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Baffinland expansion rejected

Northern Affairs Minister Daniel Vandal released his decision Wednesday evening

David Venn Local Journalism **Initiative Reporter**

Federal Northern Affairs Minister Daniel Vandal has rejected Baffinland Iron Mines Corp.'s plan to build a railroad and double its annual shipping output from its Mary River mine.

"The era of Ottawa overriding Indigenous nations, Indigenous governfor resource ments development projects in the North is over," Vandal said in an interview with Nunatsiaq News.

The Liberal cabinet minister released his decision on the expansion pro-

posal, known as Phase 2, Wednesday evening in a letter to Marjorie Kaviq Kaluraq, chairperson of the Nunavut Impact Review Board, the organization responsible for advising the federal government about the social and economic impacts of development in the territory.

Vandal said he agreed with the board's conclusion earlier this year that Baffinland could not properly mitigate or manage potential effects on the environment, wildlife and fish habitats if the mine were to expand.

As northern affairs minister, Vandal gets the ______ November 18, 2022



Rebecca Osborn blends orange, yellow and red together on top of a sheet cake at her house in Rankin Inlet last month. Osborn started a cake-making business this summer that brought in so much demand that she had to scale back. Read more about Osborn and her cakes on page 8. (Photo by David Venn)

final say on NIRB's recommendation, though he consulted with four other federal cabinet ministers.

"The other responsible ministers and I have carefully considered the board's report ... and input from the designated Inuit organizations, and have decided ... to accept the board's recommenda-

tion that Phase 2 should not proceed at this time," he said in the letter.

The company wants to build a 110-kilometre railroad between its Mary

River mine and Milne Inlet, double its shipping limit of iron ore to 12 million tonnes per year from

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Ilisaqsivik backs exec. director charged with sex assault

Organization's vice-chairperson 'sees no truth in the accusations'

Emma Tranter

name is protected under a

The Ilisaqsivik Society runs programming and Inuktitut-language counselling in Clyde River and other Nunavut communities. It is the largest employer in Clyde River, with about 200 employees. Hainnu said the board has the "highest level of confidence and trust" in Ranta, and has asked him to stay on as executive director. "We stand by him. With this matter before the courts, we will not be making any further comments," said Hainnu.

when the facts are presented in full before a fair and impartial court, Malcolm will be found not guilty," he said

say Ranta is a dedicated community worker who has devoted his professional life to improving and supporting remote Friedman went on to northern communities,

and will continue that work while awaiting his day in court.

Ranta's next court appearance is Nov. 28 in Iqaluit.

Ilisaqsivik's board of directors is standing behind the Clyde River-based organization's executive director after he was charged with sexual assault this summer.

Malcolm Ranta, 34, was charged July 18 with one count of sexual assault against a woman, according to court documents filed with the Nunavut Court of Justice. The alleged assault

took place in January 2021, in Clyde River, according to the court documents. The woman's publication ban.

"He has kept us informed throughout the process and we have done our own investigation into this matter," said Jukeepa Hainnu, the Ilisaqsivik Society board's vice-chairperson, in an emailed statement.

"We see no truth in the accusations that have been made against him and we are confident the court system will come to the same conclusion."

Ranta has been the non-profit's executive director for the past four and a half years.

Solomon Friedman, Ranta's defence lawyer, echoed statements from the organization, saying Ranta is innocent and the allegation is false.

'We are confident that



The Clyde River-based non-profit and Inuit counselling centre Ilisaqsivik is standing behind its executive director after he was charged with sexual assault this summer. (File photo)