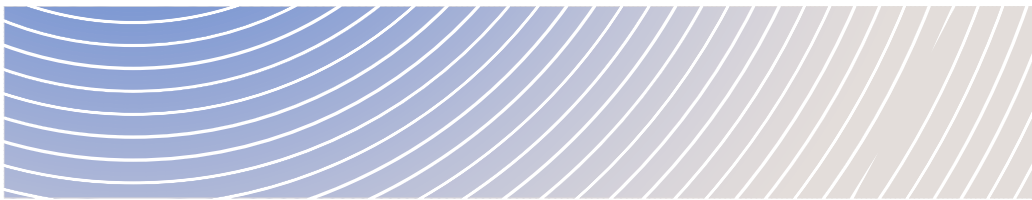


Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan



CRAWFORD NICKEL PROJECT

MARCH 31, 2023



Table of Contents

1.	Introduction.....	1
2.	Description of the proposed Project.....	1
3.	Objectives of Indigenous engagement and partnership.....	2
4.	Indigenous communities.....	4
5.	Engagement and consultation tools and methods.....	6
6.	Engagement and consultation approach.....	7
7.	Participant Funding.....	13
8.	Federal Authorities' roles and responsibilities.....	13
9.	How to submit comments.....	14



1. Introduction

On January 5, 2023, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (the Agency) announced that an impact assessment is required for the Crawford Nickel Project (the Project), pursuant to subsection 16(1) of Canada's *Impact Assessment Act* (the IAA).

The Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan (IEPP) outlines opportunities and methods for meaningful engagement and consultation with potentially affected Indigenous communities throughout the impact assessment process for the Project. Meaningful consultations are to be conducted in the spirit of reconciliation, towards a renewed relationship, and in accordance with the [Principles respecting the Government of Canada's relationship with Indigenous Peoples](#).¹ The IEPP is intended to be flexible and does not preclude the Agency from making changes to the approaches described in the IEPP in order to accommodate changes that may occur during the assessment process.

Throughout this IEPP, the terms "Indigenous community" or "Indigenous communities" refer to Indigenous Peoples connected by Nation, Band, geographical location, community roles and other shared values and identities. Within the context of the impact assessment process, the Agency encourages the active participation of a community's diversity such as the Chief and Council, community leaders, as well as other members of the community, such as women, Elders, youth and knowledge holders.

Throughout this IEPP, "engagement" refers to the spectrum of engagement defined in the [Policy Context for Indigenous Participation in Impact Assessment](#),² and "consultation" refers to the Government of Canada's duty to consult, and, where appropriate, accommodate, on the potential adverse impacts of the Project on the exercise of Aboriginal and/or Treaty rights of the Indigenous Peoples of Canada.

To complement this IEPP, interested Indigenous communities may develop community-specific consultation plans, in collaboration with the Agency, to describe the community's specific objectives for consultation, or any unique features of the impact assessment and consultation process pertaining to that community for the Project.

The Agency developed a separate [Public Participation Plan](#) to describe how the Agency plans to engage with the public during the impact assessment process.

2. Description of the proposed Project

Canada Nickel Company (the proponent) is proposing the construction, operation, decommissioning and abandonment of an open-pit nickel-cobalt mine and on-site metal mill, located 43 kilometres north

¹ <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/csj-sjc/principles-principes.html>

² <https://www.canada.ca/en/impact-assessment-agency/services/policy-guidance/practitioners-guide-impact-assessment-act/policy-indigenous-participation-ia.html>



of Timmins, Ontario. As proposed, the Crawford Nickel Project would have a mine ore production capacity of 275,000 tonnes per day and a mill ore input capacity of 120,000 tonnes per day. The project would operate for about 43 years.

For more information on the impact assessment of the Crawford Nickel Project or to view the information and comments received to date, visit the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry website (the Registry) at <https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/proj/83857>.

3. Objectives of Indigenous engagement and partnership

Impact Assessment Agency of Canada's objectives:

- Conduct meaningful Crown consultation on the potential positive and adverse effects (direct indirect, cumulative, residual, and incidental) of the Project and adverse impacts of the Project on the exercise of Aboriginal and/or Treaty rights of the Indigenous Peoples of Canada recognized and affirmed in section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982* (Aboriginal or Treaty rights);
- Meaningfully engage with Indigenous communities regarding Indigenous Knowledge they may wish to apply when considering potential effects and impacts of the Project and impacts on the exercise of Aboriginal or Treaty rights by adhering to the [Indigenous Knowledge Policy Framework for Project Reviews and Regulatory Decisions](#)³ and guidance documents;
- Meaningfully engage with Indigenous communities throughout the impact assessment process with opportunities and support to provide comments on key documents and the engagement process;
- Ensure engagement is consistent with the Government of Canada's commitment to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (the Declaration) as a comprehensive international human rights instrument and Canada's roadmap for reconciliation. The Declaration also emphasizes the need to work together in partnership and respect, as articulated through the principle of free, prior and informed consent. This principle reflects working together in good faith on decisions that impact Indigenous Peoples, with the intention to achieve consensus;
- Encourage Indigenous communities to share Indigenous Knowledge and expertise early in the impact assessment process to facilitate its integration into key documents such as the proponent's Impact Statement;
- Include Indigenous Knowledge, if provided, in the assessment of potential effects and impacts of the Project and impacts on the exercise of Aboriginal or Treaty rights, and explain how Indigenous Knowledge was considered or used in the assessment;

³ <https://www.canada.ca/en/impact-assessment-agency/programs/aboriginal-consultation-federal-environmental-assessment/indigenous-knowledge-policy-framework-initiative/indigenous-knowledge-policy-framework-project-reviews-regulatory-decisions.html>



- Provide meaningful opportunities for collaboration with Indigenous communities on methodologies or processes to assess the impact of the Project on Aboriginal or Treaty rights; and
- Conduct meaningful consultation with Indigenous communities on measures to avoid, mitigate or minimize potential adverse impacts of the Project on Aboriginal or Treaty rights.

Objectives identified by Indigenous communities during the Planning Phase:

During the Planning Phase, some Indigenous communities identified values and objectives for Indigenous consultation for the Project. The Agency summarizes these as:

- Consultation should be ongoing throughout the impact assessment process, and must meaningfully address all concerns raised by Indigenous communities. Additional consultation objectives that would add to the meaningfulness of consultations include:
 - Respecting the diverse and preferred approaches of Indigenous community representatives to consult their members or citizens;
 - Providing support to Indigenous communities in their engagement with community members or citizens to facilitate the community's understanding of the impact assessment process and the Project;
 - Provision of sufficient time for Indigenous communities to engage with their members or citizens regarding the Project;
 - Access to adequate financial support to enable meaningful participation in the impact assessment process;
 - Working to eliminate barriers that may affect the ability of diverse subgroups within Indigenous communities to participate in the impact assessment process;
 - Creation of a space for exchange and collaboration, in which knowledge systems can interact with mutual respect;
 - Where possible, in-person meetings throughout the impact assessment process, and attendance by the Agency at open houses within communities to respond to questions from community members about the impact assessment process;
 - A commitment to being as flexible as possible in engaging communities to accommodate unforeseen circumstances (e.g., pandemics, community emergencies);
- Consultation needs to respect the consultation protocols already established by certain Indigenous communities;
- Indigenous Knowledge needs to be considered on equitable footing with western scientific information in decision-making processes related to the Project;
- There must be respect for, and adherence to, established processes and protocols developed by Indigenous communities that govern the sharing and use of Indigenous Knowledge;
- Opportunities should be provided for Indigenous communities to verify procedural records of consultation and engagement throughout the impact assessment process;

- Consultation needs to occur during the development of scoping elements of the impact assessment (e.g., to ensure the incorporation of Valued Components identified by Indigenous communities into baseline studies) and all subsequent phases of the impact assessment;
- For some Indigenous communities, opportunities for the Indigenous-led evaluation of the impacts of the Project on their community. These may focus on health and socio-economic conditions, the current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes, cultural and physical heritage, or on the exercise of Aboriginal or Treaty rights, including cumulative impacts to the exercise of rights;
- Meaningful consultation needs to include identification, assessment, and determination of appropriate mitigation, monitoring and, where appropriate, accommodation measures for any adverse effects and enhancements for positive impacts of the Project;
- There should be recognition of the importance of the proponent obtaining the consent of the Indigenous communities that will be affected by the Project for aspects of the Project's design before the proponent finalizes certain design features, such as the effluent discharge location; and
- For some Indigenous communities, the development of an individualized consultation agreement and work plan with the Agency to carry out the collaborative assessment of the impacts of the Project on the Aboriginal or treaty rights of the Indigenous community.

4. Indigenous communities

The Agency identified the following lists of communities that may be potentially impacted by the Project. This includes communities where the Project may adversely impact the exercise of Aboriginal or Treaty rights of Indigenous Peoples of Canada as recognized and affirmed in section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, and also Indigenous Peoples with asserted rights where an assessment of effects under section 22 of the IAA may be required. This list is based on information available in the Government of Canada's Aboriginal and Treaty Rights Information System, as well as information shared by Indigenous communities during initial meetings and throughout the Planning Phase.

Although the impact assessment process is not a rights-determination process, the Agency acknowledges that the content and extent of the duty to consult and, where appropriate, accommodate varies according to the nature of the rights (established or potential) and the severity of the Project's potential impact on these rights. The Agency's assessment of the extent of the duty to consult and, where appropriate, accommodate is at its preliminary phase. The Agency wishes to complete this exercise in collaboration with Indigenous communities during the Impact Statement Phase.

The Government of Canada is committed to renewing its relationship with Indigenous Peoples, which is based on the recognition of rights, respect, cooperation and partnership. Through this IEPP, the Agency supports this commitment. In addition to the IEPP, the Agency plans to engage Indigenous organizations that have indicated an interest in the impact assessment process using the engagement tools and methods outlined in the [Public Participation Plan](#).



4.1. Crown Consultation list of Indigenous communities

The Agency will consult with Indigenous communities listed⁴ below to understand the concerns and potential impacts of the Project on their exercise of potential or established Aboriginal or Treaty rights and, where appropriate, make accommodations. These consultations will comprise an integral part of the work that will support the assessment of the Project.

The Indigenous communities that make up the Crown Consultation list were informed of the Project during the Pre-Planning Phase of the Project's impact assessment process.

Apitipi Anicinapek Nation
Flying Post First Nation
Matachewan First Nation
Mattagami First Nation
Métis Nation of Ontario (Region 3)
Taykwa Tagamou Nation

Where the Agency becomes aware of potential adverse impacts of the Project on the potential or asserted Aboriginal or Treaty rights of an Indigenous community that is not listed in section 4.1 of this IEPP, that community must also be consulted, and the Agency will modify this list accordingly.

4.2. Crown list of additional Indigenous communities to be engaged

The Agency will engage with Indigenous communities listed⁵ below to understand the concerns and impacts where an assessment of effects under section 22 of the IAA may be required.

Cree Nation Government
Long Point First Nation

⁴ The list of Indigenous communities identified here may change as knowledge of the effects and potential impacts of the Project is gained, or if the Project or its components are modified during the impact assessment process. The Agency reserves the right to modify this list based on additional information gathered during the impact assessment process.

⁵ The list of Indigenous communities identified here may change as knowledge of the effects and potential impacts of the Project is gained, or if the Project or its components are modified during the impact assessment process. The Agency reserves the right to modify this list based on additional information gathered during the impact assessment process.



5. Engagement and consultation tools and methods

The following is a list of tools and methods identified by the Agency and Indigenous communities to ensure meaningful consultation throughout the impact assessment process:

- Providing funding under the [Participant Funding Program](#)⁶ to support Indigenous communities in participating in the impact assessment process;
- Providing clear and timely information on available funding, impact assessment process timelines, and the workload expected of Indigenous communities to ensure meaningful participation and consultation;
- Communicating with Indigenous communities in an ongoing, open, and transparent manner;
- Considering cultural needs including seasonal issues (e.g., harvesting and hunting periods), cultural protocols (e.g., offerings, such as tobacco) and spirituality (opening prayers) when scheduling consultation activities;
- Following community consultation policies or protocols in consultation activities, to the extent possible;
- Establishing clear processes for identifying and designing accommodation measures, as applicable;
- Holding technical meetings with Indigenous communities and the proponent and/or expert authorities to support Indigenous communities' technical review of key documents and participation throughout the impact assessment process, while considering timelines and capacity of Indigenous communities;
- Offering to collaborate on the assessment of impacts on the exercise of Aboriginal or Treaty rights;
- Providing reasonable time for in-community visits, as appropriate;
- Establishing requirements for diverse participation (e.g., accessibility of meeting locations, timing of meetings, transportation);
- Providing individualized and/or group training on the impact assessment process and how to effectively participate in the process⁷;
- Providing translators and/or interpreters to support meetings between Indigenous communities and the Agency; and
- Providing summaries of key documents, fact sheets, infographics, PowerPoint tools, booklets, and audio-visual materials in plain language and in an accessible format.

⁶ <https://www.canada.ca/en/impact-assessment-agency/services/public-participation/funding-programs.html>

⁷ <https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/014/index-eng.aspx>



In addition, the Agency will explore opportunities for:

- Translating key high-level summary documents into Indigenous languages, where requested and reasonably possible;
- Accommodating communication and consultation processes according to the communities' schedule, where possible; and
- Workshop formats to discuss key documents through the impact assessment process, where appropriate.

6. Engagement and consultation approach

The table below (Table 1) provides a description of the main phases in the impact assessment process and an explanation as to how the Agency, on behalf of the federal Crown, proposes to engage and consult with Indigenous communities during each phase. Table 1 describes objectives of each phase and engagement methods proposed throughout the impact assessment process.

The Agency commenced its engagement and consultation efforts on the Project prior to the Planning Phase. This Pre-Planning Phase was used to ensure Indigenous communities were informed and aware of the impact assessment process and to validate the potential interest of the Indigenous communities on the preliminary Crown's list that was developed for initial outreach.

During the Planning Phase, and prior to the determination that an impact assessment was required, the Agency consulted with Indigenous communities on the proponent's Initial Project Description and prepared the Summary of Issues. Subsequently, the Agency provided the Summary of Issues to the proponent for preparation of the Detailed Project Description, including a response to the Summary of Issues. The Agency included the key issues identified by Indigenous communities in the Summary of Issues, and directed the proponent to refer back to the Indigenous community submissions to ensure they use the appropriate context and intent of the comments in their response.

Specific Indigenous communities to whom the Crown owes a duty to consult and who wish to work with the Agency to identify consultation activities beyond those included within this IEPP are welcome to express their interest in an Indigenous community-specific consultation work plan during the Impact Statement Phase. The Agency will work with Indigenous communities to develop community-specific consultation work plans, as needed.



Table 1 – Table of Indigenous engagement approaches and activities

Expected Agency activities	Expected Indigenous communities' participation/activities	Engagement and consultation method
Phase 1: Planning		
<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Support understanding of the proposed Project ➤ Provide Indigenous communities funding to support participation during the Planning Phase ➤ Increase Indigenous communities' awareness of the impact assessment process and meaningful participation ➤ Obtain comments and feedback on documents related to the Planning Phase such as the Initial Project Description and to inform the development of the Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan (IEPP) and Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines (Guidelines) ➤ Share information on the impact assessment process and on opportunities for participation <p>Timeline: 180 days (excluding any timeline suspension)</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From August 8, 2022 to September 13, 2022, Agency hosted virtual and in-person meetings with Indigenous communities to support their understanding of the impact assessment process and sought input on key issues and concerns • From August 8, 2022 to September 7, 2022, Agency offered grant funding during the first comment period of the Planning Phase to support participation • Agency responded to any inquiries, sent letters / emails informing Indigenous communities of upcoming Project, and posted key documents on the Registry website • Agency provided online training on the impact assessment process • From February 6, 2023 to March 8, 2023, Agency invited comments on the draft Guidelines and the draft IEPP, including the identification of any existing regional studies or plans that could inform the assessment of the Project, and made grant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From August 8, 2022 to September 7, 2022, Indigenous communities participated in the first comment period on the Initial Project Description • Indigenous communities submitted comments on the Initial Project Description • Indigenous communities applied for available grant funding during the first comment period of the Planning Phase to support participation • Indigenous communities participated in meetings to discuss and inform key planning documents • From February 6, 2023 to March 8, 2023, Indigenous communities participated in the second comment period, participated in virtual meetings with the Agency, and commented on the draft Guidelines and draft IEPP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emails and/or calls • Online comments • Meetings, information sessions and/or workshops • Posting of relevant documents and Notices on the Registry website • Notify via email of relevant documents and Notices on the Registry website to Indigenous communities on the preliminary Crown list developed for initial outreach • Follow-up to confirm receipt of materials



Expected Agency activities	Expected Indigenous communities' participation/activities	Engagement and consultation method
<p>funding available for the second comment period of the Planning Phase</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency hosted virtual meetings (and offered in-person meetings) with Indigenous communities to support their understanding of the impact assessment process and to seek their engagement in development of the draft Guidelines and the draft IEPP 		
<p>Phase 2 – Impact Statement</p>		
<p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increase Indigenous communities' awareness and understanding of the impact assessment process ➤ Provide Indigenous communities funding to support participation for the remainder of the impact assessment process ➤ Encourage Indigenous communities to share Indigenous Knowledge and information with the proponent to inform the development of the proponent's Impact Statement ➤ Obtain comments / views on the proponent's Impact Statement ➤ Notify communities of key steps in the impact assessment process, such as the receipt of the Impact Statement and the comment period on the Impact Statement ➤ Identify potential impacts on the exercise of Aboriginal or Treaty rights and avoidance, mitigation or accommodation measures in collaboration with Indigenous communities <p>Timeline: Up to 3 years (excluding any timeline extension)</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency shares how feedback has been reflected or not in the Guidelines and IEPP with rationale Agency makes participant funding available for the remainder of the impact assessment process Agency administers participant funding throughout the impact assessment process Agency works with Indigenous communities to implement the IEPP, to develop and implement Indigenous community-specific consultation plans and has dialogue with interested Indigenous communities to finalize approach to the assessment of impacts on their exercise of Aboriginal or Treaty rights. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous communities apply for funding to participate in the remaining phases of the impact assessment process Indigenous communities present comments on the partnership possibilities and the ways they wish to participate in the impact assessment process to inform the drafting, and implementation of, community-specific consultation plans Indigenous communities work with the Agency, if interested, in the approach to conduct a collaborative assessment of potential project impacts on Indigenous communities and on the exercise of their Aboriginal or Treaty rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emails and/or calls Online comments Meetings, information sessions and/or workshops Posting of relevant documents and Notices on the Registry website Notify via email of relevant documents and Notices on the Registry website to Indigenous communities indicated in sections 4.1 and 4.2 Follow-up to confirm receipt of materials

Expected Agency activities	Expected Indigenous communities' participation/activities	Engagement and consultation method
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency provides Indigenous communities with guidance on how to protect confidential information • Agency posts the proponent's Impact Statement on the Registry website and sends notification emails to Indigenous communities • Agency seeks the views of Indigenous communities on the Project's potential impacts on the exercise of their rights and discusses with Indigenous communities whether the proponent has adequately identified mitigation and/or accommodation measures, as appropriate, in its Impact Statement • Agency holds a comment period on the Impact Statement. The comments will assist in determining whether the Impact Statement contains all the information and studies requested in the Guidelines • Agency issues requests to the proponent for information or studies required to satisfy the Guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous communities share Indigenous Knowledge with the proponent, where applicable, for integration into the proponent's Impact Statement • Indigenous communities share their points of view on the Project's potential impacts on the exercise of their Aboriginal or Treaty rights with the proponent to inform the Impact Statement and with the Agency to support the Agency's review of the Impact Statement • Indigenous communities collaborate with the proponent to collect relevant information about the Project's potential positive and adverse effects (direct and incidental), as well as discuss mitigation and monitoring measures to address possible adverse effects with the proponent to inform the proponent's Impact Statement • Indigenous communities express to the proponent any interest in funding for studies conducted by potentially affected Indigenous communities • Indigenous communities submit opinions or comments to the Agency on the proponent's Impact Statement 	<p>*In-person meetings occur only where appropriate and in keeping with local and provincial health guidelines, and when agreed to by all parties</p>
<p>Phase 3 – Impact Assessment</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Increase Indigenous communities' awareness and understanding of the impact assessment process ➢ Develop and consult on Agency's preliminary analysis and conclusions related to potential project impacts on Indigenous communities ➢ Obtain comments / views on the Agency's draft Impact Assessment Report and draft potential conditions ➢ Where there is interest, collaborate with Indigenous communities on the assessment of potential project impacts on the exercise of their Aboriginal or Treaty rights <p>Timeline: Up to 300 days (excluding any timeline extension)</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency administers participant funding throughout the impact assessment process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous communities collaborate on or validate the Agency's preliminary analysis and conclusions related to potential project impacts on Indigenous communities and on the exercise of their Aboriginal or Treaty rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emails and/or calls • Online comments • Meetings, information sessions and/or workshops

Expected Agency activities	Expected Indigenous communities' participation/activities	Engagement and consultation method
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency works collaboratively with interested Indigenous communities on completing the assessment of impacts on the exercise of Aboriginal or Treaty rights Agency works with Indigenous communities to validate the Agency's preliminary analysis and conclusions related to potential project impacts on Indigenous communities and on the exercise of their Aboriginal or Treaty rights. Agency posts draft Impact Assessment Report and draft potential conditions on the Registry website and sends notification emails to Indigenous communities Agency holds a comment period on the draft Impact Assessment Report and draft potential conditions. The comments will assist in finalizing the Agency's recommendation to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous communities present their points of view to the Agency on the adequacy of the consultation throughout the impact assessment process Indigenous communities submit opinions or comments on the Agency's draft Impact Assessment Report and draft potential conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Posting of relevant documents and Notices on the Registry website Notify via email of relevant documents and Notices on the Registry website to Indigenous communities indicated in sections 4.1 and 4.2 Follow-up to confirm receipt of materials <p>*In-person meetings occur only where appropriate and in keeping with local and provincial health guidelines, and when agreed to by all parties</p>
<p>Phase 4 – Decision</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Inform the proponent, Indigenous communities and the public about the Decision Statement issued by the Minister ➤ Increase awareness of the Decision Statement, including reasons for the public interest determination, and the conditions, where applicable <p>Timeline: Up to 30 days if the determination is made by the Minister, or up to 90 days if the Minister refers the determination to Governor in Council (excluding any timeline extension)</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Agency posts on the Registry website the Minister's Decision Statement, including the reasons for the public interest determination and potential conditions, where applicable The Agency has ongoing dialogue with Indigenous communities, briefs them on the Decision Statement and provides them with opportunities to learn about next steps post-impact assessment decision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous communities learn about Minister's decision and about next steps post-impact assessment decision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Posting of relevant documents and Notices on the Registry website Notifications sent by email Follow-up to confirm receipt of email



Expected Agency activities	Expected Indigenous communities' participation/activities	Engagement and consultation method
<p>Phase 5 – Post-Decision</p> <p>Objectives: if the Project is approved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Post-decision follow-up, monitoring activities and results from follow-up program on the Registry website ➤ Obtain comments on potential amendments to the Decision Statement, should an amendment be required <p>Timeline: Begins after the Decision Statement is issued to the proponent and is ongoing</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency conducts compliance and enforcement activities consistent with the Compliance Promotion and Enforcement Policy for designated projects subject to the Impact Assessment Act and posts results as per section 152 of the IAA on the Registry website • Agency consults on potential amendments to the Decision Statement, should an amendment be required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit comments to the Agency on potential amendments to the Decision Statement, should an amendment be required • If the public has reason to believe that there has been a contravention of the IAA, please report it to the Agency at: enforcement-applicationdelaloi@iaac-aeic.gc.ca 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emails • Online comments • Posting of relevant documents and Notices on the Registry website

7. Participant Funding

During the Planning Phase, Indigenous communities received grant funding to support their comments on the Initial Project Description. Grant funding was also available to support the review and comment on the draft Guidelines and the draft IEPP.

Funding is also available to support Indigenous communities to participate throughout the remainder of the impact assessment process. The opportunity to submit applications for funding will be made available to Indigenous communities during the Impact Statement Phase. These participant-funding opportunities will support Indigenous communities in activities such as: commenting on the proponent's Impact Statement and the Agency's draft Impact Assessment Report and potential conditions.

For information about the activities that are eligible for funding or how to apply for funding, please see the Participant Funding Program National Program Guidelines at the following page:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/impact-assessment-agency/services/policy-guidance/participant-funding-program-national-program-guidelines.html>.

8. Federal Authorities' roles and responsibilities

The *Permitting Plan* issued at the end of the Planning Phase describes the permits and authorizations that may be required for the Project to proceed.

Federal authorities identified in the *Permitting Plan*⁸ as well as those with additional expert advice⁹ will engage as needed with the Agency, proponent, Indigenous communities and other parties to clarify information requirements related to its specialist or expert information and knowledge. Throughout the impact assessment process, federal authorities may also review and analyze the proponent's Impact Statement; support and participate in the Agency's Crown consultation activities; and support the Agency and Indigenous communities in understanding, assessing and addressing impacts on the exercise of Aboriginal or Treaty rights.

The Agency, on behalf of the Government of Canada, will lead Crown consultations for the impact assessment and will form the federal review team described above.

⁸ Environment and Climate Change Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Transport Canada

⁹ Employment and Social Development Canada, Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, Health Canada, Indigenous Services Canada, Natural Resources Canada, Women and Gender Equality Canada

9. How to submit comments

Comments can be submitted at any time during the impact assessment process by using the “Submit a comment” feature on the Project’s page on the Registry website ([Reference Number 83857](#)). Attachments can also be uploaded using this function.

If you have any difficulties with the submission process, please contact the Agency, using the contact information below. Comments may also be submitted through other means, including by email to Crawford@iaac-aeic.gc.ca.

Comments and other documents received by the Agency will form part of the project file and will be posted on the Registry website. The [Agency’s Submission Policy](#) determines what information can be shared publicly and what information should remain private. For more information on how we protect your privacy, please refer to the [Agency’s Privacy Notice](#). If you do not want your comment to be posted on the Registry website, please contact the Agency before submitting your comment.

Indigenous Knowledge shared in confidence is protected from disclosure under section 119 of the IAA, 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.

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 Crawford Nickel Project Team (contact 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.

If you have questions or need information, please contact:

Crawford Nickel Project
Impact Assessment Agency of Canada
Ontario Regional Office
Email: Crawford@iaac-aeic.gc.ca