



Impact Assessment  
Agency of Canada

Ontario Region  
600-55 York Street  
Toronto ON M5J 1R7

Agence d'évaluation  
d'impact du Canada

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

August 30, 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: Crawford Nickel Project - Next Steps in the Impact Statement  
Phase of the Impact Assessment Process**

The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (the Agency) is writing to follow-up on our March 31, 2023 letter regarding the federal impact assessment for the Crawford Nickel Project (the Project), proposed by Canada Nickel Company (the Proponent). The Project is now in the Impact Statement Phase of the federal impact assessment.

The purpose of this letter is to:

- provide you with updates on the federal impact assessment process for the Project;
- summarize the information available to the Agency with respect to the potential impacts of the Project on the Cree Nation;
- identify the next steps in the federal impact assessment process and opportunities for the Cree Nation to participate; and
- offer bridge grant funding of **\$10,000** to support the Cree Nation Government's participation in the federal impact assessment process, as we transition from the Planning Phase to the Impact Statement Phase.

**Updates on the Federal Impact Assessment Process for the Project**

During the Planning Phase for the Project, the Agency received a request for the assessment to be referred to a review panel. As per section 36 of the *Impact Assessment Act*, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada may refer the impact assessment of a project to a review panel if he determines it is in the public interest to do so.

Taking into consideration the information available to date, the assessment of the Project was not referred to a review panel under section 36 of the *Impact Assessment Act* and will continue to be led by the Agency.

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### **Summary of Information Available to the Agency on the Potential Impacts of the Project on Cree Nation**

The Agency understands that the Project is located in the area over which the Cree Nation asserted Aboriginal rights, as protected by section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, and that the Cree Nation filed an action in the Ontario Superior Court of Justice to obtain recognition of these rights over certain lands within northeastern Ontario, including the lands on which the Project is located.

During the Planning Phase, the Agency did not receive any information from the Cree Nation Government on the Project's potential to cause adverse impacts on Cree Nation's exercise of rights, and on impacts to the health, social and economic conditions of the Cree Nation. The Agency ***invites the Cree Nation Government to provide information*** related to the above and pertaining to your traditional territory or traditional land uses, so it can be used to inform the impact assessment process.

### **Next Steps in the Federal Impact Assessment Process and Opportunities for Participation**

The Agency understands that the Cree Nation Government is content to continue to receive updates from the Agency at key milestones of the impact assessment process, and that the Cree Nation Government would like to continue to be provided with all relevant information with respect to the impact assessment of the Project and be afforded opportunities to discuss any concerns throughout the federal impact assessment process.

The Agency would be pleased to schedule a virtual meeting with the Cree Nation Government to discuss the contents of this letter. The Agency encourages you to share information with the Agency on the Project's potential to cause adverse impacts on the Cree Nation's exercise of rights, and impacts to the health, social and economic conditions of the Cree Nation by **November 1, 2023**. The bridge grant funding, noted below, can be used to support the Cree Nation Government's participation at this meeting as well as for providing any additional information to the Agency. **Please follow-up with the Agency to confirm whether the Cree Nation Government is interested in a meeting, and to schedule a date and time.**

### **Funding**

The Agency is able to offer bridge grant funding of **\$10,000** to support the Cree Nation Government's participation in the impact assessment process for the Project, as we transition from the Planning Phase to the Impact Statement Phase. Eligible activities for this grant would include:

- preparing for, and participating in, meetings with the Agency to discuss the impact assessment of the Project; and,

- providing information to the Agency regarding the potential adverse impacts of the Project on the Cree Nation's exercise of rights, and on impacts to the health, social and economic conditions of the Cree Nation.

**Please respond to [Crawford@iaac-aeic.gc.ca](mailto: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 1**).

The Agency will offer additional funding during the Impact Statement Phase to support the continued participation of the Cree Nation Government throughout the remainder of the impact assessment process. The Agency will notify the Cree Nation Government once a call for applications for this funding is made available. Further information on participant funding during the impact assessment process can be found on the Agency's website.<sup>1</sup>

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Information submitted to the Agency to inform this project assessment may be posted online to the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry (Reference #83857) subject to certain exceptions related to privacy, security or confidentiality. The Agency's Submission Policy<sup>2</sup> 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 Notice<sup>3</sup>.

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.

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<sup>1</sup> Agency's Participant Funding Program: <https://www.canada.ca/en/impact-assessment-agency/services/public-participation/participant-funding-application-environmental-assessment.html>

<sup>2</sup> Agency's Submission Policy: <https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/participation/conditions>

<sup>3</sup> Agency's Privacy Notice: <https://www.iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/protection?culture=en-CA>

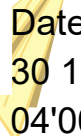
Should you wish to provide any comments or documents that contain confidential or sensitive information that should be protected from release to the public, please contact the Agency at the details provided below **before** submitting the information. This will ensure that your submission is handled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

**New Crown Consultation Coordinator**

I would also like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the new Crown Consultation Coordinator for the Project, and the main point of contact at the Agency for the federal impact assessment process for the Project. Please note that Erin Norton, the former Crown Consultation Coordinator, has moved on to a new opportunity with the Agency. Any future questions or comments can be directed to me at [Crawford@iaac-aeic.gc.ca](mailto:Crawford@iaac-aeic.gc.ca) or by phone at 416-209-4623.

Sincerely,

Neha Frantz



Date: 2023.08.  
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Neha Frantz  
Project Analyst

Enclosures:

1. Overview of Eligible Activities and Expenses for Bridge Grant Funding

c.c.: Kristen Moar, Cree Nation Government  
Anna Krupa, Cree Nation Government  
Eva-Maria Hanchar, Cree Nation Government  
Cameron McLean, Cree Nation Government  
Isaac Voyageur, Cree Nation Government  
Davey Bobbish, Cree Nation Government  
Lillian Loon, Cree Nation Government