

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

PROPOSER: Swan Valley Gas Corporation
PROPOSAL NAME: Swan Valley Gasification Project
CLASS OF DEVELOPMENT: Two
TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT: Transportation and Transmission -
Pipelines
CLIENT FILE NO.: 4513.00

OVERVIEW:

The Proposal was received on March 23, 2000. It was dated April 3, 2000. (The Proposal was initially received without an Environment Act Proposal Form.) The advertisement of the proposal was as follows:

“A Proposal has been filed by the Swan Valley Gas Corporation for the construction and operation of a natural gas pipeline system to service the area of the Swan River valley between Benito and Minitonas, including Swan River. The system would originate at Norquay, Saskatchewan and enter Manitoba south of Benito. It would consist of 37.3 km of six inch diameter steel transmission pipeline from Norquay to the Manitoba boundary, and 58 km of distribution pipeline in Manitoba. Most of the distribution pipeline would be steel, with the remainder consisting of polyethylene. The route would follow existing corridors such as road allowances where possible, and utilize easements on private land where necessary. Construction is proposed to begin in June, 2000.”

The Proposal was advertised in the Swan River Star and Times on Tuesday, April 18, 2000. It was placed in the Environment Library, Centennial Public Library, Eco-Network and North-West Regional Library (Swan River) public registries. The Proposal was distributed to TAC members on April 10, 2000. The closing date for comments from members of the public and TAC members was May 12, 2000.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

No public responses were received.

COMMENTS FROM THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

Manitoba Conservation - Water Quality Management - Water Quality Management has some concerns with this proposal since there are numerous stream crossings involved. Water Quality Management has concerns with respect to erosion and sedimentation with respect to degradation of water quality in general as well as impacts on downstream

habitat for fish and other aquatic organisms with respect to stream crossings. The proposal indicates that either trenching or directional drilling under the drainage will be used for watercourse crossings. Directional drilling beneath streams is the preferred option for stream crossings.

Several of the streams to be crossed in Manitoba are considered to be capable of providing fish habitat on a permanent or seasonal basis including Keillor Creek, Roaring River, Minitonas Creek, Favel River and East Favel River. Of these Roaring River, Minitonas Creek, Favel River and East Favel River were considered to be sensitive and directional drilling should be used in all of these cases as indicated in this proposal. The Keillor Creek crossing and crossings of number of other water courses in Manitoba considered non-sensitive in this proposal might be crossed by trenching after the spring spawning season at times when water levels are as low as possible. Also, as indicated in this proposal "Manitoba Stream Crossing Guidelines for the Protection of Fish and Fish Habitat" and DFO (1986) "Policy for the Management of Fish Habitat" should be adhered to both with respect to pipeline crossings and temporary vehicular crossings. Hydrostatic testing should avoid water discharges directly into streams. Appropriate erosion control structures, reseeding of exposed areas and other mitigative measures should be put in place after construction and monitoring of crossing sites should be conducted for one year after completion of construction as per this proposal.

Providing the procedures outlined in this proposal are adhered to then Water Quality Management's concerns should be addressed. If any variation from the above mentioned practices should appear necessary then this should only be done with the approval of appropriate Manitoba Conservation personnel.

Disposition:

These comments can be addressed as licence conditions.

Manitoba Conservation – Policy Coordination - If directional drilling cannot be used where intended, the regional fisheries manager should be contacted before any open cut trenching is done. Plans should then be made to avoid any fish habitat destruction or disruption. Where directional drilling can be carried out, the drill entry and exit holes should be located outside of the stream channel and flood plain associated with that site and rehabilitated to natural conditions following pipeline installation. The open cut crossings should be done after June 15 and should be completed under no flow/dry conditions. Instream channel activities should be completed as quickly as possible and crossing areas should be restored as nearly as possible to their original condition and stabilized against erosion. Efforts should be made to control erosion and sediment injection into streams and the Swan River. Provincial stream crossing guidelines should be adhered to during installation of all crossings. The proponent should be careful not to cut through low permeability materials that are blocking groundwater from flowing out of gravels under the valley uplands. If groundwater discharge occurs, the trench should be

backfilled and the discharge stopped, by grouting if necessary. Care should be taken to do as little digging underneath the streambeds as possible. Consideration should be given to doing test drilling adjacent to the major stream crossings to determine the hydrogeological conditions. Both the construction work and the test drilling should be prepared for artesian conditions. All groundwater blowouts should be sealed off.

Disposition:

These comments can be addressed as licence conditions.

Mines Branch - No concerns.

Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency - Environmental assessment of this project will be required. The contacts for purposes of coordinating environmental assessment activities for the project are PFRA and Western Economic Diversification. Environment Canada, Parks Canada and Natural Resources Canada have offered to provide specialist advice in accordance with subsection 12(3) of the Act. The Canadian Coast Guard and Fisheries and Oceans require additional information in order to make a determination.

Disposition:

Western Economic Diversification was the only federal agency which indicated a desire to participate in the provincial assessment process. As no additional information is needed to complete the Environment Act assessment process, a copy of the Project Summary and draft Environment Act Licence for the project will be provided to Western Economic Diversification, PFRA, DFO and the Canadian Coast Guard.

PUBLIC HEARING:

As no public concerns were identified, a public hearing is not recommended.

RECOMMENDATION:

All comments received on the Proposal can be addressed as licence conditions. Therefore, it is recommended that the Development be licensed under The Environment Act subject to the limits, terms and conditions as described on the attached Draft Environment Act Licence. It is further recommended that enforcement of the Licence be assigned to the Park-West Region.

PREPARED BY:

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May 24, 2000

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