



Department of  
Environment & Labour

PO Box 697  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 2T8

Bus: (902) 424-4148  
Fax: (902) 424-0575

Our File Number:  
10350-40-~~68~~ 94  
40100-34-70

Office of the Deputy Minister

JUL 10 2003

Mr. Gordon Gillis  
Deputy Minister  
Treasury and Policy Board  
PO Box 1617  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 2Y3

**Re: Proposed Stakeholder Consultation on Harmonized Environmental Assessment - White's Point Quarry Expansion and Marine Terminal Const.**

Dear Mr. Gillis:

This Department has recently completed a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on the environmental assessment (EA) process for the proposed White's Point quarry expansion and marine terminal construction (White's Point project) in Little River, Digby County. Both provincial and federal EAs are required by existing regulations for the proposed project. This document outlines the joint panel review process the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Labour (DEL), and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA) are proposing to release for stakeholder comment.

Under the Nova Scotia *Environment Act*, when an Undertaking is also subject to another jurisdiction's EA review, the Minister may enter into an agreement with the other government agency to conduct a joint review and to adopt for the purposes of the review all or part of their procedures for EA. The draft agreement for the joint EA panel review of the proposed Whites Point project is based on a similar agreement signed by the DEL in the mid-1990s for the Sable natural gas project. In that example, the NSDEL adopted the federal EA review process for a joint panel review.

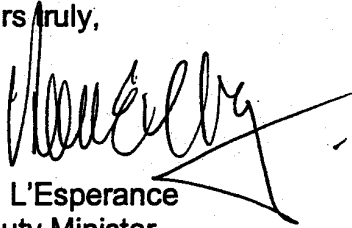
A joint EA review panel will be welcomed by stakeholders for several reasons. A coordinated provincial/federal EA will allow all parties to use one process, thereby providing a more efficient process. Rather than having to participate in two EA reviews the Proponent will only have to proceed through one EA review. This will reduce unnecessary time delays and costs, while still ensuring government requirements are met. For the public, this will provide a clear, straightforward process in which to participate.

... 2/

Mr. Gordon Gillis  
Page 2

In conjunction with the CEEA, we will be releasing the draft MOU for stakeholder review. The 30 day review period will begin in mid-July. Comments will be taken into account when finalizing the agreement for Cabinet and Ministerial approval. The joint EA review panel process will take approximately 13-15 months, exclusive of the time the Proponent takes to prepare required documents.

Yours truly,



Ron L'Esperance  
Deputy Minister

cc: Hon. Ronald S. Russell  
Minister of Environment & Labour  
Barbara Jones-Gordon, DEL