



# North Slave Métis Alliance

32 Melville Dr, Yellowknife, NT X1A 2P7, PO Box 2301

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Melissa Pink  
Senior Environmental Assessment Advisor  
Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board  
P.O. Box 938, 200 Scotia Centre,  
Yellowknife, NT, X1A 2N7

## **Re: NSMA Response to Pine Point Mine Project Information Requests to Indigenous Governments and Organizations**

Dear Melissa,

In responding to these Information Requests, the North Slave Métis Alliance (NSMA) would like to highlight its well-documented historical and ongoing use and occupancy of lands in and around the Pine Point area, as well as its strong claim south of Great Slave Lake. NSMA would also like to advise the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board that the Government of Canada has formally acknowledged that the North Slave Métis Alliance represents members whose ancestry stems from the historic Métis collective of the Great Slave Lake region. Canada has also formally recognized that the North Slave Métis Alliance has Aboriginal rights as affirmed under section 35 of the *Constitution Act*, 1982. Despite this recognition, NSMA has had limited involvement in negotiations, engagement activities, and decision-making processes related to the Pine Point Mine Project.

NSMA is not identified in the Environmental Assessment Terms of Reference as a “potentially affected Indigenous Government or organization” and received comparatively less funding to participate in the EIA process than other participating groups. NSMA respectfully notes this context may be relevant to the Review Board’s consideration of potential impacts on well-being and culture. NSMA offers this perspective to support a thorough and inclusive assessment process.



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The responses below therefore reflect both the anticipated impacts of the project and the consequences of NSMA's historical exclusion from project-related engagement.

## **Response to Information Request #1**

### **What could be the long-term effects of the project on well-being?**

Potential long-term effects of the project on well-being include reduced access to lands used for harvesting, travel, and family activities, affecting food security, physical health, cultural identity, and social cohesion. The extensive mining history and increasing development in the region heightens cumulative and legacy impacts on land, water, wildlife, and future generations; while community concerns about water quality, wildlife health, and traditional food safety, combined with stress arising from exclusion and uncertainty, may have lasting physical, mental, and community-wide effects. While mining and associated development activities may offer short-term employment to some members, exclusion from negotiations limits the potential for long-term economic resilience for NSMA as a community.

### **Please describe any project changes or mitigations that could avoid lasting impacts on well-being.**

Project changes or mitigations to avoid these impacts to well-being include:

- Formally recognizing NSMA as an affected Indigenous government in the environmental assessment and regulatory processes of the Pine Point Mine Project;
- Establish ongoing, NSMA-specific engagement and negotiation across all Project phases (including closure and reclamation);
- Protect NSMA land use and access, prioritizing avoidance of impacts to harvesting, travel, and culturally important areas; and



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- Support NSMA's involvement in environmental and cultural monitoring with authority to inform adaptive management.

## **Response to Information Request #2**

**Please describe if, and in what ways, the proposed Pine Point Mine Project is likely to affect aspects of culture that are important to your community or organization.**

Exclusion from planning and assessment increases the risk that culturally important places and practices, whether formally recognized or not, will be overlooked. Industrial development without NSMA involvement may erode sense of place, weaken intergenerational knowledge transfer, threaten language and oral traditions, and undermine NSMA governance, law, and self-determination in its affirmed traditional territory. Without deep and meaningful consultation with NSMA, it is difficult to assess how the project will affect culture and lands important to the community.

## **Do you have suggestions for how to avoid or reduce (mitigate) potential impacts?**

These impacts could be avoided or reduced by the same measures outlined in our response to IR #1:

- Formally recognizing NSMA as an affected Indigenous government in the environmental assessment and regulatory processes of the Pine Point Mine Project;
- Establish ongoing, NSMA-specific engagement and negotiation across all Project phases (including closure and reclamation);
- Protect NSMA land use and access, prioritizing avoidance of impacts to harvesting, travel, and culturally important areas; and
- Support NSMA's involvement in environmental and cultural monitoring with authority to inform adaptive management.



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NSMA appreciates the opportunity to respond and thanks the Review Board for its consideration. Our responses outline concerns about potential long-term impacts to well-being, land access, culture, and community resilience, particularly given NSMA's limited involvement in the PPML project to date. Our concerns may begin to be addressed through the formal recognition of NSMA as an affected Indigenous government, meaningful engagement throughout all project phases, protection of land use and culturally important areas, and participation in monitoring and adaptive management throughout the project life.

Sincerely,

Monica Walker  
Assistant Manager and Lead, Crown-Industry Consultation

Cc: Catherine Fairbairn, Sr. Environmental Assessment Advisor, MVEIRB  
N. Johnson, Environment Manager, NSMA