

## **Environment and Climate Change**

March 17, 2022

### **Environmental Assessment Bulletin**

The Honourable Bernard Davis, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, has announced the following event relative to Part 10 Environmental Assessment of the Environmental Protection Act.

#### **UNDERTAKING REGISTERED:**

##### **Cormack Agriculture Land Development**

(Reg. 2191)

**Proponent: Mckay Farms Ltd.**

The proponent is proposing to develop approximately 110 hectares of forage production off Route 430 in Cormack. Development of the land would include removing trees, stumps and stones, rock picking, adding soil amendments and planting the forage crop. It would also include constructing a road to access the back of the property. It is anticipated that all useable farmland will be cleared and enhanced in 3-5 years. A description of the project can be found on the Department's web page at <https://www.gov.nl.ca/ecc/env-assessment/projects-list>

The undertaking was registered on March 17, 2022; the deadline for public comment is April 21, 2022; and, the minister's decision is due by May 1, 2022.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT ACCEPTED:**

##### **Valentine Gold Project**

(Reg. 2015)

**Proponent: Marathon Gold Corporation**

A review has been completed of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), EIS Amendment 1 and EIS Amendment 2 submitted on November 3, 2020, August 6, 2021, and January 7, 2022, respectively. On March 17, 2022, the minister determined that the EIS and Amendments 1 and 2 comply with Part X of the Environmental Protection Act and the provincial EIS Guidelines and require no further work.

#### **UNDERTAKINGS RELEASED:**

##### **Valentine Gold Project**

(Reg. 2015)

**Proponent: Marathon Gold Corporation**

On March 17, 2022, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change informed Marathon Gold Corporation that under the authority of Section 67(3) (a) of the Environmental Protection Act, the Lieutenant-Governor in Council has released the Valentine Gold Project from further environmental assessment, subject to the following terms and conditions:

- The proponent shall adhere to all mitigation, monitoring and commitments stated in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) submitted on November 3, 2020, and in the amended EIS submitted August 6, 2021 and in the second amendment to the EIS submitted on January 7, 2022.
- The proponent shall submit an Environmental Protection Plan (EPP) for all applicable mining construction activities, for the Minister's approval, prior to the start of mining construction. The EPP shall describe the environmental protection and mitigation measures that will be applied throughout the life of this component of the Project to avoid or minimize potential negative effects on the environment associated with the Project and will be updated by Marathon Gold Corporation as needed.
- The proponent shall submit an EPP for all applicable mining operations activities, for the Minister's approval, prior to the start of mining operations. This EPP will describe the environmental protection and mitigation measures that will be applied throughout the life of this component of the project to avoid or minimize potential negative effects on the environment associated with the Project, and will be updated by the proponent as needed.
- The proponent shall implement, review, and update the Caribou Protection and Environmental Effects Monitoring Plan in collaboration with the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture (FFA) - Wildlife Division. This review should occur twice per year, every year of project operation and prior to each caribou migration, and should include sharing and reviewing of all data collected during the most recent migration, including the operational response of the mine site.
- The proponent shall fund the hiring of one full-time Environmental Ecologist position and one full-time Environmental Effects Monitor position to report to FFA for all phases of the project, and shall provide financial support to offset additional survey activities required by FFA (i.e. winter surveys, fall classifications and surveys specific to monitoring caribou response to the project).
- The proponent shall provide annual funding to support three graduate students, over all phases of the project, to study specific and cumulative project effects.
- The proponent shall submit a Fish Data Collection Plan for the approval of the FFA - Wildlife Division by May 1, 2022.
- The proponent shall, in consultation and partnership with the Water Resources Management Division (WRMD) of the Department of Environment and Climate Change, establish a real-time water resources monitoring network that shall be

comprised of water quantity, quality, climate and groundwater monitoring stations. The proponent is to bear all costs associated with the monitoring network and must install the required stations to collect baseline data prior to project commencement, and throughout the life of the project.

- The proponent shall submit a plan, developed in consultation with WRMD, to address remediation of the Victoria River valley in the case of a tailings dam breach that blocks the flow of water in the Victoria River and results in water backing up towards the Victoria Dam prior to commencement of project construction.
- The proponent shall meet with NL Hydro at least quarterly, commencing with project construction, to discuss issues of mutual concern including but not limited to dam safety, blasting, site access, and further studies, and shall undertake and cover the cost associated with the following work, in consultation with NL Hydro:
  - Modelling of the tailings dam breach that incorporates outflows from the Victoria Reservoir and development of dam breach inundation maps. This shall include assessment of a range of annual exceedance probability floods where incremental differences may be of more impact, and further refinements to improve the accuracy of the model used in the analysis including survey work to establish accurate elevations. The modelling shall be submitted to the WRMD for review prior to the commencement of project construction;
  - Monitoring and review of ground acceleration and blasting impacts on the Victoria Dam by a qualified geotechnical engineer to ensure impacts are maintained within acceptable limits. NL Hydro shall be consulted on the review prior to the undertaking of any blasting operations that have the potential to impact existing NL Hydro assets, including the Victoria Dam; and
  - Notification of NL Hydro of changes to the project design, site access, the commencement of major works that may result in increased vehicle traffic on the access road, blasting operations, and any other activities, which may affect the operations of NL Hydro or the safety of its' assets, including the Victoria Dam.
- The proponent shall undertake further investigation to confirm the hydraulic conductivity of the Valentine Lake thrust fault. Marathon Gold Corporation shall also undertake further characterization of the Victoria Lake Group rock units. Full characterization of these units must be undertaken prior to the start of mine development. The data shall be used to update the groundwater model and the new modelling results shall be submitted and found by the WRMD to be sufficient, prior to the start of mine development.

- The Department of Industry, Energy and Technology requires the development of a Benefits Agreement that meets the approval of the Minister of Industry, Energy and Technology. The Benefits Agreement must also include a Gender Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Plan that meets the requirements of the Minister responsible for Women and Gender Equality. Marathon Gold Corporation is required to finalize the Benefits Agreement and Gender Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Plan and obtain Ministerial approval prior to the commencement of site activities.
- The proponent is required to submit an Outfitter Environmental Effects Monitoring Plan (OEEMP) in partnership with the Newfoundland and Labrador Outfitters Association (NLOA) that aligns with the Memorandum of Understanding that Marathon Gold Corporation and the NLOA signed on October 4, 2021. The OEEMP must be submitted to the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation for review in consultation with the NLOA and must be approved by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts and Recreation prior to construction activities.
- The proponent is required to construct its facility and operate it in a manner consistent with the Management of Greenhouse Gas best available control technology requirements prescribed in the Management of Greenhouse Gas Regulations.

### **Learn more**

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Public comments may be forwarded to: [EAprojectcomments@gov.nl.ca](mailto:EAprojectcomments@gov.nl.ca)

Environmental assessment information is available at:

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/ecc/env-assessment/>

[https://www.gov.nl.ca/ecc/files/GUIDE-TO-THE-PROCESS\\_Dec2021](https://www.gov.nl.ca/ecc/files/GUIDE-TO-THE-PROCESS_Dec2021)

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**If you submit comments on a project that is under environmental assessment, please advise the Department if you DO NOT wish to share your comments with the project proponent.**

**Media contact**

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