, Sheet Harbour and Millbrook IRs frequently use the area (range of use from weekly to yearly, depending on availability of species) for hunting and rely on the wild harvest as an important food and dietary source. Equally, community members harvest berries when in season, and a number of plants that are also used for sustenance, as well as traditional medicines."</p> <p>The proponent acknowledges that this loss of land includes impeded access to flora and fauna, and that an exclusion zone for</p>	<p>Based on the information available, calculate and provide a figure depicting the total area lost for all VCs that may affect the current use of land by Indigenous peoples. The calculation is required to include the direct loss of land (i.e. the Project footprint), as well as indirect loss of land (e.g. visual or noise disturbances, and exclusion zones for the use of firearms, etc.). The direct and indirect loss of land is to be quantified as a surface area measure, and represented in plan view on the figure.</p> <p>Explain how nearby lands would be a suitable alternative for Indigenous groups to practice current use, and how they are sufficient to limit potential impacts on Indigenous</p>

				<p>the use of firearms is in place that may affect hunting. However, no estimates have been provided for the amount of land lost for current-use purposes for the duration of the Project. Furthermore, the proponent states that there is sufficient and unrestricted adjacent access to similar lands to limit any impact on Indigenous peoples as a result of Project activities. However, a better understanding of whether nearby lands are suitable and immediately available (i.e. not private land) for Indigenous peoples to use and/or harvest is required.</p>	<p>peoples. Include a description of the suitable alternative areas that may be used by Indigenous peoples for current-use practices (in consideration of other land uses, zoning and ownership) in the local and regional assessment area, and indicate the degree of access to these areas in realistic and quantifiable terms.</p> <p>Provide a definition of the term “suitable alternative”, incorporating a consideration of Indigenous groups’ potential adaptability to transfer existing cultural, experiential and biophysical reliance on lands and resources to available alternate nearby areas. Include a discussion on whether and how these conclusions were informed by engagement with the affected Indigenous groups.</p>
CEAA 2-50	CEAA, Indigenous groups	6.1.4 Indigenous Peoples	Section 6.14.5.2	<p>In response to CEAA 1-48, the revised EIS (section 6.14.5.2) states that “a significant adverse residual effect on Indigenous peoples as a Project-related environmental effect [is one] that results in one or more of the following outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term loss of the availability of, or access to, land and resources currently relied on for traditional use practices or the permanent loss of traditional use areas within a large portion of the project area. • Effects on health and/or socio-economic conditions of affected Indigenous communities to the extent that there are associated detectable and sustained decreases in the quality of life of a community.” <p>Table 5.10-1 of the revised EIS defines the definition of “long term” as an effect that extends beyond three years. The proposed life of the Beaver Dam Mine Project extends beyond three years. As such, in consideration of the threshold highlighted above, the effects predicted by the proponent to the Mi’kmaq of Nova Scotia would be significant.</p>	<p>Provide additional rationale for the conclusion that potential effects to Indigenous peoples are not significant based on the threshold identified in section 6.11.5.2 of the revised EIS.</p>

CEAA 2-51	CEAA, Indigenous groups	6.1.4 Indigenous Peoples	Section 8.5.7	<p>During consultation, Indigenous groups expressed concern regarding the potential for the Beaver Dam Mine Project and other regional projects to affect access to and current use of lands and resources. While the Agency is of the view that identifying projects within a 35 km radius may be appropriate for the cumulative effects assessment of some VCs (e.g. fish and fish habitat, air quality, habitat and fauna, etc.), it considers the buffer to be limiting for the Indigenous peoples' VC. As suggested during consultation with Indigenous groups, the Agency requires the proponent to broaden the spatial boundaries of the current use of lands to the Eskikewa'kik for their consideration of cumulative environmental effects of existing and future physical activities that are certain or foreseeable (Figure 6.14-4 in the revised EIS).</p> <p>Additionally, the proponent is required to provide a complete analysis of the cumulative effects assessment in relation to Indigenous peoples. For example, although Table 8.4-2 in the revised EIS identifies that the residual effects of many certain or foreseeable projects may interact with the residual effects of the Project (section 8.5.7), the proponent's discussion is limited to forestry, Touquoy Mine and the Beaver Dam to Touquoy Haul Road. Other projects within the 35 km buffer, and noted in Table 8.4-2, are not part of the proponent's analysis. For example, despite only being 20 km away, Fifteen Mile Stream Gold Project is only considered in the context of Haul Road traffic and does not address the decrease of available land within the region that may affect the ability of Indigenous peoples to practice traditional and current-use activities.</p> <p>In the context of this information requirement, note that specific concerns of Indigenous peoples expressed throughout consultation include, but are not limited to: direct loss of land; contamination of water and soil; decreased quality of harvested wildlife, fish, berries and medicinal plants; increased noise; decreased air quality; removal of access to areas for traditional practices; and introduction of new access to areas (which may open access to hunting by non-Indigenous peoples), etc.</p>	<p>Revise the spatial scope for the cumulative effects analysis of VCs related to Indigenous peoples.</p> <p>Provide an updated cumulative effects analysis and significance determination for VCs related to Indigenous peoples (e.g. current use of lands, health and socio-economics) within the Eskikewa'kik territory.</p>
-----------	-------------------------	--------------------------	---------------	---	---

CEAA 2-52	CEAA, Indigenous groups	6.1.4 Indigenous Peoples	Appendix C.2	<p>With respect to the report <i>Evaluation of Exposure Potential Related to Dust Deposition from Haul Road Traffic onto Soils, Berries, and Vegetation</i> (Intrinsik, 2019) provided in Appendix C.2 of the revised EIS, KMKNO requested that a rationale for the berry and leaf samples used in Intrinsik’s analysis be provided. In particular, KMKNO noted that Labrador tea is omitted from the berry and leaf samples used in the evaluation, despite Labrador tea being commonly consumed. KMKNO also notes that velvet-leaved blueberry (<i>Vaccinium myrtilloides</i>) was selected, while the more common late low blueberry (<i>Vaccinium angustifolium</i>), which is the usual wild species harvested for human consumption within the province, was not.</p> <p>Further, KMKNO requests a discussion of laboratory methods and results to gain a better understanding of Intrinsik’s evaluation. For example, it is unclear whether the berries and leaves were analyzed separately by species or by composite.</p>	<p>Provide a rationale for the sample set of berries and leaves used in <i>Evaluation of Exposure Potential Related to Dust Deposition from Haul Road Traffic onto Soils, Berries, and Vegetation</i> (Intrinsik, 2019).</p> <p>Provide laboratory methods and results used to support the report <i>Evaluation of Exposure Potential Related to Dust Deposition from Haul Road Traffic onto Soils, Berries, and Vegetation</i> (Intrinsik, 2019).</p>
CEAA 2-53	CEAA, Indigenous groups	6.1.4 Indigenous Peoples	Section 6.14	<p>Section 6.14 of the revised EIS includes an assessment of how the health of Indigenous peoples may be affected by the Project. Health Canada indicated that there is insufficient justification in the revised EIS (based on the consideration of air quality, noise, drinking water and country foods assessment) to conclude that effects on human health are not significant. Round 2, Part 1 IRs CEAA 2-29 to CEAA 2-39 require the proponent to update their assessment of air quality and noise, and to further consider drinking water, while CEAA 2-38 requires that the proponent conduct a Human Health Risk Assessment (or sufficient justification if one is not required). Based on the outcomes of the aforementioned IRs, the proponent’s environmental effects and cumulative effects assessments (i.e. analysis and significance determination) of the health of Indigenous peoples requires an update.</p> <p>Guidance on the assessment of effects on human health is provided in the following Health Canada publications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Canada. 2016. <i>Guidance for Evaluating Human Health Impacts in Environmental Assessment: NOISE</i>; • Health Canada. 2016. <i>Guidance for Evaluating Human Health Impacts in Environmental Assessment: AIR QUALITY</i>; 	Update environmental effects and cumulative effects analysis and significance determination on the health of Indigenous peoples, including the consideration of air, noise, drinking water and country foods.

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Canada. 2018. <i>Guidance for Evaluating Human Health Impacts in Environmental Assessment: COUNTRY FOODS</i>; • Health Canada. 2012. <i>Federal Contaminated Site Risk Assessment in Canada: Supplemental Guidance on Human Health Risk Assessment for Country Foods (HHRA Foods)</i>. 	
CEAA 2-54	CEAA, Indigenous groups	Part 1, 1.1.1. Aboriginal Peoples; Part 2, 6.3.1 Fish and Fish Habitat	Section 6.9; 6.9.6	<p>Section 1.1.1 of the EIS Guidelines requires a description and analysis of how changes to the environment caused by the Project will affect Aboriginal groups' current use of land and resources for traditional purposes. This assessment characterizes any changes to resources (fish, wildlife, birds, plants or other natural resources) used for traditional purposes (e.g. hunting, fishing, trapping, collection of medicinal plants, use of sacred sites).</p> <p>In KMKNO's comments on the revised EIS, gaps were identified regarding the characterization of fish and fish habitat in relation to the Aboriginal fishery. The revised EIS does not clearly confirm the quality of Aboriginal fishery species habitat within the proposed mine footprint and does not identify Atlantic salmon as a fish species that supports Aboriginal fisheries.</p> <p>The proponent's responses to CEAA 2-06 through 2-23 will address many of KMKNO's questions regarding the characterization of fish habitat in the project area, as well as quantify potential losses/modifications. In addition, CEAA 2-33 requests a Human Health Risk Assessment that will help to determine potential risks to humans in consuming fish that may be affected by metals. However, a discussion regarding how potential impacts to fish and fish habitat from the Project may affect the Aboriginal fishery is required. The discussion should include, but not be limited to, an overview of how the Aboriginal fishery may be affected during the Project's lifespan, particularly for species in the Killag River (a known salmon-bearing watercourse).</p>	<p>Provide an overview of Aboriginal fisheries activity in the local and regional assessment areas, including, but not limited to, species harvested and known harvesting locations.</p> <p>Discuss how the proposed Project may affect the Aboriginal fishery of the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia, particularly for species in the Killag River.</p>