

Scotian Materials: CLC Meeting #6

Tuesday, April 24, 2018

Attendance

- Sean MacLean, Maritimes Northeast Pipeline,
- Dean Bouchard, Halifax Stanfield International Airport,
- Mimi LeCain, Resident,
- Keri Irwin, Resident,
- Anna McCarron, SWEPS
- Angela Dicker, Resident,
- Bill Horne, MLA,
- Martin Zwicker, Resident,
- Meghan Milloy, McCallum Environmental
- Callie Andrews, Golder
- Rob McPherson, Scotian Materials
- Mark Webb, Scotian Materials
- Andrew Blanchette, NATIONAL Public Relations

Absent

- Bud Baker, Resident
- Greg Hughes, Clean Earth

Meeting

Martin chairs the meeting in absence of Bud. Rob introduces the meeting and talks about the recent blasting. The blasting went forward on Tuesday, April 24 at approximately 12:20 PM—blasting was a success, levels were well below permissions (12 millimetres per second for peak particle velocity of blasting). The measures were approximately 2 millimetres per second at the pipeline monitoring station and 0.00 at Miller Lake, 20,000 tonne blast.

There will be another blast in another week or two, then at least one more and possibly not another for the rest of this year. Bill clarifies about the limit/readings. There were no questions for Rob around blasting.

Mimi indicates that she would like to take care of sourcing a biologist for the next meeting. Scotian Materials and the CLC agree. Mimi will confirm for agenda inclusion if she is able to source someone.

The dirty water at a local residence comes up and Rob indicates that he has yet to receive a formal notification about the incident.

Golder Presentation

Callie Andrews from Golder gives an overview of the presentation she delivers to the committee around the Environmental Process related to the development and expansion of the quarry. (Presentation is included as an appendix).

Callie indicates that construction of the less than 4 ha quarry began in September 2017 and the first blast occurred in November. Work stopped in December and resumed in April. Monitoring continued through the winter months.

2017 monitoring reports indicated that there was no changes to ground level, stream water, or stream flow. There was also no change in pH level.

Callie goes over the Environmental Assessment Process and discusses the steps that go into the preparation of the baseline levels, testing, and studies that go into the Class I Environmental Assessment.

EA evaluates the effects of the project on the environment. The EA will identify any mitigation measures and monitoring requirements. Once the EA document is drafted and submitted to NS EA branch, department reviews the submission and there is a public review period. Following that, the Minister will make a decision on the project.

Callie goes over the current quarry and the footprint. It is approximately 1 km from nearest residence, and 2.86 km to airport. Callie indicates that it is important to note that although the footprint is increasing, the operations remain the same. The total area is 41 hectares compared to 3.99. The project involves the construction, operations and reclamation of the quarry.

Four different phases of development are associated with the quarry. Other areas that are not within the grey shaded areas are lay down or pile up areas. The life of the quarry could be 25–50 years.

Callie points out the less than four hectare quarry, the proposed project, the streams within the area, and the proposed outline. Callie indicates that baseline monitoring was completed within the streams to measure surface water flow. Callie estimates the Waverly game sanctuary is 800 m from the quarry. Mimi asks about the distances from the project to the protected area.

Anna asks about the distance of the game sanctuary to the project.

Callie talks about the catchments and what they will look like post development. The sedimentation pond associated with the 4 hectare quarry will be used until it can no longer accommodate the volume of water.

Callie indicates that for Stream 4 there may be a reduction in surface water input into stream 4 on-site due to the reduction of catchment area. There is the potential that stream 4 at the south property boundary (off-site) will see an increase in flow/water at the discharge location. This will be mitigated by on-site water management infrastructure to control the follow of water if needed.

Callie indicates for Stream 6 that there is the potential for onsite effects to the stream however the water will be discharged at the site boundary and offsite effects are not anticipated. Appropriate watercourse alteration permits would be obtained from the province and appropriate permits from DFO, if required.

Bill asks about the streams and whether certain ones are being relied upon for the flow of the catchments. Callie clarifies that this is done based on run off rates and the potential for increased flows.

Stream 5 will be excavated as part of the quarry and all the water will be redirected to the sediment pond.

The EA process works that you cannot obtain permits until the project is released from the EA process by the Minister. The process is to determine whether or not a project will cause environmental impacts.

Bill asks about fish in stream 6. Discussion deferred to the later in the presentation.

The less than 4 hectare quarry will be excavated to 88 m above sea level, phase 4 to 99 m above sea level. Radius of influence is 431 metres, phase 4 radius of influence is 284 metres. The radius of influence acts like a cone that has maximum drawdown in the quarry and reduces as it goes away.

Keri asks about the nearest houses and residences to the radius of influence, Callie shows it on a zoomed out map.

There are no private wells in the radius of influence, nearest private well in Miller Lake West is 1 km away. Wells installed on-site will be monitored. Keri asks about the house that does have the nearest well, Callie says she can get that information. Callie indicates that they are not anticipating any changes to ground water quality.

Scotian monitors both ground and surface water for quality.

Regarding radius of influence, Martin asks about how it is found. He asks about the verification of the information that goes into the modeling of the radius of influence and Callie indicates that monitoring is required to validate modeling and monitoring is required through the industrial approval for the site.

The habitat types are gone over, talks about the topography. Talks about the importance of the habitats being in the area.

Golder assessed the site in 2012 and revisited the site last year, as well. The majority of plant species identified on the site are common, everything within the 41 hectares. There are 11 wetlands and five streams within the project area.

The black ash species is in wetland 7. Birds, reptiles, and mammals in the wetlands.

No impact to black ash in wetland 7 (threatened species at risk in Nova Scotia). Not anticipating any impacts to black ash. Quarry boundary was re-designed to maintain the catchment of Wetland 7. Wetland 7 is primarily provided water by surface run-off. By maintaining the catchment, it is not anticipated to effect Wetland 7 and therefore the black ash.

Wetland alteration permits will need to be obtained. The compensation can be in many forms, wetland compensation is a 2:1 ratio so if you impact hectare, restore wetlands. NS Environment likes to see the restoration of wetlands to happen on site, but in reality that doesn't always happen.

Martin asks about the classification of wetland systems, five different types that are classified by function.

Anna asks about the redirection of stream 5, will that impact stream 4. Maintaining the catchment. Anna asks clarification around the redirection of stream 5. It is not being redirected, it will be removed by the quarry. They will apply for the permits and that will be approved to excavate.

Mimi highlights about the stream 5. Make the same EA for 40 hectares about doing the same amount of work. It was not a full EA the last time and this is the first EA.

Mimi asks about having a quarry that is 3.99 hectares and then within 6 months everything goes 10 times its size and it goes from 5 wetlands to 11 wetlands and now its 800m to the game sanctuary and Mimi doesn't get it.

Mimi asks about the process and Meghan talks about the Environmental Assessment for the expansion and how it goes to the regulator, goes to public comment. When the document gets submitted there is a 30 day public comment process.

Callie indicates that the habitat at the site is not unique and similar habitat is available in the surrounding areas. Wildlife will likely avoid the project area. Martin talks about the reality being there regulations that the company has to follow, and Mimi suggests it's all a business deal. And she indicates that it's about making money. Martin indicates that we have to keep paving roads and that has to come from somewhere.

Callie resumes her presentation and she discusses that any alteration to wetlands needs the appropriate permits and approvals will be obtained. She indicates that impacts to fish habitats can be mitigated and if not, all the approvals will be obtained. Callie indicates that it is not anticipated that the streams off-site will be affected based on the implementation of on-site mitigation measures (i.e. water management infrastructure). If monitoring indicates that this is not the case, then the appropriate approvals and permits will be obtained.

Air quality

The project is an extension of the existing operation, same level of emissions. Wind erosion. Monitoring for dust will be conducted as requested.

Noise

Extension of existing operations. Operations are designed to meet government limits, monitoring data conducted in 2012, and blasts will continue to be designed to meet regulatory requirements (noise and vibration limits).

Bill asks about the emissions from the asphalt and concrete plant and the outlined limits within that project. Callie indicated they were approved under a separate approval process.

Socio-Economic

- Extension of the operations
- History of the adjacent land uses, the project is not expected to be incompatible

Archeological

Davis McIntyre and Associates conducted an examination and did not include any archaeological findings. Low for potential.

Next Steps

- Consultation with indigenous groups, public/open house/comment period

- Identify any additional mitigation measures
- Document will be submitted to NS EA branch. NSE review and additional public comment period would commence at that time. Likely 50 days later the Minister's decision would be expected to be handed down.

Questions on Callie's discussion

- Wetland classification and the importance of those on the site.
- Callie outlines wetland 5 and the man-made boundaries.
- Question on any significant wetland features. Callie indicates that a significant feature was identified in Wetland 5 as it is the head water to stream 5. Callie clarifies that this is typically considered significant due to the potential to support fish and fish habitat. No fish were identified in Stream 5. Anna asks if not finding the fish life in the stream factored into the decision to include it within the quarry footprint.
- Callie goes over wetlands and what lives in each one.
- Callie indicates that in Nova Scotian there is a process determine/evaluate the importance of wetlands and that Golder followed the requirements of NSE. Wetlands of special significance are no go zones. In 18 years of working in Nova Scotia, Meghan indicates she has seen one significant wetland altered.
- Martin asks if there are any significant wetlands identified. Wetland 7 is a wetland of significance that has black ash, the boundaries of the project were moved to protect it.
- Rob indicates that the buffer, or bench for safety, over 30 metres away of the buffer between the project operation.
- There is potential that the boundaries of the operational phases may differ depending on the conditions. Bill asks about the significant rock and Rob indicates that they are in the rock and once you get down to a low face you just stop. New sedimentation ponds need to be established upon expansion.
- The EA is the umbrella to determine the potential impacts, mitigation, and what's left over after mitigation. Minister has to make the decision pertaining to adverse effect.
- The nuts and bolts of the project are determined to the industrial approval document (sedimentation pond design etc)
- There is no plan to expand the quarry west beyond stream 4.
- Martin indicates that he heard it said there is anticipated overflow in the management. There will have to be water flow infrastructure to hold the flow management so there are not exceedances on the downstream aquatic environment can handle.
- Dean says any wetland habitat is lost must be compensated for a 2-1 ratio. The logic behind the compensation speaks to the long term viability of the overall population. It's striking a balance of socioeconomic importance and protection.
- Class I Class II EAs because of the large extra 36.37 hectares, doesn't make it a class II? Class I is typical of every quarry expansion in the province. Class II is the activity not size.
- In the industrial approval, there are a number of regulations that they may come up with to control or condition the operations and those will happen. If the EA is approved, there is a list of terms and conditions approved to the EA, then there are IA conditions that become implemented with the proponent, and tracking their success.

Public Engagement Session

Rob speaks to the public engagement piece and indicates that the next step is a public engagement in addition to the formal EA engagement.

Rob says that the first step is working with the CLC, there will be a presentation on the website along with the project description. There will be a portal for questions to be submitted.

The open house is anticipated in May that will be held around the public engagement, and a collection of commentary and comments from stakeholder consultation.

Once that is compiled, the public will be able to see how the comments are being raised, and then there is the EA associated comment period.

Blasting frequency doesn't change, employees don't change, and it is status quo to current operations with anticipated production rates of 300k tonnes/yr that spans across the surface of the project.

Future Meetings

Martin thanks the group. Mimi says she's not inclined to invite a biologist to come and Martin asks if it would be helpful to review the role of the CLC. He reads definition and indicates that he values the input of each member and expresses that he feels the committee is stronger with Mimi on it and that her perspective is important and should be held.

Rob says when he put together the membership of the CLC, he was purposed in selecting a cross section of the views of the committee. The comments that come here are valued and brings a good discussion to get to the best end goal.

Date for the next meeting will be sent out after the open house.