

Meeting summary

The 215th meeting of the KEQC was held in Montréal on March 26, 2015.

The first project discussed was the clayey silt borrow pit for the repair of wastewater treatment ponds at Akulivik. This project does not present significant environmental issues, and the Commission decided it could be exempted from the impact assessment procedure. The second project the members reviewed was the new airstrip at Roberts Lake planned by the Northern Village of Quaqlaq. Members felt that additional information was required before they could continue analysis of the project. Next, the Commission discussed the expansion of the airport pad for the buildings and apron at Salluit. Again, they concluded that more information was needed before they could analyze the project, and in particular for the expansion of the quarry. Then the Commission reviewed the draft directive for Phases I and II of the Raglan Mine project, and decided that once a few changes are made, it could be forwarded to the Administrator. Finally, the members briefly discussed some issues regarding the recent project submission to the Commission from Quest Rare Minerals for the mining of rare earth at Strange Lake.

Present: *Peter Jacobs* *Charlie Arngak*
 Daniel Berrouard *Lisa Koperqualuk*
 Pierre-Michel Fontaine *Putulik Papigatuk*
 Marie-Ève Fortin

Executive Secretary: *Jacques Lacroix*

Before the meeting was called to order, the Chairman informed members that Mme Josée Brazeau had advised him of her departure from the MDDELCC and by the same token, from the Commission.

1. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

2. Adoption of the minutes of the 214th meeting

The minutes for the 214th meeting were adopted as written.

3. Matters arising from the last meeting

4. Newsletter / Infolettre

The Executive Secretary circulated a draft edition of the newsletter. Members said they were very satisfied with both the content and the presentation. It will be distributed as soon as the Inuktitut version is ready.

5. Kativik Regional Government: clayey silt borrow pit for the repairs of the wastewater treatment ponds at Akulivik

This project involves the operation of a clayey silt borrow pit covering an area of less than 3 hectares. The material extracted will be used to plug a leak in one of the wastewater treatment ponds of the northern village of Akulivik. The Commission received the information on this project on March 9, 2015 and must determine whether or not the project should be subject to the social and environmental impacts assessment procedure.

Members agreed that the project does not present significant issues that would warrant an impact assessment, and so decided to exempt the project from the assessment procedure. However, they expect the borrow pit to remain less than 3 hectares in area and also that the proponent will restore the site once work is complete so that it matches the general profile of its surroundings. These comments will be included in the decision letter to be sent to the Administrator.

6. Northern Village of Quaqtak: Construction of a new airstrip at Roberts Lake

The information concerning this project was submitted to the Commission on March 4, 2015. The proposed airstrip is 300 m long and 30 m wide. It is to be constructed perpendicular to the existing airstrip using materials taken from the latter. The necessary equipment will be transported to Quaqtak in the winter. The Commission has to determine whether the project must undergo the social and environmental impacts assessment procedure.

Commission members discussed several aspects including the location of the project in relation to existing buildings, and safety standards (i.e. the staging area), the need for the proponent to obtain authorization from the Kativik Regional Government before carrying out the project, the runway orientation in relation to prevailing wind direction and speed, waste management, and storage of hydrocarbons.

Members were of the opinion that additional information was needed before they could continue their analysis, which should include information on the above aspects as well as the dismantling of the existing airstrip and restoration of the site, and information on the impacts of the proposed project on Roberts Lake. Finally, the Commission will ask the proponent to supply a map at the appropriate scale showing the location of the proposed airstrip and the existing airstrip in relation to Roberts Lake and to buildings.

7. Transports Québec: Expansion of the Salluit airport pad for the buildings and the apron

This project is to expand the airport pad at Salluit Airport by about 19,000 m² in order to make space for aircraft stand areas, enlarge the parking lot for airport users, and construct, at some point in the future, a new multipurpose building and a new terminal. The proposal includes enlarging the existing quarry by about 4 hectares in order to extract the aggregates needed for the project.

The information on this project was submitted to the Commission on January 15, 2015, and members have to determine whether or not it should be subject to the social and environmental impacts assessment procedure.

In the opinion of the members of the Commission, this project presents no particular environmental issue as it is merely a question of expanding the existing airport pad. However as concerns the quarry, they agreed that additional information on the expansion will be necessary before they can complete their analysis. They also need to know the intentions of the proponent regarding restoration of the quarry, and ask the proponent to supply the resolutions from the northern village and the landholding corporation in support of the project. A letter to this effect is to be sent to the Administrator.

8. Glencore Canada Corporation: Raglan Mine – Phases II and II

Members commented on and revised a draft version of the guideline, which was sent to translation.

They had additional comments in particular on the social aspects of the project, and other changes that will be made as a result. The French and English versions will both be finalized before they are forwarded to the Administrator. The Administrator will also be advised that the Commission plans to hold public consultations in the communities concerned.

9. Nunavik Nickel Mine Restoration Plan – November 2014 version

According to Condition 9.1 of the global certificate of authorization issued May 20, 2008, the proponent must submit for information the 5-year versions of the restoration plan as provided for in the Mining Act. The restoration plan was forwarded to the Commission on January 8, 2015. The Commission was invited to provide its comments, which will be combined with those to be prepared by the Regional Branch for Abitibi-Témiscamingue and the Nord-du-Québec of the MDDELCC for submission to the Ministère de l'énergie et des Ressources naturelles.

After some discussion, members agreed that questions and comments would be to the Administrator, including concerns about the tailings site, the waste rock piles and the treatment of effluent. The Commission will also stress that the proponent must describe in its next restoration plan, to be submitted in five years, what work has been carried out on the restoration efforts.

10. Quest rare Minerals Ltd.: Strange Lake B Zone Rare Earth Mine Project

The information on this project was submitted to the Commission on March 2, 2015. Because the project is automatically subject to the social and environmental assessment procedure, the job of the Commission is to issue its recommendations regarding on the content and scope of the required impact study.

This project involves the annual production of about 357,600 tons of rare earth concentrate over a 30 year period (2019-2049). The proposed mine site is in Québec near Lake Brisson, on the border with Labrador, where an exploration camp has existed for some fifteen years. The project includes several facilities and infrastructures including an open pit from which ore will be extracted; a storage area for ore awaiting processing; an ore processing plant (crushing, grinding and flotation), a camp for workers, an airstrip, a road about 18 km in length between the ore treatment plant and the Nunatsiavut border; a

multipurpose building; a sanitary water treatment system; a power generation station consisting of five diesel generators and a landfill.

The rare earth concentrate would be trucked to port facilities located at Edward's Cove on the coast of the Labrador Sea. For this purpose, a road 152 km long is planned between the Nunatsiavut border and Edward's Cove.

The following topics were discussed:

- Given the locations of the various components of the project, it is likely that four separate environmental assessments procedures will apply: the one undertaken by the Commission, one by the Nunatsiavut Government, one by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, and finally, a federal review. Based on the experience of the New Millennium mine there is limited likelihood of harmonizing with Newfoundland and Labrador. However there are reports that the government of Nunatsiavut may be willing to pursue that direction. The Nunatsiavut Government environmental assessment manager contacted the Executive Secretary to invite the Commission to initiate a dialogue in this regard. There is certainly room for at least attempting to cooperate and coordinate some of the activities with any assessment committees who agree to do so.
- The Commission has assessed a number of mining projects since it was established, but this is the first rare earths mine. This means that the content and scope of the directive will need to be adapted. Members were inclined to consider taking a 'major issues' approach like the one used was used for Phases II and III of the Raglan Mine. A draft directive will be tabled for discussion at the next meeting. It will incorporate the considerations of the Department's working committee on rare earths. The Executive Secretary will also try to find examples of some other directives for rare earth mining projects that might serve to guide the Commission in this exercise.
- Even if the Commission is in theory limited to assessing the components of the project that are located in Nunavik, some of the activities at the mine could impact the territory of Nunatsiavut. This might include, for example, dispersion of dust particles or the physico-chemical conditions of lakes and streams. Furthermore, the directive will take into account that users of the territory include Inuit of Nunavik and Nunatsiavut, Naskapi, and visitors from elsewhere.

11. Varia

Kuujjuaq Mining Workshop: This workshop will take place April 28-30 in Kuujjuaq. It was suggested that the Commission hold its next meeting in Kuujjuaq at the same time so that members could participate. The Executive Secretary is already registered for the workshop.

Tour of the Northern Villages and Visit to Douglas Harbour: the Executive Secretary's visit to the communities and Douglas Harbour, which was discussed at the last meeting, is still planned for early summer. Salluit and Kangiqsujuaq will be the first two communities on the schedule, although the exact dates remain to be determined.

12. Next meeting

As discussed under Varia, the Executive Secretary will collaborate with the members for Québec to compare the costs of holding the meeting in Kuujuaq during the mining workshop, given the discounts offered by the airlines at this time, versus holding a regular meeting.



*Prepared by Jacques Lacroix, Executive Secretary
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