

GIANT MINE Oversight Board



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Hon. Carolyn Bennett
Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Hon. Wally Schumann
Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment
Government of the Northwest Territories
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Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9

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Giant Mine Remediation Socio Economic Strategy

The Giant Mine Remediation Project (GMRP) is in the planning stages of preparing for a water licence application in 2019 with a potential start to the remediation as early as 2020- 2021. In addition to the more than \$350 million that has already been spent stabilizing the site, future remediation costs are expected to be as much as \$1 billion over the ten years of planned implementation. The Giant Mine Oversight Board (GMOB) believes this expenditure represents a significant socio-economic opportunity for Northerners, in particular for the residents and businesses in the communities of Yellowknife, Ndilo and Dettah.

While the Project Team has taken initial steps to begin to address this opportunity, GMOB believes that those efforts are insufficient. Unlike a situation one would expect for a large mining development in the NWT, there has been no public, comprehensive socio-economic strategy developed for this remediation project. GMOB is unaware of any public accounting regarding how the expenditures to date have already benefited the local communities; or how many combined direct and indirect jobs have been created; or how businesses have been directly affected and or created. The plans for tracking and accounting for the future economic impacts are equally unclear.

To address this critical gap, GMOB's 2017 Annual Report identified a need for the development of an overall socio-economic strategy to direct and manage the benefits of these remediation expenditures for the Northern economy. Issues of employment, training, housing, infrastructure and service impacts, and business opportunities

resulting from the work at the Giant Mine Remediation Project are of concern to the residents of the region. Highlighted in media coverage following GMOB's recent Annual Public Meeting on May 15, 2018, there is real concern that the economic stream created by the remediation project will not substantially benefit the affected communities, let alone the NWT, and that employment and contract opportunities will benefit southerners disproportionately.

With potentially only two years before the remediation work begins, and with the knowledge that contracts and employment have already started to ramp up, the timeframe for developing the socio-economic strategy is now. The strategy can only work if it is incorporated as part of the lifecycle of the Remediation Project and subsequently managed, reviewed and updated as the Project moves forward. It should not be seen as having just a "jobs" and "contracts" focus for it can be utilized to address capacity, social and cultural concerns of affected Indigenous peoples in a meaningful manner. It is also important that the strategy be developed and implemented with the full participation of Northern stakeholders and community leaders.

GMOB believes that the vision and leadership for developing and implementing the Giant Mine Remediation Project socio-economic strategy must come from senior levels of both the Government of Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories. As the co-proponents of the Remediation Project, they share the responsibility for the success of the socio-economic benefits of the Project, in addition to the technical and engineering aspects. On this basis, GMOB requests that you immediately direct senior levels of management in your respective departments to expeditiously initiate a concerted and coordinated effort to develop and implement a Giant Mine Remediation Project socio-economic strategy, including the necessary consultation with affected NWT sectors, organizations and communities.

In closing, GMOB regards the Giant Mine Remediation Project as having real potential to be a positive force in shaping the future of the North. This will require vision and leadership from both of your departments on a priority basis to ensure Northerners are able to capitalize on this once in a generation opportunity.

Sincerely,



Dr. Kathleen Racher
Chair, Giant Mine Oversight Board

Cc. Hon. Bob McLeod, Premier of the Northwest Territories
Hon. Robert. C. McLeod, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, GNWT
Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories
Parties to the Giant Mine Oversight Body Society