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July 5, 2013

Chief Xavier Thompson and Council  
Pays Plat First Nation  
<contact information removed>

**Re: Preparation for Upcoming Hearings for Marathon PGM-Copper Mine Project**

Dear Chief Thompson and Council:

As you are likely aware, on June 27, 2013, the Joint Review Panel (the Panel) for the environmental assessment of the Marathon PGM-Copper Mine Project (the Project) invited comments on the additional information provided by Stillwater Canada, Inc. (the proponent). The additional information was provided in response to information requests the Panel sent to the proponent on November 26 and December 19, 2012. The information requests were issued following the Panel's review of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) submitted by the proponent and the Panel's review of the comments received during the public comment period. We are writing to provide you with information that might be useful in your preparation for the next phase of the environmental assessment process.

The Panel is providing a public comment period ending July 31, 2013, to give members of the public, Aboriginal groups, governments and other participants an opportunity to submit their views in writing to the Panel on the sufficiency and technical merit of the EIS, supplemented by the additional information, as measured against the EIS Guidelines. During this period we encourage Aboriginal groups to review the information submitted by the proponent and prepare their information for submission to the Panel. The federal and provincial Crown Consultation Coordinators are available to discuss and meet directly with Aboriginal groups if necessary to discuss the integration of consultation in the Panel process and how to participate.

The Panel will determine if the EIS is sufficient to proceed to public hearing based on its own review of the additional information and on its review of the comments received. If the Panel determines the EIS, supplemented by the additional information, is insufficient to proceed to public hearing, it will ask the proponent to provide further information in the necessary areas.

If the Panel determines it has sufficient information to proceed to public hearing, a public notice will be issued at least 45 days before the commencement of the hearing. The public

notice will also announce the hearings schedule and location(s) within the area likely to be affected by the Project, or in an area reasonably close to the Project, to provide convenient access for potentially affected Aboriginal people and the public. The public hearing provides an opportunity to present more detailed views and information on the Project and its potential environmental effects.

The Panel has the mandate to invite information from Aboriginal persons or groups related to the nature and scope of asserted or established Aboriginal and Treaty rights in the area of the Project, as well as information on the potential adverse impacts or potential infringement that the Project may have on asserted or established Aboriginal and Treaty rights. For this reason, during the hearings phase of the environmental assessment process, Aboriginal groups are encouraged to provide the Panel with information related to the nature and scope of asserted or established Aboriginal and Treaty rights, and the potential adverse impacts that the Project may have on those rights. Aboriginal groups are also invited to propose appropriate measures to avoid or mitigate such impacts on asserted or established Aboriginal and Treaty rights. It is important to note that the federal and provincial governments rely on the Panel to gather this information.

All hearings by the Panel will be open to the public except for the information and in-camera sessions requested by Pays Plat First Nation for which the Panel has granted confidentiality. Transcripts of the hearings will be prepared and be made available through the public registry on the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency's website at: [www.ceaa-acee.gc.ca/050/index-eng.cfm](http://www.ceaa-acee.gc.ca/050/index-eng.cfm) .

If you have any questions or concerns, or wish to schedule a meeting, please feel free to contact either Mark O'Brien at the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines or Candace Anderson at the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency.

Sincerely,

<original signed by>

Candace Anderson  
Federal Crown Consultation Coordinator  
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency

<original signed by>

Mark O'Brien  
Provincial Crown Consultation Coordinator  
Ministry of Northern Development and Mines

c.c.: Alissa Sugar, Ministry of the Environment  
Marie LeGrow, Co-Panel Manager, Marathon Joint Review Panel  
Cindy Parker, Co-Panel Manager, Marathon Joint Review Panel  
Rachel Van Deventer, Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency