



File: ENVA-30200-20/YELPRO 05 02

Reference: 416627

July 3, 2025

SENT VIA EMAIL

Terence Hubbard
President
Impact Assessment Agency of Canada
22 floor, Place Bell
160 Elgin Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0H3
Terence.Hubbard@iaac-aeic.gc.ca

Dear Terence Hubbard:

I am writing to request substitution pursuant to the *Impact Assessment Act* (IAA) and in accordance with the Impact Assessment Cooperation Agreement Between Canada and British Columbia (B.C.) (the Cooperation Agreement) for the proposed Yellowhead Copper Project (the Project).

Taseko Mines Limited is proposing the construction, operation, and closure of the Project, a new open-pit copper mine located about 150 kilometres northeast of Kamloops, British Columbia, near the community of Vavenby. The Project has been designed with a production capacity of 90,000 tonnes of ore per day to produce a copper concentrate containing payable amounts of gold and silver, over a 25-year operational mine-life. The Project will include an open pit, concentrator, tailings storage facility, water treatment plant, and associated mine site infrastructure. Offsite infrastructure will include existing primary and secondary access routes, rail load-out facility at an existing site and an approximately 110 kilometre long 230 kilovolt transmission line connecting the project site to an existing BC Hydro substation at 100 Mile House.

...2

On June 23, 2025, the Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) received the Initial Project Description for the Project. The Project meets the thresholds for a reviewable project requiring an environmental assessment under the *Environmental Assessment Act* (2018) (the Act) Reviewable Projects Regulation, as its proposed production capacity exceeds the thresholds for the construction of a new mine facility that, during operations, will have a production capacity of $\geq 75,000$ tonnes per year of mineral ore.

I understand that Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (IAAC) also received an Initial Project Description for the Project on June 23, 2025, and that the Project is expected to meet the definition of a designated project under the IAA's *Physical Activities Regulations*. Those criteria are:

- Section 18 the construction, operation, decommissioning and abandonment of the following:
 - (c) a new metal mine with an ore production capacity of 5,000 tonnes per day or more; and
 - (d) a new metal mill with an ore input capacity of 5,000 tonnes per day or more.

Coordination with IAAC

I have been informed that the EAO and IAAC intend to jointly initiate engagement with First Nations and the public shortly. In accordance with the Cooperation Agreement, I am submitting this request for substitution at this time to allow IAAC to consult the public and Indigenous peoples on the substitution request as part of the planned comment period. I understand that later in the planning phase, IAAC will decide whether an impact assessment is required, and following that, the federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change (the Minister) will respond to this request for substitution.

As per the Cooperation Agreement, and the March 2025 British Columbia - Canada Commitment Statement on Coordination on Permitting for Critical Mineral Projects, the EAO has been working closely with IAAC on a joint process for the EAO's Early Engagement and IAAC's Planning phase. This coordinated engagement helps facilitate a common process and seeks to issue joint documents where possible. The EAO is committed to this cooperative approach with IAAC throughout the review of the Project, and to collaborating on measures that meet our shared goals of maintaining strong environmental and social standards, supporting reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, and improving efficiency through eliminating duplication and improving decision timelines.

If substitution is approved by the Minister, the EAO commits to meet the legislative requirements of both Canada and B.C. and fulfil the conditions for substitution under the IAA set out in Section 7 of the Cooperation Agreement and any conditions the Minister may establish. The EAO will take into account the factors set out under the subsection 22(1) of the IAA and fully assess the effects to areas of federal jurisdiction as defined in Section 2 of that Act, when conducting the assessment and providing an Assessment Report with the findings and conclusions to the Minister. The EAO will work with IAAC to consider the recent amendments to the IAA and any potential implications on the conduct of a substituted process.

During the assessment, the EAO would seek, manage, and rely on the advice of members of the Technical Advisory Committee, including representatives from federal authorities, in establishing information requirements for the assessment, assessing the potential effects of the Project and assessing the adequacy of any proposed mitigation measures.

Conclusion and next steps

In accordance with the provisions of the IAA and the Cooperation Agreement, the EAO requests that the Minister approve the substitution of B.C.'s assessment process for the Project, should an impact assessment be required under the IAA.

Additionally, if the Minister approves the substitution request, consultation with Indigenous peoples, federal authorities, and engagement with the public will be carried out by the EAO in accordance with the Cooperation Agreement and the Act. The EAO will work with IAAC to coordinate engagement with Indigenous peoples. The EAO will also work with IAAC on the preparation of a permitting plan, including federal requirements, for the Project.

I look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible regarding the Minister's decision on this request for substitution.

Sincerely,

<Original signed by>

Chris Trumpy
A/Chief Executive Assessment Officer and Assistant Deputy Minister

cc: Christal Nieman, Project Manager
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