



March 31, 2023

Sent by email

Ron Spencer
Director of Lands and Resources
Moose Cree First Nation
P.O. Box 190
Moose Factory, ON P0L 1W0
<email address removed>

Dear Ron Spencer:

Subject: Federal Impact Assessment for the Crawford Nickel Project

Thank you for your letter to the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (the Agency) dated March 8, 2023, and for your thoughtful comments regarding Moose Cree First Nation's concerns about the potential impacts of the Crawford Nickel Project (the Project) on the Aboriginal and Treaty rights and interests of Moose Cree First Nation.

We appreciate your time in meeting with the Agency on March 24, 2023 to discuss your letter, as well as opportunities for the Agency and Moose Cree First Nation to maintain a dialogue moving forwards.

We understand that Moose Cree First Nation's primary concerns relate to the potential for impacts from the Project on the Mattagami River and Abitibi River watersheds, which flow northward from the Project site towards your community's Homelands. You also indicated a desire for the Agency to more directly and meaningfully engage with Moose Cree First Nation moving forwards, including keeping your community fully informed of the assessment process.

Status of the Federal Impact Assessment Process

On March 31, 2023, the Agency commenced an impact assessment pursuant to the *Impact Assessment Act* for the Project. The following documents were posted on the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry website¹ (Registry #83857) and will inform the impact assessment process:

.../2

¹ Canadian Impact Assessment Registry website: <https://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/proj/83857>

- Notice of Commencement
- Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines
- Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan
- Public Participation Plan
- Cooperation Plan with the Province of Ontario
- Permitting Plan

The Project is now in the Impact Statement Phase. The Agency must be satisfied that Canada Nickel Company (the Proponent) provided the required information and studies set out in the Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines within three years of the Notice of Commencement.

Please note, in accordance with section 36 of the *Impact Assessment Act*, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada has until 45 days after the Notice of Commencement to refer the impact assessment to a review panel. If the assessment is referred to a review panel, a notice will be posted to the Registry website.

Downstream Water Effects

Based on information available throughout the Planning Phase, the Agency has not anticipated that changes to water quality and flow caused by the Project would extend downstream, such that there would be an impact to Moose Cree First Nation's Homelands. The Proponent's Detailed Project Description identifies the potential for downstream flow reductions within North Driftwood River (which flows into the Abitibi River) and a short mixing zone downstream of any effluent discharge points. Nevertheless, a question about the downstream range of effects is valid and we thank you for bringing your concerns forward.

To build confidence with the anticipated range of downstream effects, Section 8.6.2 of the Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines has been updated to require an assessment of predicted water quality changes at Smooth Rock Falls on the Mattagami River and the Island Falls Generating Station on the Abitibi River. The Agency has requested that Canada Nickel Company report back to the Agency, within a short time period following the Notice of Commencement, with preliminary technical information to demonstrate the downstream range of potential effects, in relation to these locations. The Agency will review this information with federal and provincial expert advisors and will also make it available for Moose Cree First Nation's review. The Agency will contact you with information about the availability of any participant funding to support Moose Cree First Nation's review of Canada Nickel Company's report back to the Agency with preliminary technical information on the downstream range of potential effects.

Should the range extend further than anticipated during the Planning Phase, the Agency will reevaluate the Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan and Public Participation Plan.

Specifically, if it is determined that there will be changes to water quality that may impact Moose Cree First Nation's Homelands, the Agency will reach out to your community, and will amend the Indigenous Engagement and Partnership Plan for the Project to ensure that Moose Cree First Nation is meaningfully engaged by both the Agency and the Proponent moving forwards.

Please contact me at 902-399-8838 or at Crawford@jaac-aeic.gc.ca if you have any questions. The Agency looks forward to an ongoing dialogue with Moose Cree First Nation moving forwards.

Sincerely,

**Norton,
Erin**

Digitally signed by
Norton, Erin
Date: 2023.03.31
10:20:21 -03'00'

Erin Norton
Crown Consultation Coordinator

c.c.: Chief Mervin Cheechoo, Moose Cree First Nation
Mark Butterfly, Moose Cree First Nation