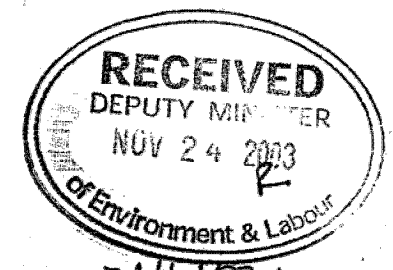


Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency
President
Fontaine Building
Hull, Quebec
K1A 0H3

Agence canadienne d'évaluation environnementale
Président
Édifice Fontaine
Hull (Québec)
K1A 0H3

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copy - Rob Cameron
Chris Daly
Valérie
Murray
Hank
Sent Nov. 25

Mr. Larry Murray
Deputy Minister
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
200 Kent Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0E6

Dear Mr. Larry Murray:

As you are aware, on June 26, 2003, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans referred the proposed Whites Point Quarry and Marine Terminal to the Minister of the Environment for a referral to a review panel. Since that time, the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency has been working with Nova Scotia Environment and Labour on a draft agreement outlining the process details for a joint review. The draft agreement was released for public comment on August 11. The comment period closed on October 22.

One matter not covered by the draft agreement relates to the coordination of federal and provincial decision-making following the submission of the joint review panel report. Fisheries and Oceans Canada, as the lead responsible authority, would also lead the development of the Government response to the joint review panel report and take a course of action under section 37.1 of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* in conformity with the Government response. The submission of the joint review panel report will also allow the Minister of the Environment and Labour to make decisions pursuant to the *Nova Scotia Environmental Assessment Regulations*.

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour officials wish to ensure that the federal and provincial decisions are made in a timely and coordinated manner. Although this matter is outside the scope of the current draft agreement, provincial officials have requested that the Agency provide assurance that efforts will be made to ensure that, once the Government of Canada's response to the joint review panel report has been approved by Cabinet, subsequent announcements by the federal and provincial governments will be made at the same time.

...12



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- 2 -

I am seeking your concurrence on coordinated timing and announcements with the province for this process. I look forward to our continued good working relationship on this assessment. My staff will inform your officials once the agreement with Nova Scotia has been finalized and signed.

Yours sincerely,



Sid Gershberg

c.c.: Mr. Ronald L'Esperance, Deputy Minister
Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Labour