

Honourable Dominic LeBlanc

Minister of Intergovernmental and Northern Affairs and Internal Trade
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

April 23, 2019

Giant Mine Oversight Board Annual Report 2018

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc:

Pursuant to the Giant Mine Remediation Project Environmental Agreement and on behalf of the Giant Mine Oversight Board, I am pleased to submit the Board's third annual report.

The Giant Mine Oversight Board (GMOB) was created as a result of the Report of Environmental Assessment and Reasons for Decision: Giant Mine Remediation Project, EA 0809-001 (June 20, 2013) and the subsequent Giant Mine Remediation Project Environmental Agreement signed on June 9, 2015 by the Government of Canada (Minister for Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada), the Government of the Northwest Territories, the Yellowknives Dene First Nation, the North Slave Métis Alliance, Alternatives North, and the City of Yellowknife.

Included in the attached report are eleven recommendations that address issues GMOB feels must be resolved to ensure the effective remediation of the Giant Mine site in a manner that will ensure benefits to local residents. Many of these recommendations have been made in the Annual Reports from the previous years but have been reiterated again as they have not, in our opinion, been satisfactorily addressed to date. The remaining recommendations are equally important to address, particularly as the Giant Mine Remediation Project Team (the Project Team) has formally submitted its water licence application to the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board.

A summary of the recommendations follows. Please note that, this year, we have clearly identified the party to whom each recommendation is directed. The report itself provides the full context for each recommendation.

Recommendations:

1. Directed to: Minister and Deputy Minister, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC)

We recommend that the Yellowknife CIRNAC office make it a priority to produce a socio-economic strategy and act on it.

- The strategy should identify barriers to local business and job opportunities and ways the Project will improve community well-being, increase trained workers, and other community assets.
- CIRNAC should work with federal, territorial, municipal, and Indigenous agencies to develop and act on this strategy.

2. Directed to: Minister and Deputy Minister CIRNAC; Minister and Deputy Minister, Government of the Northwest Territories' Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR)

We recommend that the federal and territorial government give each Party enough resources so they can fully participate in all aspects of the Project, including:

- Critical review of technical reports linked to water licensing.
- Informed participation in water licensing workshops and hearings.
- Adequate consultation with their constituents.

3. Directed to: Minister and Deputy Minister, CIRNAC; all Parties; GMOB

We recommend again that the Project Team give its duty to communicate and engage with the public an equal importance to other parts of the Project by:

- Funding communication and engagement activities adequately.
- Evaluating their effectiveness.
- Responding to gaps.

The Parties and GMOB should assist the Project Team by:

- Asking their audiences how to best ensure the Project Team understands their interests.
- Asking their audiences how to best help them understand the Project Team's challenges and opportunities.

4. Directed to: Mayor and Council, City of Yellowknife

We recommend that the City of Yellowknife do more to make sure its citizens are informed, involved, and realize the possible social and economic benefits from the remediation Project. The Project could impact City residents in several ways, including:

- Availability of clean construction fill.
- Possible change in city boundary.
- Possible change in city tax base.
- Public boat launch closure.
- Blasting noise and dust.

5. Directed to: Minister, CIRNAC

We recommend the federal government immediately respond to the YKDFN requests for an apology and compensation for the historic operations at the Giant Mine.

6. Directed to: Project Team

We recommend that the Project Team provide a five-year project plan that:

- Shows how activities are linked, scheduled, ordered, and integrated.
- Highlights major milestones.
- Includes the budget.
- Includes targets to measure performance.
- Includes a flowchart that shows how and when Project decisions are made. The Project Team's annual report should detail:
 - Achievements, and compare them to plans.
 - Reasons if achievements did not meet goals
 - The budget and the money actually spent.

7. Directed to: Project Team

We recommend that the Project Team describe in detail the responsibilities of the Main Construction Manager, Parsons Inc., and how they will share duties. The Team should also describe how the construction manager will work with the Parties, GMOB, the Project Team, and the public.

8. Directed to: Project Team

We recommend that the Project Team immediately:

- Complete a quantitative risk assessment for the remediation plan.
- Complete its report on long-term funding and management options for the Giant Mine site.

These actions were among the conditions set out in the Project environmental assessment.

9. Directed to: Project Team

We again recommend that the Project Team develop an in-depth and integrated way to regularly review, evaluate, and improve its various environmental actions. We recommend that the team explain its environmental programs and make it easy for the public to find the program results.

10. Directed to: Project Team

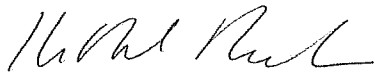
We continue to recommend that the Project Team develop a communication and education plan to improve the public's understanding of arsenic risks and safety.

11. Directed to: Minister and Deputy Minister, CIRNAC; GNWT Minister and Deputy Minister, ENR; Mayor, City of Yellowknife

We again recommend that the federal, territorial and municipal governments work together to ease the environmental and health concerns about arsenic levels on land outside the Giant Mine remediation site.

On behalf of the Giant Mine Oversight Board, I thank you for your consideration of the recommendations contained in the Report and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Dr. Kathleen Racher
Chair, Giant Mine Oversight Board

Attachment

Cc. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, GNWT
Member of Parliament for the Northwest Territories
Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories
Parties to the Giant Mine Oversight Body Society
Directors, Giant Mine Oversight Board