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SENT VIA EMAIL

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Dear Louise Pedersen:

Thank you for your letter of August 18, 2021, addressed to the Honourable John Horgan, Premier, regarding Copper Mountain Mine (BC) Ltd. Premier Horgan has sent your letter to the Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) for response on his behalf.

Copper Mountain Mine (BC) Ltd. holds a permit under the *Mines Act* and several permits under the *Environmental Management Act* for the Copper Mountain Mine (Copper Mountain). The Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation and the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, respectively, oversee these permits, including compliance with permit requirements. I understand from staff at the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation that Copper Mountain is currently proposing amendments to its *Mines Act* permit that would seek to authorize raised tailings impoundment dams and increased tailings storage. In reviewing applications for authorizations, these ministries look at a broad range of potential environmental effects, risks, impacts to Indigenous nations and other considerations. After issuing authorizations, these ministries also undertake compliance and enforcement activities in relation to their respective authorization requirements.

Environmental assessments in B.C. are conducted only on major projects. The *Environmental Assessment Act's* [Reviewable Projects Regulation](#) determines what proposed major projects, or modifications to existing projects, require an

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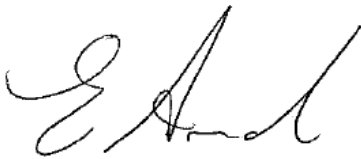
environmental assessment. For Copper Mountain, the potentially relevant criteria are under Part 3 – Mine Projects and Part 5 – Water Management Projects of the Reviewable Projects Regulation. It is the EAO's understanding that Copper Mountain (BC) Ltd. and the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation are satisfied that the currently proposed project modifications do not meet the criteria in the Reviewable Projects Regulation.

I also note your reference to the 2014 Mount Polley tailings dam breach. In response to this event, the Province has completed the implementation of all recommendations, including updates to legislation, resulting from the independent expert engineering panel's investigation into the Mount Polley tailings storage facility breach as well as all recommendations of the Chief Inspector of Mines. For more information, please see the following link:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/mineral-exploration-mining/further-information/directives-alerts-incident-information/incident-information/mount-polley-tailings-breach/mount-polley-investigation>.

Thank you for taking the time to share your concerns.

Sincerely,



Elenore Arend
Associate Deputy Minister and
Chief Executive Assessment Officer

cc: Honourable John Horgan, Premier
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Honourable George Heyman
Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
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