



Impact Assessment
Agency of Canada

Ontario Region
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Toronto ON M5J 1R7

Agence d'évaluation
d'impact du Canada

Région de l'Ontario
600-55 rue York
Toronto ON M5J 1R7

February 6, 2023

Sent by email

Grand Chief Mandy Gull-Masty
Cree Nation Government
2 Lakeshore Road
Nemaska, QC J0Y 3B0
<email address removed>

Dear Grand Chief Mandy Gull-Masty:

Subject: Notice of Comment Period on the Draft Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines and Draft Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan for the Crawford Nickel Project and Request for Input by March 8, 2023

Thank you for your continued participation in the Planning Phase of the federal impact assessment for the Crawford Nickel Project (the Project) proposed by Canada Nickel Company (the Proponent).

I am writing from the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (the Agency) to:

- inform you that the Agency is conducting a 30-day public comment period from **February 6, 2023** to **March 8, 2023**;
- invite input from the Cree Nation Government on the draft Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines (**Enclosure 1**) for the Project;
- invite input from the Cree Nation Government on the draft Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan (**Enclosure 2**);
- offer grant funding of **\$5,000** to support the Cree Nation Government's review of the draft documents; and
- follow-up with the Cree Nation Government on the Agency's invitation to meet during the current public comment period.

Development of Impact Assessment Planning Documents

On January 5, 2023, the Cree Nation Government received notice from the Agency that a federal impact assessment is required for the Project. The Agency has developed the draft versions of the Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines and Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan.

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The draft planning documents were informed by the Proponent's Detailed Project Description¹ and Response to the Summary of Issues,² as well as comments received during the first comment period on the Project, held from August 8, 2022 to September 7, 2022.

Drafts of the Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines and the Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan are posted on the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry Internet site³ (the Registry), along with comments received to date. Drafts of these planning documents are also enclosed with this letter for your review and consideration.

Input to the Impact Assessment Planning Documents

To seek input from Indigenous communities, the Agency is conducting a **30-day comment period** on the draft Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines and the draft Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan from February 6, 2023 to March 8, 2023.

The Cree Nation Government is invited to provide input by **March 8, 2023**.

- Comments provided by the Cree Nation Government would be used to inform the finalization of the Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines. These Guidelines provide direction to the Proponent on the factors to be considered, the methodology to be followed, and information requirements in order to guide preparation of the Impact Statement.
- Comments provided by the Cree Nation Government will be used to inform the finalization of the Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan. This plan outlines opportunities and methods for meaningful engagement and consultation with potentially affected Indigenous communities throughout the impact assessment process for the Project.

The Agency requests that comments be submitted using the "submit a comment" feature available on the Registry (Reference No. 83857 at <https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/proj/83857>). Attachments can also be uploaded using this feature. If you have any questions or difficulties submitting this way, please contact the Agency for assistance using the contact details provided below.

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¹ <https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/document/145854>

² <https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/document/145855>

³ <https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/proj/83857>

As part of your input, the Agency also welcomes receiving any existing study or plan prepared by the Cree Nation Government that is relevant to the region within which the Project is proposed (e.g., a community land-use plan or an existing Traditional Knowledge and Land Use Study). Obtaining this information during the current comment period will help inform the final Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines.

During this comment period, the Agency will also seek input from the public on the draft Public Participation Plan, from federal authorities on the draft Permitting Plan, and from the Province of Ontario on the draft Cooperation Plan.

Pursuant to the *Information and Management of Time Limits Regulations*, the Agency is required to post finalized versions of each of these planning documents, with the Notice of Commencement for the impact assessment of the Project, on April 1, 2023.

Please note, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada has until 45 days after the Notice of Commencement to make a final determination on whether the assessment of the Project should continue to be led by the Agency, or whether it should be referred to a review panel. If you have views on this aspect, you are welcome to provide them during the current comment period.

Funding

To support the Cree Nation Government's review and comment on the draft Guidelines and the draft Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan, the Agency is able to offer the Cree Nation Government a grant of **\$5,000**. Please respond to Crawford@iaac-aeic.gc.ca to confirm your interest in this grant funding opportunity, and the Agency's funding program will follow up with you. An overview of eligible activities and expenses is also enclosed (**Enclosure 3**).

Invitation to Meet with the Agency

If you are interested, the Agency wishes to schedule a virtual meeting with the Cree Nation Government during the current public comment period to discuss the draft Guidelines and draft Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan, and to learn how the Cree Nation may potentially be impacted by the Project. The Agency encourages you to begin considering the Cree Nation Government's availability, and will follow up with you immediately to schedule this meeting.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Information submitted to the Agency to inform this project assessment may be posted online to Registry (Reference #83857) subject to certain exceptions related to privacy, security or confidentiality. The Agency's Submission Policy⁴ describes what submitted information can be shared publicly, and what should remain private. For more information on how we protect your privacy, please refer to the Privacy Notice⁵.

Indigenous Knowledge shared in confidence is protected from disclosure under section 119 of the *Impact Assessment Act*, except if written consent is provided, or if the information is publicly available. In addition, Indigenous Knowledge shared in confidence could be shared with certain parties if disclosure is necessary for procedural fairness and natural justice or for use in legal proceedings. This ensures that interested persons have a fair opportunity to participate in processes that would likely affect their interests, and that they have access to all necessary information and evidence relied on by the decision-maker.

Should you wish to provide any comments or documents that contain confidential or sensitive information that should be protected from release to the public, please contact the Agency at the details provided below **before** submitting the information. This will ensure that your submission is handled appropriately. Note, the Agency will consult with you prior to disclosing Indigenous Knowledge shared in confidence under an exception.

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⁴ <https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/participation/conditions>

⁵ <https://www.iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/protection?culture=en-CA>

Please feel free to contact me at 902-399-8838 or at Crawford@iaac-aeic.gc.ca if you have any questions. I welcome the opportunity to work collaboratively with the Cree Nation Government.

Sincerely,

Norton, Erin Digitally signed by Norton,
Erin
Date: 2023.02.06 09:55:30
-04'00'

Erin Norton
Crown Consultation Coordinator
Impact Assessment Agency of Canada

Enclosures: 1: Draft Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines
 2: Draft Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan
 3: Overview of Eligible Expenses and Activities

c.c.: Kristen Moar, Cree Nation Government
 Isaac Voyageur, Cree Nation Government
 Kelly LeBlanc, Cree Nation Government
 Bill Namagoose, Cree Nation Government