

Closing Remarks – JPR – Marathon Palladium Project by the Métis Nation of Ontario Region 2

Respectfully submitted by Dr. Victoria Stinson (MNO Lands, Resources, and Consultations Manager) on May 12, 2022

“Marsi, merci, miigwetch and thank you to all for the opportunity to meet and communicate openly and honestly today concerning the Marathon Palladium Project.

The Métis Nation of Ontario would like to take the opportunity to thank all groups, Nations, and the proponent for their presentations and participation today. We appreciate and value all of the concerns, issues, and comments brought forth through this process, particularly by other Indigenous communities.

The MNO is committed to working with GenPGM and is proud of the MOU signed in November of 2021. There are a few outstanding issues that the MNO believes continued engagement and consultation can solve. We value this relationship greatly, and as Councilor Sinclair has said previously, this project has been a long time coming. It has been our pleasure to have a great working relationship with the past and present GenPGM team and they have shown a continued commitment to engagement and environmental monitoring.

The value of water and traditional practices is of the utmost importance to MNO citizens and it through this lens that we speak here today and work towards solving concerns raised by all concern parties. Métis citizens have been invited to the proposed site to participate in water monitoring sampling and were able to learn how the samples are taken, recorded, and published. The GenPGM team has a robust environmental baseline and expansive bank of knowledge that goes back to when the first geologists began the early exploration of the site. Much of this information has been provided to the community, but there are still information gaps that we know GenPGM will work with the MNO to alleviate. One of these is improving the sensitivity in sampling metals, including PGEs (platinum group elements), in the environment.

Outstanding questions to GenPGM from Information Requests and those posed in our previous presentation are as follows:

1. Provide documentation on the methodology and results on the testing for asbestos-forming minerals at the mine site. This information should be readily available today as on April 4th the GenPGM COO Mr. Drew Anwyll stated to the JPR that “asbestos” [sic] was not located at the mine site. To date we have not yet received this data we requested. These data and methodology will confirm that no asbestos-forming minerals are present and therefore will pose health affects to humans and Métis VECs, as well as the potential to impact rock mechanics. As both amphiboles and serpentine are present at the mine site the MNO requests to know what varieties are present, particularly if they are asbestos-form varieties.
2. Provide the correct references in IR8-15. The MNO, MNMNR and NRCan asked these scientific questions to assess the environmental impacts of the ore and waste materials.

Without this information the statements made by GenPGM cannot be assessed nor can they be presented as scientifically valid.

Outstanding concerns related to these IRs and those posed in our previous presentation concern environmental regulations and laws. This question is posed to the Federal Ministries of Environment and Climate Change Canada, Health Canada, and the Provincial Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks:

1. When will the Federal and Provincial governments provide environmental and health regulations for PGEs at mines? Guidance, oversight, and legislation based on current scientific knowledge are required to assess the concerns of MNO citizens and impacts to the environment and Métis VECs. The Federal and Ontario governments both have Critical Mineral Strategies that name PGEs as integral to the strategies. However, neither government have set regulations based on current scientific studies. The MNO requests a timeline on the development of these regulations as IAAC cannot fulsomely assess impacts if these other Ministries do not yet have the data presented to the public. This is a type of circular reasoning that needs to be quickly addressed and the MNO requests an immediate response by these ministries on the current timeline.

Councilor Sinclair has described these issues listed above as hurdles to overcome. To date GenPGM has tried to be a good operator and MNO staff and Regional Consultation Committee members are confident that they will address the issues our experts have raised. The MNO is also confident that the Ministries listed above will also collaborate, develop, and provide regulation for PGEs so that IAAC can fulsomely assess the project. Councilor Sinclair states that he looks forward to working together along with MNO staff, Ministries, and GenPGM's team to get this project off the ground in a safe, environmentally conscious direction.

In the past MNO staff and Regional Consultation Committee members have spoken with the GenPGM team to present best practices that are in line with Ministry regulations to ensure that this site does not allow for the proliferation of noxious or invasive species. This is another example of the GenPGM team being open to hearing from MNO citizens and taking their concerns into consideration. More recently MNO staff, Councilor Sinclair, and GenPGM staff have met to go over some of our greatest concerns and there has been momentum behind the conversation.

Councilor Sinclair has also been in contact with the staff at GenPGM and has advocated for Indigenous planter boxes to supplement some of the valued species near the mine site. This initiative shows that their team is willing to collaborate with the MNO to mitigate some impacts from the project. It is MNO's hope that these small steps will provide a site for Indigenous communities to harvest and provide a safe site to meet and engage with those who may be visiting or exercising their rights. It is the MNO's hope that these steps will be one of many larger collaborations in the future.

MNO Staff and Regional Consultation Committee members have recognize GenPGM's efforts so far and we look forward to getting over the hurdles we have left together. Furthermore, the MNO values the relationship we have been able to build with GenPGM's staff as well as the staff from the federal and provincial ministries who have supported the MNO throughout this process. Both staff and MNO citizens appreciate the work that GenPGM has done on many of their successful projects, such as groundwater monitoring. It is for this reason that we are continually encouraging open and honest communication between GenPGM and all Ministries, Indigenous communities in the region, municipalities, and citizens.

The MNO values water – which provides life -, ecological health, and the Métis way of life and guide our views today. Marsi to all, and I will now cede our time to the next speaker and look forward to hearing and learning from all of the speakers today.”

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