

The monthly *Northern Gas Project Secretariat* newsletter is designed to update the public on the various developments related to the environmental assessment and regulatory review of the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project.



The imagination and holiday spirit of the children in Fort McPherson was on display for all to enjoy during the National Energy Board hearing in that community on December 5. Community residents turned out to speak to the Board about the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project. The Board had been holding hearings in the region in late November and early December. The Board concluded its evidentiary portion of its hearings in Inuvik December 14. It will await the report of the Joint Review Panel before hearing final argument on the proposed project applications. ■

(Photo by Brian Chambers, Northern Gas Project Secretariat)



The staff of the
**NORTHERN GAS
PROJECT SECRETARIAT**
wish everyone a safe
and happy holiday!

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National Energy Board Panel Members Ken Vollman and Gaétan Caron chat with Joseph Kochon during a coffee break. The Board was in Colville Lake for a public hearing on November 27, 2006.

In addition to Colville Lake, the Board visited a number of small communities during a recent tour, including Tuktoyaktuk, Fort McPherson and Tsiigehtchic. ■

(Photo by Andrew Cameron, National Energy Board)

NEB adjourns initial hearings, signals intentions for coming months

The National Energy Board wrapped up its initial hearing schedule looking at evidence presented on applications for the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project on December 14th in Inuvik. Prior to wishing everyone a happy holiday season, NEB Panel Chairman Ken Vollman identified a number of topics that will occupy the Board while awaiting the environmental review report of the Joint Review Panel. The following items are included in his closing remarks:

Dene Tha' Motion

- “The Board will hold a procedural conference on January 11, 2007 and will issue directions as soon as practical thereafter.”

Update cost estimates

- “Upon receipt of Imperial’s updated cost information, the Board intends to canvass parties for their views on the appropriate process for addressing that information. Knowing when Imperial will file this information would greatly assist the Board in moving the process forward and we encourage the proponents to provide certainty as soon as practical.”

Aboriginal consultation

- “The Board has been notified that the Government of Canada hopes to be in a position to bring a formal Notice of Motion in mid to late spring 2007 to file further evidence in respect of its aboriginal consultation activities. Should this occur, the Board will provide parties with an opportunity to comment. “

Conditions

- “...the Board will continue its preparation of potential conditions which are not directly related to environmental or socio-economic issues. The Board will decide later on a process for release of those draft conditions.”

Final Argument

- “The Board will provide direction on the process for final argument at a later date.”

Joint Review Panel sets hearing schedule for January - March 2007

On December 12, the Joint Review Panel issued another of several letters relating to its environmental review following a November 10, 2006 Federal Court Judgement in relation to a court challenge initiated by the Dene Tha' First Nation concerning the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project.

In light of the Judgement, the Panel stated, “...*the Panel has a responsibility to continue to fulfill its mandate, within the constraints of the Judgement.*” The Panel has, therefore, set a hearing schedule for public hearings for January to March, 2007. It additionally stated that “*the Panel will not consider evidence on matters involving the Connecting Facilities or the territory in which the Dene Tha' First Nation has or have asserted Aboriginal or treaty rights.*”

Copies of the hearing schedule can be found on the Northern Gas Project Secretariat website “[Events](#)” page.

Northern Gas Project Secretariat in the community

➔ *Technicians Pat Braden and Trevor Bourque test their equipment prior to a National Energy Board public hearing in Fort McPherson on December 5, 2006.*

The technicians also work to ensure that the interpretation provided during the public hearings is communicated to other technicians who transmit the voices across the Internet. The public hearings – both of the Joint Review Panel and the National Energy Board - are broadcast live on Internet and can be accessed from the [Northern Gas Project Secretariat homepage](#) (follow links to "Hearing information page." ☐

(Photo by Brian Chambers, NGPS)



Cathy Gingras awaits a flight leaving Inuvik. Cathy is one of several court reporters who attend the Joint Review Panel and National Energy Board hearings and produce written transcripts of the proceedings. Transcripts are available on the Internet the day following the public hearing. ☐

(Photo by Brian Chambers, NGPS)



Brian Chambers, executive director of the Northern Gas Project Secretariat, takes some time to speak to residents of Fort McPherson via a local radio show. Mr. Chambers was informing the community in advance of the public hearing on the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project that was held by the National Energy Board on December 5, 2006. ☐

(Photo by Michael Benson, National Energy Board)

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A quick look at the Joint Review Panel's January, 2007 public hearing schedule

Jan. 8 - Inuvik

Community Hearing

Jan. 9 - Inuvik

General Hearing (GH) – Open
Community Hearing

Jan. 11-12 - Inuvik

GH – Topic #11 Project-related Economic Costs and
Physical Infrastructure Impacts

Jan. 15-16 - Inuvik

GH – Continuation of Topic #7 Wildlife and Wildlife
Habitat, including Birds and Bird Habitat (includes
effects on the Kendall Island Bird Sanctuary)

Jan. 18 - Aklavik

Community Hearing



Anke Tuininga spoke to the Joint Review Panel during an Open General Hearing in Yellowknife on December 5, 2006. Twenty presenters turned out to speak to the Panel during the day-long session.

The Joint Review Panel is scheduled to return to Yellowknife February 6-8 for a Topic-Specific General Hearing on Education, Training, Employment and Procurement.

The Panel will continue its hearing schedule in Inuvik on January 8, 2007. ☐

(Photo by Annette Bourgeois-Bent, Northern Gas Project Secretariat)