

The Review

July 2004, Issue 2

Your link to the review of the Mackenzie Gas Project

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.

Comment deadline nears

July 15th is the last day for the public to submit comments.

The draft Agreement for an Environmental Impact Review of the Mackenzie Gas Project (Joint Review Panel Agreement) and the draft Terms of Reference for the Environmental Impact Statement for the Mackenzie Gas Project are available for public comment until July 15, 2004.

The [draft Joint Review Panel Agreement](#) is an agreement among the Inuvialuit, the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency. It outlines how the environmental assessment processes for the Mackenzie Gas Project may be harmonized by establishing a Joint Review Panel that meets the requirements of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*, as well as the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act*. It will also ensure the joint review encompasses certain unique measures related to wildlife impact assessment contained in the *Inuvialuit Final Agreement*.

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What's ahead this summer?

Several key announcements related to the Mackenzie Gas Project are expected to be made this summer.

Look for the following:

- Finalization of the Joint Review Panel Agreement and Environmental Impact Statement Terms of Reference
- Appointment of the Joint Review Panel
- Filing of an application by industry
- Details on Phase 2 of the Participant Funding Program

Notice of many of these announcements is made through the Northern Gas Project Secretariat information distribution list. If you'd like to be added to our list, either email, fax or mail-out, please contact our Inuvik or Yellowknife office. ☐



Marie Anik Elie, Brian Chambers and Carolyn Blake attended the Inuvik Petroleum Show to explain to visitors the various steps through the environmental and regulatory processes associated with the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project. ☐

Continued from page 1 *Comment deadline nears*

The draft Agreement describes the mandate of the Joint Review Panel, how it would be formed, the scope of its review and the factors that it would consider. One of its foundations will be the Environmental Impact Statement. That document will contain what the companies building the project predict the potential environmental, cultural, social and socio-economic impacts of the project will be.

The [draft Terms of Reference for the Environmental Impact Statement](#) is a document that outlines the information that companies must provide in detail in the environmental impact statement. That document, which is expected to be filed along with regulatory applications to the National Energy Board this summer, will include information in such areas as: a description of the project, and the existing environment, and how the companies intend to avoid, minimize or reduce any project impacts.

The public has the opportunity to comment on both these important documents. Copies of the drafts can be obtained from the Northern Gas Project Secretariat [website](#), or by contacting our offices.

All comments will be posted to the Secretariat's website. Once the comment period is complete, the draft documents will be finalized and final copies will be available to the public. ☐

Joint Review Panel Office will be located in Inuvik

Office to be located within Northern Gas Project Secretariat

The Office of the Joint Review Panel will be located within the existing Northern Gas Project Secretariat office in Inuvik, announced Brian Chambers, executive director of the Secretariat, during his presentation at the Inuvik Petroleum Show in June.

"Establishing the Office within our Secretariat office in Inuvik reinforces our efforts to reduce duplication and maximize efficiency, and reflects the objectives expressed in the *Cooperation Plan*," Mr. Chambers said. The *Cooperation Plan (for the Environmental Impact Assessment and Regulatory Review of a Northern Gas Project through the Northwest Territories)* was published in June 2002 as a framework document to guide the review process.

Mr. Chambers, who made the announcement on behalf of the Environmental Assessment Chairs' Committee, stressed that the Office of the Joint Review Panel will be independent; however office space and administrative support will be provided by the Secretariat. The Office of the Joint Review Panel will be staffed with a panel manager and a small support staff, who will provide expert advice to the panel members.

The Joint Review Panel members are expected to be appointed following the finalization of the Joint Review Panel Agreement.

The Joint Review Panel will examine the potential impacts of the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project, including environmental, cultural and socio-economic.

The panel will hold public hearings throughout the Northwest Territories and into Alberta.

Following the formal comment period, which ends July 15, the Agreement will be finalized by the EA Chairs' Committee. That committee represents the parties involved in the environmental impact assessment Joint Review Panel process – the Inuvialuit Game Council, the [Mackenzie Valley Environmental Review Board](#) and the [Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency](#). ☐

The Northern Gas Project Secretariat in the community

Northern Gas Project Secretariat Executive Director Brian Chambers talks to members of the Inuvialuit Game Council during its meeting in Tuktoyaktuk in June.

Staff at the Secretariat will continue to seek opportunities to assist individuals and communities understand the review process for the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project.

If you or your organization would like information about the review and how you can become involved in expressing your concerns, please contact our Inuvik or Yellowknife office. ☐



The Northern Gas Project Secretariat accepted a request from the NWT Association of Communities to attend its annual general meeting. Delegates to the conference were given the opportunity to ask questions about the review process. Many of them also took the opportunity to obtain more information on the Participant Funding Program, a \$1.5 million program that will assist the public to participate in the environmental review of the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project. Public and local governments are among the groups who are eligible to apply for funding under the program. The first phase of the program is complete and 16 applicants were awarded funding totalling nearly \$120,000. Details of phase two of the program are expected to be announced this summer. ☐



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National Energy Board continues preparation for project application

The [National Energy Board](#) is one of the regulators of the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project and has a significant role to play in the review of the project.

The National Energy Board regulates oil and gas development under the *Canada Oil and Gas Operations Act*. As well, it regulates pipeline matters under the *National Energy Board Act*.

The Board continues its planning in anticipation of receiving an application from industry this summer.

Once an application is filed and reviewed for completeness, the Board will issue a **Hearing Order**, which will include a process schedule and information on how to participate in the Board's hearing process.

The Board plans to hold hearings in the Northwest Territories as described in the *Cooperation Plan*. These would be coordinated with the hearings of the Joint Review Panel, but details on the exact time and locations have yet to be finalized.

The National Energy Board is an independent federal agency that regulates several aspects of Canada's energy industry.

Prior to the hearings, staff from the Board will hold information sessions in key communities along the proposed project route to explain the Board's role in the review process and describe the opportunities that are available for public involvement.

Representatives from the Board, for example, have been in Inuvik in recent weeks to explain the Board's role in the review process and what's expected in the months to come.

For more information on the Board process, contact Public Affairs Officer [Ross Hicks](#) at 403-299-3930. ☐