

NORTH SLAVE MÉTIS ALLIANCE

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August 22 2013

Honourable Bernard Valcourt
Minister
Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development
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VIA EMAIL

Dear Minister Valcourt:

RE: GIANT MINE REMEDIATION PROJECT REPORT OF ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA0809-001)

The North Slave Métis Alliance ("NSMA") received a letter dated July 30, 2013 from the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency inviting the NSMA to provide comments on the Report of Environmental Assessment ("the Report") on the Giant Mine Remediation Project ("the Project").

NSMA members have a strong *prima facie* claim as a Métis community that holds Aboriginal rights protected by section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982¹ in the area north and east of Great Slave Lake, Northwest Territories. The Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board ("Review Board") recognizes that the Project is within the traditional land use area of the North Slave Métis people.²

The North Slave Métis people have for approximately 200 years used and occupied their traditional land. The land where Giant Mine is located is on the North Slave Métis people's traditional land. The 237,000 tons of arsenic trioxide stored in underground vaults at the mine is an unmitigated disaster!

¹Enge v. Mandeville et al, 2013 NWTSC 33.

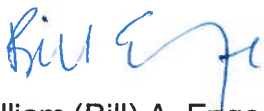
² EA0809-001: Giant Mine Remediation Project. Report of Environmental Assessment and Reasons for Decision.pg 4.

NSMA members have consistently expressed their concerns about this remediation Project. Their primary concern revolves around AANDC's refusal to remove the arsenic trioxide from the mine site. This means that the North Slave Metis people's traditional land may, in perpetuity, be in danger of an unprecedented environmental catastrophe. It should not therefore come as a surprise to the authorities that the NSMA does not support AANDC's plan to leave the arsenic trioxide on our people's doorstep - in perpetuity. An environmental hazard of this magnitude and danger should not be permitted to threaten the lives of every living thing around it – forever!

The Review Board, while undertaking its regulatory mandate, provided the NSMA with an opportunity to voice its concerns respecting the Project. That being said, the NSMA supports the Review Board's conclusion that the Project proponents should not be planning to keep the arsenic trioxide stored in underground vaults at Giant Mine in perpetuity. In other words, the Review Board recommends that AANDC be required to find a way to remove the arsenic trioxide sometime in the future. This will require AANDC to research possible methods of removing the arsenic trioxide and reviewing these research methods every 20 years.

In closing, the NSMA is of the view that you and the Responsible Ministers should adopt the Review Board's recommendation to the effect that AANDC be required to look for ways and means to permanently remove the arsenic trioxide from the NSMA's traditional land.

Yours truly,



William (Bill) A. Enge

President

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