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## Whites Point Quarry and Marine Terminal, Digby County

### Issue:

- A Joint federal/provincial environmental assessment panel review is being conducted for the proposed Whites Point Quarry and Marine Terminal.

### Key Message:

- A public and government review of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), prepared by the proponent, is currently underway. Interested parties are invited to submit comments by August 4, 2006.
- This current stage of the review is intended to assist the panel in determining whether the proponent must provide additional information. The Panel will hold public hearings only once it is satisfied all required information has been received from the proponent.
- The Panel is responsible for conducting the assessment and providing a recommendation to the Minister of Environment and Labour and the Government of Canada. It would be inappropriate to discuss government's position on the project prior to submission and review of the panel report.

### Background:

- Both a provincial and federal EA are required for the proposed quarry and marine terminal construction at Whites Point on Digby Neck.
- The life of the proposed quarry is expected to be 30 to 50 years (roughly 10 acres of quarry opened each year). All aggregate produced will be shipped by water (approximately 40 to 50 shipments/year).
- Local opposition to this quarry and marine terminal is concerned with impacts on quality of life, water quality, tourism, whales and the fishery.
- The federal government has designated this project for a "panel review" EA. This level of assessment includes the formation of a review panel to hold hearings and provide a report with recommendations. The province agreed to a "joint" panel process through an agreement established with the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency.
- A three-member panel, Bob Fournier, Jill Grant and Gunter Muecke has been appointed by the governments to review the quarry proposal.
- The proponent, Bilcon of Nova Scotia, submitted the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the project in April 2006. The public and interested parties are invited to submit comments by August 4, 2006.
- Once the panel is satisfied it has all required information to hold a review through a formal public hearing process, it will give 30 days notice for the start of hearings. It is

currently anticipated that hearings would begin around mid October, 2006.

- The panel must submit its report to both governments within 90 days of the close of hearings. The report will include a recommendation to the Minister of Environment and Labour to either approve or reject the project.

**Recommendation / Current Position:**

- The EIS is out for public review for 90 days, comments are due by August 4, 2006.
- To respect the independence of the panel review process, governments should not discuss their position on the project until the panel report has been submitted and thoroughly reviewed.

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