



File: 30200-20/AMIN-05-08

Reference: 309013

March 30, 2017

SENT VIA EMAIL

Helen Newmarch
Aberdeen Neighbourhood Association
2071 Glenmohr Drive
Kamloops BC V1S 1N4
hnewmarch53@gmail.com

Dear Ms Newmarch:

Thank you for your letters of January 12 and February 8, 2017 on behalf of the Aberdeen Neighbourhood Association (ANA) regarding the proposed Ajax Mine Project. In that correspondence, ANA raised the issue of access to information provided during an environmental assessment (EA) and also requested that the Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) hold another public comment period on the KGHM Ajax Mining Inc (KAM)'s Application. I am pleased to respond to these two issues.

As you are aware, the assessment of the Ajax project was suspended by the EAO on May 4, 2016, at day 107 of the 180 day regulatory timeline. In my letter to KAM of the same date, I indicated that the EAO expected KAM to respond to the large volume of comments from the public, the Working Group and First Nations in an integrated manner. The EAO recognized that there were key issues and overlapping areas of interest from the various parties who had commented on the Application, and that some issues raised by your association and the general public were also being considered by members of the Working Group and/or First Nations. We determined that it would be therefore be practical to ensure that the completed responses were provided to the public in a single comprehensive package.

During the suspension period, KAM has been progressively providing information and responses to satisfy the deliverables set out in my letter. The EAO's evaluation of completeness and adequacy of the materials provided by KAM has been ongoing throughout this suspension period. The EAO is now in receipt of all required materials from KAM and has, with input from the Working and First Nations, determined that these materials have satisfied the requirements that the EAO set out last May.

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The Executive Director of the EAO lifted the suspension on March 29, 2017, resuming the provincial regulatory timeline at day 108 of the Application review period. I appreciate the public's interest in being able to access information that the EAO considers during the Ajax Mine EA. In keeping with the goal of KAM addressing public comments in a practical and integrated fashion, the completed package of materials KAM provided for the purposes of responding to my letter of May 4 is posted to EAO's electronic project information centre (EPIC).

I would also like to respond to your interest in having another public comment period, and to inform you of the EAO's intended path forward for the completion of the EA.

As you are aware, the EAO and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (Agency) are conducting a coordinated federal-provincial EA under our respective legislation. Going forward, the Agency and the EAO have agreed to continue our coordination efforts, which will include striving to align our respective timelines and preparing a joint assessment report to inform separate federal and provincial decisions. The EAO will also be developing proposed conditions for consideration by provincial ministers that would, at their discretion, be included in the provincial environmental assessment certificate, should one be issued. The EAO and the Agency will be consulting with the Working Group and Aboriginal Groups on the joint report and draft provincial EA certificate conditions.

To support the public's interest in seeing how their input has been considered in the assessment, the EAO and the Agency will hold a joint 30-day public comment period to seek public feedback on the joint assessment report and the draft provincial EA certificate conditions, prior to the referral to provincial Ministers. We will notify the public at least seven days in advance of commencing the public comment period. We look forward to your engagement in the next public comment period.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Tracy James', with a stylized, flowing script.

Tracy James
Project Assessment Manager

cc: Kevin Inouye, Project Manager, Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency
Kevin.Inouye@ceaa-acee.gc.ca