

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: NECHALACHO RARE EARTH ELEMENT PROJECT REPORT OF ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA1011-001)

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 Avalon Rare Metals Inc. Nechalacho Rare Earth Element 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 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 should be prevented from negatively affecting water quality and that First Nation and Metis traditional knowledge should also be incorporated into the ongoing management of the Project.

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

² EA1011-001: Avalon Rare Metals, Inc., Nechalacho Rare Earth Element Project. Report of Environmental Assessment and Reasons for Decision.pp15; 45; 112-113.

In closing, the NSMA is of the view that you and the Responsible Ministers should adopt the Review Board's recommendations, respecting the Nechalacho Rare Earth Element Project, as they will help ensure that the Project will be undertaken in a sustainable way.

Yours truly,



William (Bill) A. Enge

President

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