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News Release

Proposed Aguathuna Quarry Development Project Clears Environmental Assessment Phase

OTTAWA, November 10, 1999 - Federal Minister of the Environment David Anderson has determined that the proposed Aguathuna Quarry Development project is not likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects. The Minister has, therefore, referred the project back to the President of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) for appropriate action. ACOA, as the responsible federal authority for the project, was asked to provide partial funding for the project.

"Environmental assessments routinely help protect the environment by contributing to informed decisions," said Minister Anderson. "One consequence of this assessment was the saving of important habitat for crustaceans created by an abandoned dock." The concerns of local fishers and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans prompted the proponent to make changes in the design and location of the marine terminal which is now to be located 600 metres east of the old dock.

Minister Anderson made his determination on the project based on a consideration of the following:

- the environmental assessment report prepared on behalf of ACOA, as the responsible authority for the project;
- public comments received during public consultation on the environmental assessment report and the responsible authority's response to them; and
- the implementation of the mitigation measures and a follow-up program described in the report.

A follow-up program is designed to determine the effectiveness of measures taken to mitigate the adverse environmental effects of the project, and verify the accuracy of the environmental assessment of the project.

The Aguathuna Quarry Development project, a joint venture between Mosher Limestone Ltd and Mid-Atlantic Mineral Inc., has proposed the development of a limestone quarry in Aguathuna, Newfoundland. The project will consist of re-opening the abandoned limestone quarry and constructing a marine terminal that can accommodate Panama-sized vessels. The company is expecting to generate 150,000 tonnes of multi-grade crushed stone in the first year of operation, eventually building up to a production capacity of 500,000 tonnes per year. The quarry will operate from April to December, with a life expectancy of approximately 20 years. ACOA, as the responsible federal authority for the project, was asked to provide partial funding for the project. As a result it was required to conduct an environmental assessment under the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* before authorizing payments for the project to be carried out.

Environmental assessment is a planning tool used to identify possible adverse effects of development projects on the environment - the air, water, land and living organisms, including human populations. By eliminating or reducing these effects, project proponents can avoid expensive, and sometimes controversial corrective action once the project has been completed.

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Date Modified: 2010-06-17