
*Whites Point Quarry and Marine Terminal Project
Joint Review Panel*

May 26, 2006

Neal Burnham
Deputy Director, Sustainable Development Division
Foreign Affairs Canada
Rideau Pavilion - Floor: 2
111 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, ON K1A 0G2

Dear Mr. Burnham

On November 5, 2004, the Minister of the Environment for Canada and the Minister of Environment and Labour for Nova Scotia established a Joint Review Panel to conduct an environmental assessment of the Whites Point Quarry and Marine Terminal Project pursuant to their respective authorities under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* and the *Nova Scotia Environment Act*. The Panel is responsible for identifying and evaluating the potential environmental effects of the proposed project and reporting these effects to the Ministers as outlined in the Joint Review Panel Agreement.

The project proponent, Bilcon of Nova Scotia Corporation, is proposing to construct and operate a basalt quarry, processing facility and marine terminal located on Digby Neck in Digby County, Nova Scotia. The Whites Point Quarry and Marine Terminal Project is projected to take place on 150 hectares of land and involve year-round operations with approximately 40,000 tonnes of aggregate produced for ship loading each week, totalling two million tonnes per year. The full project description provided by the proponent is available on the Joint Review Panel's Web site (see EIS link below).

On March 31, 2005, The Joint Review Panel issued final Guidelines to the proponent for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and on April 27, 2006, announced the availability of the proponent's EIS for review and comment. We have invited the public and interested parties to submit written comments on whether the Statement adequately addresses the requirements of the Guidelines to assist the Panel in determining what additional information we need before holding public hearings for the project.

Section 6.6 of the EIS Guidelines directs the proponent to describe the implications of international agreements (e.g. NAFTA, Kyoto Protocol), designations (e.g. World Biosphere Reserve), or action plans (e.g. Gulf of

Maine) that may influence the project or its environmental effects. The proponent responds to this direction in Volume IV, Chapter 6, Pages 71 to 80 of the EIS.

The Panel requests that you provide us with an assessment of the accuracy and completeness of this information provided by Bilcon particularly as it relates to the *North American Free Trade Agreement*. Accordingly, we ask that all appropriate representatives from your department or agency carefully review the EIS and that you provide their comments to the Joint Review Panel as early as practicable in the EIS review period which terminates on August 4, 2006.

Thank you for your attention to this important task in the environmental assessment process of the Whites Point Quarry and Marine Terminal Project.

Yours sincerely,

Original signed

Robert Fournier, Chair