

Meeting Minutes
North Rock and Residents of Tulita
Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board
Yellowknife, NT
April 8, 2003

Participants:

Gordon Yakeleya, Tulita
Michael Widow, Tulita
Wilfred Lennie, RRC - Tulita
Theresa Etchinelle, Tulita
Fred Andrews, RRC - Tulita
David Etchinelle, Tulita
Ruby McDonald, Land Development Corporation - Norman Wells
Matt Law, Northrock Resources Ltd.
Art Stirrett, Northrock Resources Ltd.
Martin Haefele, MVEIRB
Sherry Sian, MVEIRB

Introduction

Martin Haefele welcomed all participants to the meeting and provided a brief presentation:

- To describe the meeting agenda; and
- To explain the scope of meeting to focus on process and schedule rather than issues to ensure fairness.

Northrock Resources Ltd. Presentation

Matt Law gave a presentation on the proposed project. He began with an explanation of the constraints on the company, namely the expiration of the Exploration License in 2004 unless a well was drilled prior to the deadline. Furthermore, the proposed timeline for the environmental assessment was going to require that contracts not be issued until mid-August. Any delay in project approval could mean that the contractors could not be hired on time to get equipment to the staging area via the last barge of the year.

Project partners were discussed. The withdrawal of Anadarko from the project has prompted Northrock to seek out another funding partner for the operation. Matt and Art indicated that Northrock is still pursuing the project while they aggressively search for a new partner.

The mobilization, operation and demobilization for the exploratory well were described in detail. The access route and rationale for routing were based on minimizing costs and environmental impacts.

Equipment and supplies would be transported and staged at the confluence of the Keele and Mackenzie Rivers until the winter of 2003. Operations would commence once the ground was sufficiently frozen or upon the construction of ice bridges and roads. Water for ice road construction and the well site would be secured from the Mackenzie River, Stewart Lake and several other small lakes along the access route. Working with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Northrock designed a lake monitoring program consisting of various water quality measurements.

The site selected for the exploratory well was based on information compiled during the 2001 2D seismic program. The drilling operation would drill to a depth of 3000m. An inert water-based gel mud would be used for the operation. The duration of drilling would be 45 days. The sump would be mixed and buried upon completion of the program.

The implementation schedule for the project was also provided

Environmental Assessment Process

Martin Haefele provided an overview of environmental assessment. He explained how environmental impacts are defined within the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act* and proceeded to describe the three phases of environmental impact assessment process – screening, environmental assessment and environmental impact review.

The role of the MVEIRB was described relative to screening, environmental assessment and environmental impact review. In the case of Northrock, the screening was referred by the Sahtu Land and Water Board due only to public concern. The MVEIRB then started the environmental assessment process. Where more in-depth analysis is required a project may be referred to a panel for environmental impact review. No projects to date have achieved this level of review.

Upon notification of referral to environmental assessment, the Board issues Terms of Reference (ToR). The ToR is issued for review and comment by interested parties. Once the ToR are finalized and approved by the Board, the developer must prepare the Developers Assessment Report (DAR). Once the DAR is submitted, the MVEIRB must determine whether the report is complete and accurately describes the potential impacts. If the submission is incomplete, the developer is asked to provide the missing components. Once the DAR is deemed in conformance by the Board, Environmental Assessment Officers issue Information Requests (IR) with advice from regulatory authorities.

Based upon a review of the DAR, public registry and the developers responses to the IR, the MVEIRB makes recommendations as to whether a project should be approved or not. This recommendation is forwarded to the Minister for the Department of Indian and Northern Development (DIAND). The Minister may then approve the environmental assessment or refer it back to the Board for further consideration.

The tasks and schedule for the environmental assessment process were described. The roles of the interveners, proponents and regulatory authorities within this process were discussed.

In the case of Northrock, the timeline for completing the process is tight. Some options have been considered such as a public meeting with the developer, Tulita and the Board. There is a requirement for advance notice of 45 days prior to a public meeting. The Board is still considering a community meeting.

Discussions among the parties were limited to procedural issues and mechanisms for providing input to the process on various concerns. Several questions were asked of Martin Haefele and Matt Law.

A discussion followed...

<i>Question/Concern</i>	<i>Response</i>
Community: Who requires 45 days notice?	MVEIRB: The community requires 45 days notice.
Community: Northrock should come to the community for a direct response (to concerns).	
Community: Getting back to the Sahtu Land and Water Board, how did it get here? One of the issues for us is harvesting and culture. Why didn't they take the time to deal with the issues.	The Sahtu Land and Water Board did take extra time, but in the end concluded that the issues hadn't been resolved. The issues raised emphasize harvesting, archaeological sites and access road routing.
Community: Does the Board deal with compensation?	Community: No. The Land Claim ensures that this is handled directly with individuals through the RRC. MVEIRB: The Board does not deal with compensation, it can only determine whether the project is likely to cause a significant impact on wildlife harvesting. Sometimes the Board makes suggestions on issues it does not deal with itself.
Northrock: How does Northrock get information about harvesting? Do we go to RWED or the RRC? In some cases development has a positive impact and road construction may improve access for harvesting.	MVEIRB: Feel free to contact as many parties as you need to.
Northrock: Without understanding culture, how do we recognize impacts or evaluate significance?	MVEIRB: You can talk directly to the community to address the issue. You can include the Board.

Community: People should have information ready (for meetings with the community). People should write it down.	Community: Some people may choose not to write. Not everyone has writing skills.
Northrock: What should the timing of the meeting be?	Community: The meeting should be held before people go out on the land. (Some discussion about when people in the room go on the land. Late the following week was proposed.)
Community: The Board should come.	MVEIRB: The Board may not be available on such short notice.
MVEIRB: There must be a quorum if the Board is to attend.	
Community: How many for a quorum?	MVEIRB: 5 people
MVEIRB: You should not feel limited by the availability of the Board. Records of consultation are required as part of the DAR. MVEIRB staff can come if you like.	
Community: Where does the community meeting fit in the schedule?	MVEIRB: That is what we are here to decide today. It could be inserted prior to the preparation of the DAR or during the technical analysis of reports in July or August.
MVEIRB: So far, the draft ToR has been distributed to parties that have expressed interest.	
Community: Who received a copy of the ToR?	MVEIRB: The draft ToR was sent to the Tulita District Land Corporation, Northrock, DIAND, RWED here and in Norman Wells, NEB... about 19 parties received copies. It's not too late to get the ToR.
Community: Can we get a copy?	MVEIRB: Yes.
Community: You give the Minister 5 days to respond?	MVEIRB: Yes, he has 5 days to make his decision.
Community: Will you go to the Wells?	Northrock: There were no documented concerns from the Wells. Is it possible to combine meetings?
Community: Yes. It may work better to combine meetings so one community does not disagree with agreements made with the other. Everyone can hear everyone's opinions.	Northrock: One meeting can be arranged. Northrock can work with the communities to get people from the Wells to Tulita. It is better to have both communities in the same place so there are no contradictions.
Community: Who is making arrangements for flights, accommodations, meals?	
Community: The district should not go in	Northrock: We will help with travel. We

the hole to pay for this. Northrock should look after it.	are assuming we are not talking 50 people (from Norman Wells).
Community: Maybe we should wait for the meeting. More notice is better. Since the oil companies started working on our lands, no one knows what is happening. People from the community need time to get caught up.	MVEIRB: The communities may want to wait until the Board is available near the decision period. This would allow the Board to hear exactly what the community is concerned about in order to consider it in their decision.

After the discussion, a copy of the presentation given by Martin Haefele and Matt Law was distributed to all participants at the end of the meeting.

Meeting ended at 12:15 pm.