



Reference: 373926

March 25, 2021

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President
Chief Don Tom, Vice President
and Kukpi7 Judy Wilson, Secretary Treasurer
Union of BC Indian Chiefs
c/o Morris Prosser, Policy Analyst

Sent via email: morris@ubcic.bc.ca

Dear Grand Chief Phillip, Chief Tom and Kukpi7 Wilson:

Thank you for your letter of March 10, 2021, regarding the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) resolution 2021-12 "Support for ?Esdilagh First Nation and Condemning the Gibraltar Mines Discharge Permit."

The amendment of the effluent discharge permit PE-416 was issued on March 18, 2019, by a Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (ENV) Statutory Decision Maker (SDM) and the decision was appealed to the Environmental Appeal Board (EAB) by the Tsilhqot'in National Government shortly thereafter. Considering the appeal is still in progress and hearings are underway, I cannot comment on the specifics of the decision made by the SDM at this time and I trust this important matter is being heard appropriately through the EAB processes.

I am aware the amended effluent discharge permit allowed a discharge to the Fraser River for a period of three years and that this authorization to discharge will be ending this fall, on November 10, 2021. I am also aware that ENV staff responsible for the administration of the effluent discharge permit are actively engaged with ?Esdilagh, Xat'sull, Williams Lake Indian Band, the Tsilhqot'in National Government, the proponent, Gibraltar Mines Ltd. (GML), and Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation on matters related to site water management, including site water treatment and other long term effluent management and discharge alternatives, as required under the effluent discharge permit and the site Adaptive Management Plan (AMP).

Pending the EAB decision, ENV will continue to administer the effluent discharge permit and engage with Indigenous communities in an honest, open, and transparent manner in keeping with the agreements that are in place.

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Thank you again for taking the time to make me aware of UBCIC's position on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "G. Heyman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter 'G' being particularly large and stylized.

George Heyman
Minister

cc: Honourable Bruce Ralston, Minister of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation